10-14-2016

Creating Assessment Tools for Students, Adjuncts, and Site Supervisors

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During this workshop, we plan to explore how clinicians can assess student performance at project, course, and program levels using self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and faculty evaluation (focusing on clinical adjuncts and site supervisors). One presenter (Carole) is an experienced clinician who has thirteen years of clinical teaching experience, and our second presenter (Carolyn), while new to clinical teaching, is an experienced legal writing professor who has successfully engaged students in self- and peer-assessment for over fifteen years.

As formative, summative, and programmatic assessment become increasingly important under changing ABA standards, clinicians should consider how we can use assessment tools to both help our institutions comply with ABA standards and improve student learning. With the assessment standards as our backdrop, this program will explore the use of assessment within clinics and externships. We will cover how assessment can be used most effectively, propose methods for creating assessment instruments, and describe how these assessment tools can be converted to feedback instruments to share with clinical adjuncts and externship site supervisors.

We also believe that clinicians may be uniquely-equipped to measure students’ achievement of our law schools’ learning outcomes given our ability to observe our students’ mastery of issue spotting, problem-solving, research, and communication abilities (and others) because we observe those skills in a practice-setting. Thus, the program also will touch on the development and use of programmatic assessment tools in clinics and externships.

Prior to the workshop, we plan to conduct a survey of clinical and externship faculty to seek the following information: (1) whether clinicians use peer- and self-assessment with their students; (2) what methods of peer- and self-assessment are used (mid and end of the semester self-evaluations, project evaluations, peer evaluations), (3) whether their clinical program is involved in measuring their school’s learning outcomes as required by ABA Standard 315 and, and (4) assuming that proposed revised standard 304 is adopted in August of 2016, whether externship clinicians believe that changes to their externship programs will be necessary to comply with the revised standard.