C&A Survey Results

The results are in! Thanks to everyone for your time and input. Briefly, here are some of the trends that were found while scoring the surveys. After looking at mean (M), median (MD), and mode (m), the areas scoring the lowest (on a 5 point scale) included the level of communication with mentors (m=2, MD=3), and the level of communication with adjunct faculty (m, MD, M=3). Investment in the research clerkship scored low in median and mean (3), but high in modality (5). The survey also indicated that students have concerns about the quality of PD groups (m, MD, M=3) and that their voices were not heard at the last town hall meeting (M, MD, M=3). Scores indicated that students were pleased with the quality, communication, and support of core faculty (m, MD, M=5) and with the overall work of Track delegates (m, MD, M=5).

In written and checklist responses, the research clerkship was the area that needed most improvement according to the survey with 11 people citing this concern. Psychopathology and Assessment classes were next with votes of 5 and 4 respectively.

C&A students also expressed an interest in curriculum focusing on personality disorders (8) as well as adult psychopathology (3), group therapy (2), and abuse and trauma (2).

Although the practicum process was met with overall satisfaction, there were some issues of concern including site descriptions (16), faculty letters (11), transcripts (10), and outside letters (6). A large number of respondents cited the small cohort size and community atmosphere as the best thing about the C&A Track (13). Others cited the core faculty (13), and the faculty’s dedication to students (8) as the best thing about their experience. The willingness to be open to feedback was also expressed as a strength of the track (4).

All of the information and recommendations from this survey will be presented at the next faculty meeting.

Town Hall Topics and Structure

This semester’s Town Hall meeting will be structured a little differently to try and accommodate the wide range of topics that students found important, as well as to cover everything in a set amount of time. We are going to try and have a limit of 15-20 minutes for each discussion topic. It is recommended that if you have a specific concern, you write out your question in preparation to help expedite the process. The topics chosen by you to be covered at this semester’s town hall meeting are:

- Research Clerkship
- Practicum
- C&A Curriculum
- Adjunct Faculty
- Assessment class

We will also designate some time at the end of the meeting to look at and review a synthesized mission statement for the Track.
What are you Doing?

What have you been doing on your clerkship experience? We’ve decided to feature 2 people in each newsletter to find out.

Olena Droz- “This year I am working under the mentorship of Dr. Rubenstein regarding the topic, "Playspace." It consists of a space and time that exists between two individuals who have created a self-contained, mutually understood relationship with self-determined rules. Last semester I began preliminary literature review research regarding the definition and description of measures of social competence. Dr. Rubenstein handed me an amazing opportunity to present my literature review at a community conference, organized by the office of Senate President, Emil Jones, Jr. at Kennedy King College at the end of January. This semester, I will be working on literature searches regarding the definition of "playspace" and the development of a methodology within which different improvisational, playspace techniques will be evaluated.”

Ann Srodulski- “Here’s the scoop: I have crossed over to the dark side. Right now, my research entails scouring the internet and psycinfo for any information regarding why children with Asperger’s Syndrome enjoy science fiction, particularly Star Wars. Dr. Rubenstein and I believe that it’s because Star Wars deals with concrete examples, black and white, good and bad. Using this information, we want to develop a program where we show snippets of Star Wars’ movies and ask the children to label the emotions, conflicts, tensions, and moods of all characters involved. Finally, Dr. Rubenstein and I hope to use science fiction (for good, not for evil) to help children with Asperger’s Syndrome develop appropriate social skills. That seems like science fiction in itself! Maybe I should drop Dr. Iaccino a line!”

Speaker Series Survey

Dr. Goerget’s presentation on the demographic changes in Chicago’s children was met with approval from the C&A students who attended. Survey results indicated that overall, students strongly agreed that Dr. Goerge’s presentation provided useful information for their career, a valued question and answer period, as well as relevant expertise and knowledge. Students did feel, however, that the presentation was not as engaging as they would have hoped and had no strong feelings either way about having a follow-up presentation in the future.

Results from the C&A Track survey indicated several topics that students would like to see in upcoming speaker series. Popular areas of interest included:

- Introduction to Private practice and business (8)
- Suicide/ self harm (5)
- Eating disorders (2)
- Neuropsych testing (2)
- Introduction to supervision(2)

These suggestions will be incorporated into decisions for the speaker series this coming fall.

We Need to Talk...

You don’t have to wait until the next Town Hall Meeting to express your concerns or suggestions. We are always here to listen! But who should you go to first?

1. If you have a problem with a professor or concern/ suggestion about a class, first go directly to that person. If you need additional support, feel free to contact your advisor. If the situation is still not settled, the next step is to go to Dr. Hardin.

2. If you have a question about the development of the C&A track or new suggestions of improvements/changes, please email any one of the 3 delegates. If you choose to do this confidentially, please use the C&A gmail address created for your privacy. The username is Childrensmen- health@gmail.com and the password is “Turtle24.” Also, feel free to call one of the delegates if email is not your thing. If you do not feel comfortable contacting the delegates, you can go directly to Dr. Hardin.

CONTACT INFORMATION
Delegate Email Addresses and Phone Numbers:
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From the Faculty

Dr. Bianka Hardin

“We would like our advisory board to assist with training site development, critiquing our curriculum, (and) finding future adjunct faculty…”

We are continuing to develop the Track Advisory Board. I am sure you are wondering what an Advisory Board is and why we would need one. An Advisory Board is a group of professionals in the field who can act as consultants about a wide variety of issues such as curriculum, best practices in the field, clinical training, etc. Ideally we will have 5-8 professionals on our Advisory Board. We would like our Board to assist us with training site development, critiquing our curriculum, finding future adjunct professors, speakers for our speaker series, and development of collaborative training opportunities. We currently have 2 members on our Advisory Board. Dr. Carol Craddock, Director of Behavioral Health at Advocate Illinois Masonic, and Dr. Elaine Moor, Dean of Students at The MacNeal Therapeutic Day School. We are having another meeting in March for additional persons of interest.

C&A Track Advisory Board

We are working on creating a Research Clerkship manual that will include information about mentors, selecting a mentor, expectations, etc. We are also working on the development of a mentor rating form so that we can evaluate the mentorship process.

Faculty Search

The Faculty Search Committee continues to look for Track Faculty. We will be hiring at least 2 FTE (full-time equivalents) this Spring for next year. We will continue to hire at least 2 FTEs for the upcoming years. Please keep your eyes posted and participate in this important hiring process.

Clerkship Manual

Dr. Hardin has been working on refining and tweaking the curriculum. This includes determining which classes will be considered cohort vs. department classes. Additionally, identifying Track classes that will be offered as classes in the Child and Adolescent Concentration. Some of these classes will be offered as early as next year as electives in the department. We would like to begin course development and evaluation for more of our advanced classes.

Curriculum

Be one of the first to visit the C&A run website soon to be unveiled in coordination with the The Chicago School. The page provides resources, current research, and news all dedicated to children’s mental health advocacy. Take a minute and visit; http://childrensmental-health.googlepages.com/home