HSP 440

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# Connections

Ever since my first internship, I was able to put into practice the skills I acquired through HSP325 Interviewing for Human Services. During my internship at Hope Options, I was working with adults 65 years old and older who were suffering from some form of mental illness in order to find them permanent, independent housing. I discovered that paraphrasing does work. I was able to maintain a client focused on the issue at hand simply by paraphrasing. Using the appropriate questions to learn more from a client is an invaluable skill. Open-ended questions have opened the door to wonderful insights into my clients' lives and the road to empowerment.

HSP0345 Case Management has influenced my practicum experiences because it has put so many pieces of professional conduct and knowledge together. I was able to practice interviewing skills and writing short and clear case notes for Hope Options. I am also more aware of the importance of documentation, whether it is scribbling notes to myself on a separate piece of paper and then putting together a thorough but concise summary or reading my case notes before meeting my client to make sure we go over every goal we had set before.

The Systems Theory classes have opened my eyes to the interconnectedness present in everything. Looking at my interactions with family, classmates, other professionals and my clients has been interesting. I have gained great respect for my voice, because if I join others asking and demanding better conditions and more services, we could all affect an enormous change that will resonate within bigger systems, such as the country, the continent, the world.

Last, but not least, I am seeing the real-life applications of Program Planning and Evaluations HSP485. There are so many things that have to be taken into consideration before even thinking of implementing a program, from researching the area and the services available, to conducting surveys and trying to connect with other agencies and professionals in the community. I am both, excited and terrified about presenting my findings before the Alzheimer's Association and before the Older Adult Servicesat Snohomish County Area Agency on Aging. I am doing my best, but I am not a professional yet and I hope to be capable of presenting results that will lead to implementation of services for the Spanish-speaking population in Snohomish County. I am not sure that every student can see or live the real life applications of our classes, but I am a very fortunate individual and this makes me very hopeful for my future as a Human Services professional.