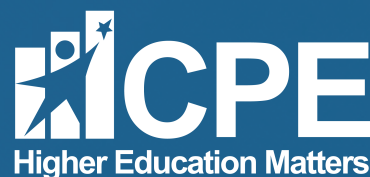




Case Study Outcomes Report

AI Integration into Advanced Peer Support Specialist Certification Curriculum

A joint project of Big Sandy Community and Technical College, Southeast Community and Technical College and Owensboro Community and Technical College



About the Council on Postsecondary Education

CPE is Kentucky's higher education coordinating agency committed to strengthening our workforce, economy and quality of life. We do this by guiding the continuous improvement and efficient operation of a high-quality, diverse and accessible system of postsecondary education.

Key responsibilities include:

- Developing and implementing a strategic agenda for postsecondary education that includes measures of progress.
- Producing and submitting a biennial budget request for adequate public funding of postsecondary education.
- Determining tuition rates and admission criteria at public postsecondary institutions.
- Collecting and distributing data about postsecondary education performance.
- Ensuring the coordination and connectivity of technology among public institutions.
- Licensing non-public postsecondary institutions to operate in the Commonwealth.



Introduction

The advanced Peer Support Specialist (APSS) certification course under development at Big Sandy Community and Technical College, Southeast Community and Technical College with computer-based technology (CBT) integration provided by Owensboro Community and Technical College, stands as a cornerstone in the landscape of behavioral healthcare, offering vital training and accreditation to individuals aspiring to support those grappling with mental health and substance use disorders (SUD/OD). Developed to empower participants with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate the complex challenges of peer support, this course plays a pivotal role in shaping the future of mental health and addiction recovery initiatives.

Recognizing the evolving landscape of education and technology, the Council on Postsecondary Education (CPE), in collaboration with CLIMBs Kentucky Community and Technical College System (KCTCS), embarked on a transformative journey to enhance the APSS certification course through the integration of ChatGPT—an advanced natural language processing AI developed by OpenAI.

This integration represents a strategic leap forward, leveraging cutting-edge technology to augment traditional learning methodologies. By infusing ChatGPT into the curriculum, we aimed to provide students with dynamic, on-demand access to additional resources, support, and guidance, thereby enriching their learning experience and better preparing them to excel in their roles as peer support specialists.

In this report, we delve into the intricacies of our endeavor, detailing the objectives, methodologies, outcomes, and insights gained from our exploration of the symbiotic relationship between education and artificial intelligence. Through rigorous evaluation and reflection, we endeavor to illuminate the transformative potential of ChatGPT in shaping the future of behavioral healthcare education and professional development.

Objectives

1. Enhanced Learning Support

To provide students enrolled in the APSS certification course with enhanced learning support through the integration of ChatGPT. By leveraging ChatGPT's natural language processing capabilities, the objective was to offer students instant access to supplemental resources, clarifications, and explanations related to course content and concepts. This approach addressed individual learning needs and fostered a more personalized learning experience.

2. 24/7 Accessibility

To ensure round-the-clock accessibility to learning resources and support materials for students. By embedding ChatGPT within the course framework, the objective was to break free from the constraints of traditional classroom hours and facilitate learning at any time and from any location. This objective sought to accommodate diverse learning preferences and schedules, catering to the needs of a broad spectrum of students.

3. Interactive Learning Experience

To cultivate an interactive learning experience that promotes student engagement and participation. The integration of ChatGPT aimed to encourage active interaction with course content, foster critical thinking, and stimulate meaningful dialogue. By enabling students to pose questions, seek clarifications, and engage in discussions with ChatGPT, the objective was to create a dynamic and immersive learning environment.

4. Real-Time Feedback Mechanism

To establish a real-time feedback mechanism for assessing student comprehension and addressing knowledge gaps. The objective of analyzing interactions with ChatGPT was to gather insights into student learning patterns, identify areas of difficulty or confusion, and tailor instructional approaches accordingly. This objective aimed to promote continuous improvement and refinement of the course curriculum based on student feedback and performance.

5. Promotion of Self-Directed Learning:

To empower students to take ownership of their learning journey and develop self-directed learning skills. By providing students with the autonomy to explore topics of interest, seek answers to specific queries, and delve deeper into course materials through ChatGPT, the objective was to foster independence, curiosity, and lifelong learning habits. This objective aligned with the principles of adult education and learner-centered pedagogy, emphasizing the importance of active participation and self-discovery.

6. Alignment with Technological Advancements

To align the APSS certification course with the latest advancements in educational technology and artificial intelligence. By integrating ChatGPT into the course framework, the objective was to harness the potential of AI-driven solutions to enhance teaching and learning outcomes.

This objective reflected a commitment to innovation, adaptability, and staying at the forefront of educational trends and methodologies.

ChatGPT Augmented Interactive Peer Support

Expanding on the concept of having prospective certified APSS students use ChatGPT with 'act as' prompts of simulated individuals undergoing SUD/ODU treatment introduces a dynamic and immersive learning experience that goes beyond traditional teaching methods.

1. Simulation-Based Learning

To immerse prospective certified APSS students in realistic scenarios simulating individuals undergoing Substance Use Disorder (SUD) or Opioid Use Disorder (ODU) treatment. Using ChatGPT with 'act as' prompts, the objective was to expose students to the challenges, emotions, and dynamics inherent in peer support interactions within a clinical setting. This approach aimed to bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, preparing students to navigate real-world scenarios confidently and empathetically.

2. Applied Peer Support Skills Development

To facilitate developing and refining applied peer support skills through practice one-on-one conversational sessions. By engaging in simulated interactions with ChatGPT representing individuals in SUD/OD treatment, the objective was to provide students with opportunities to actively apply core principles of peer support, such as active listening, empathy, motivational interviewing, and problem-solving. This hands-on approach aimed to foster competency and proficiency in supporting individuals on their recovery journey, equipping students with valuable skills they can leverage in their future roles as peer support specialists.

3. Experiential Learning and Reflection

To promote experiential learning and reflective practice among prospective certified APSS students. Following each simulated conversational session with ChatGPT, the objective was to encourage students to self-reflect and critically analyze their communication strategies, interpersonal dynamics, and effectiveness in providing support. This reflective process aimed to deepen students' understanding of their strengths, areas for growth, and the nuances of peer support interactions, fostering a continuous cycle of learning and improvement.

4. Cultural Competency and Sensitivity Training

To cultivate cultural competency and sensitivity among prospective certified APSS students in their interactions with individuals from diverse backgrounds and communities. By incorporating various scenarios and personas into the ChatGPT simulations, the objective was to sensitize students to the unique cultural, social, and contextual factors that influence the experience and needs of individuals in treatment.

This objective aimed to foster an inclusive and respectful approach to peer support grounded in an appreciation for diversity and cultural humility.

5. Interdisciplinary Collaboration

To foster interdisciplinary collaboration and teamwork among prospective certified APSS students. The objective of engaging in simulated peer support interactions with ChatGPT was to encourage students to collaborate with peers from different disciplines, such as psychology, social work, nursing, and addiction counseling. This collaborative approach aimed to broaden students' perspectives, enhance their communication skills, and promote a holistic understanding of recovery-oriented care within a multidisciplinary context.

Expanding the course objectives to include simulation-based learning, applied peer support skills development, experiential learning and reflection, cultural competency training, and interdisciplinary collaboration underscores the transformative potential of integrating ChatGPT into the APSS certification course. By simulating real-world scenarios and facilitating hands-on practice, this approach empowers students to become confident, competent, and compassionate peer support specialists capable of making meaningful contributions to behavioral healthcare.

APSS Course Integration of ChatGPT

Using ChatGPT for simulated peer support sessions provides APSS students with a practical and experiential learning experience that complements traditional classroom instruction. By engaging in simulated interactions with Chatbots, students develop essential skills, gain confidence in their abilities, and deepen their understanding of the peer support role in SUD/OD treatment. Course integration will be accomplished by:

1. Creating ChatGPT Accounts

APSS students are guided through creating ChatGPT accounts, allowing them to access the platform for training and interaction. Each student is provided with login credentials and instructions on navigating the ChatGPT interface.

2. Supplying Text to Train Chatbots

As part of the training process, students are supplied with text materials that serve as training data for Chatbots. These materials may include transcripts of peer support interactions, case studies, therapeutic dialogue examples, and other relevant resources. Students are encouraged to review and analyze the text to gain insights into effective communication strategies and peer support techniques.

3. Providing ChatGPT 'Act As' Prompts

Using the ChatGPT platform, students are presented with 'act as' prompts that simulate individuals undergoing Substance Use Disorder (SUD) or Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) treatment. These prompts are designed to emulate real-world scenarios and depict individuals' experiences, emotions, and challenges in recovery. Students are prompted to respond to these simulated scenarios as if engaging in a one-on-one conversation with a peer support client.

4. Simulated Sessions with Chatbots

Students engage in simulated peer support sessions with Chatbots, utilizing the skills and techniques they have learned to provide support and guidance to the simulated individuals in SUD/OD treatment. During these sessions, students interact with the Chatbots in real-time, responding to prompts, asking questions, offering encouragement, and practicing active listening. The Chatbots generate dynamic responses based on the student's input, creating a realistic and immersive learning experience.

5. Obtaining Insight and Practice

Through their interactions with Chatbots, students gain valuable insights into the dynamics of peer support relationships and the complexities of supporting individuals in recovery from SUD/OD. They can practice active listening, empathy, motivational interviewing, problem-solving, and other core peer support skills in a safe and supportive environment. After each session, students engage in reflective exercises to analyze their performance, identify areas for improvement, and integrate feedback into their practice.

6. Instructor Critique and Learning Objective Comprehension

After engaging in simulated peer support sessions with Chatbots, students are encouraged to submit copies of their chat interactions to instructors for review and critique. Instructors analyze the chat transcripts to assess students' comprehension of learning objectives, application of peer support skills, and adherence to ethical guidelines and best practices.

Through instructor feedback, students receive personalized guidance and constructive criticism to enhance their proficiency in peer support techniques and understanding of course concepts. Instructors may highlight areas of strength, provide recommendations for improvement, and offer additional resources or guidance as needed. This feedback loop fosters a collaborative learning environment where students can actively engage with instructors to deepen their understanding, refine their skills, and address any challenges or concerns they may encounter during the simulated sessions. Additionally, instructors use the submitted chat transcripts to evaluate students' comprehension of course material, identify areas of confusion or misunderstanding, and tailor future instruction to address these needs effectively.

This additionally emphasizes the importance of instructor involvement in the learning process, providing students with valuable feedback and guidance to support their development as peer support specialists. By incorporating instructor critique and learning objective comprehension assessments, the educational experience becomes more comprehensive and impactful, facilitating continuous improvement and mastery of critical concepts and skills.

Summary

Integration of ChatGPT technology into the APSS certification course to facilitate simulated peer support sessions provided students with dynamic, immersive learning experiences that emulate real-world scenarios in Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and Opioid Use Disorder (OUD) treatment settings.

The objectives of the integration were multifaceted, including enhanced learning support, 24/7 accessibility, interactive learning experiences, real-time feedback mechanisms, promotion of self-directed learning, alignment with technological advancements, simulation-based learning, applied peer support skills development, experiential learning and reflection, cultural competency training, interdisciplinary collaboration, instructor critique, and comprehension of learning objectives.

The process involved APSS students creating ChatGPT accounts, supplying text to train Chatbots, engaging in simulated peer support sessions with Chatbots using 'act as' prompts of simulated individuals in SUD/OUD treatment, and submitting chat transcripts for instructor critique and assessment of learning objectives comprehension.

Simulated sessions with Chatbots provided students with practical opportunities to apply peer support skills, receive instructor feedback, and deepen their understanding of course concepts. As peer support specialists, instructors were crucial in providing personalized guidance and constructive criticism to support students' development.

Overall, the integration of ChatGPT technology in the APSS certification course enriched student learning experiences, fostered skill development, and promoted a deeper understanding of peer support principles in the context of SUD/OUD treatment. This innovative approach holds promise for enhancing the effectiveness and relevance of behavioral healthcare education and professional development initiatives.



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Career Ladders in Mental and Behavioral Health (CLIMB-Health) is a Healthcare Workforce Collaborative (HWC) initiative focused on creating postsecondary pathways at KCTCS for individuals in recovery/reentry seeking entry-level employment as peer specialists.

