ELPS 886: Student Learning and Development Competency Analysis

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Broad Description of the Competency

The **Student Learning and Development** competency, as defined by ACPA and NASPA (2016), focuses on understanding and applying theories and models that explain student learning and development to create and enhance educational environments. This competency encompasses cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal domains of development, emphasizing the critical role of student affairs professionals in fostering holistic student growth.

Key elements of this competency include **applying student learning theories**, **promoting self-directed learning**, **developing critical thinking skills**, and **creating educational experiences that enhance student engagement and motivation**. By mastering this competency, student affairs and higher education professionals can effectively design and facilitate learning environments that contribute to students' academic achievement and personal development.

Reflection on Experience and Growth

My development in the **Student Learning and Development** competency has been shaped by my experiences in various functional units within higher education. Through these roles, I have gained hands-on experience in designing and implementing learning opportunities tailored to diverse student populations, equipping me with the skills necessary to foster academic growth and student success.

I work closely with **peer academic coaches** to enhance their ability to engage in **metacognitive strategies**, encouraging them to reflect on their learning processes and adopt personalized study techniques. I have conducted **training sessions on Bloom's Taxonomy**, helping coaches understand how to guide students from basic knowledge acquisition to

higher-order thinking skills such as **analysis, synthesis, and evaluation**. These skills are then applied in their coaching meetings as they support students in adopting **effective learning strategies** that promote long-term academic success.

Additionally, I have conducted **supervisory observations and evaluations** of our peer academic coaches. This process has provided an opportunity not only to offer constructive feedback but also to assist coaches in identifying areas for professional development. By engaging in this reflective and assessment-driven process, I have refined my ability to provide targeted coaching and mentorship, ensuring that student learning and development initiatives are both effective and meaningful.

As a leadership program facilitator for engineering students, I designed and led training sessions that emphasized Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, reinforcing the importance of hands-on learning, reflection, and application. This approach was particularly effective in project-based learning environments, where students applied leadership theories in real-world problem-solving contexts. The students were paired with community partners who presented some of the challenges they were facing. In return, the SELF students would provide engineering solutions to help solve the challenges. By integrating experiential learning principles, I helped students bridge the gap between theory and practice, enhancing their problem-solving and leadership competencies.

Knowledge, Skills, and Application

Through these experiences, I have developed key skills, including:

- **Curriculum Design and Pedagogical Strategies:** Developing workshops and educational experiences based on student learning theories.

- **Facilitating Active Learning:** Encouraging interactive and experiential learning that promotes student engagement and knowledge retention.
- **Assessing Learning Outcomes:** Utilizing formative and summative assessments to measure student progress and program effectiveness.
- **Promoting Metacognitive Awareness:** Teaching students how to reflect on their learning processes and apply **evidence-based study techniques** to improve performance.
- **Enhancing Motivation and Engagement:** Applying theories such as Self-Determination Theory to foster intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, and student persistence.

I assess my competency level as **foundational to intermediate**, as I have built a strong knowledge base and practical application but continue to refine my expertise through ongoing on the job training, reflection, and professional development opportunities.

Competency Artifacts

1. **Performance Evaluation**
    - **Description:** This artifact is an evaluation letter from my supervisor at Wingspan: Center for Learning and Writing Support, where I serve as a graduate assistant for the Peer Academic Coaching program. The evaluation highlights my strengths in facilitating student learning, developing academic coaching materials, and creating student engagement strategies. It acknowledges my role in guiding students through reflective learning processes and enhancing their academic performance. This evaluation serves as an external validation of my expertise in

student learning and development and my ability to foster academic success through intentional programming.

2. **PowerPoint Presentation on Higher-Order Thinking and Bloom's Taxonomy**

    - Description: This artifact consists of a PowerPoint presentation I developed for peer academic coaches to enhance their understanding of higher-order thinking skills and Bloom's Taxonomy. The presentation provides an overview of Bloom's hierarchical model, offering strategies for coaching students through different levels of cognitive engagement, from knowledge recall to evaluation and creation. The slides include practical exercises, real-world examples, and interactive discussion prompts that demonstrate how to guide students in applying critical thinking techniques to their coursework. By equipping peer coaches with these instructional strategies, I contributed to fostering deeper learning and analytical skills among the students they support.

Conclusion

Through my work in student learning and development, I have cultivated a passion for creating educational experiences that empower students to thrive academically and personally. These experiences have solidified my understanding of student development theories, pedagogical strategies, and program assessment, equipping me with the tools to support student success effectively. Moving forward, I aim to further enhance my skills in curriculum design, assessment methodologies, and program facilitation to continue fostering meaningful learning opportunities for diverse student populations.

References

American College Personnel Association & National Association of Student Personnel Administrators. (2016). *Professional competency areas for student affairs educators*. ACPA & NASPA. https://www.naspa.org/images/uploads/main/ACPA_NASPA_Professional_Competencies_FINAL.pdf