

Guidelines for Site Supervisors: A Tool Kit

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Abstract

Site supervisors rarely receive training at the master's level in the supervisory skills required for the supervision of intern students. General guidelines for site supervisors are presented in this article. The article suggests steps for a site supervisor to take prior to accepting an intern, procedures to follow during the internship, and information regarding the evaluation process. The appendices contain information that readers can tailor to the unique needs of a site supervisor.

Keywords: school counselors, site supervision, site supervisor, intern students, guidelines, supervision skills

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Introduction

Supervisors are charged with the responsibility for the development of the supervisee, the treatment of the supervisee's client, and the protection of the public from incompetent practitioners (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Bernard and Goodyear defined supervision as:

. . . an intervention provided by a more senior member of a profession to a more junior member or members of that same profession. This relationship is evaluative and hierarchical, extends over time, and has the simultaneous purpose of enhancing the professional functioning of the more junior person(s); monitoring the quality of professional services offered to the clients that she, he, or they see; and serving as a gatekeeper for those who are to enter the particular profession (p. 7) .

In schools, it is suggested that supervision for counselors in training include distinctive components to increase counselor competency: 1) clinical supervision, 2) developmental supervision, and 3) administrative supervision (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006). Each type of supervision focuses on specific skills and knowledge for the supervisor to address with the supervisee, and each provides assessment and feedback models for targeted skills.

Clinical supervision is designed to increase skills in the areas of direct service delivery and “on the counselors’ unique professional skills such as guidance, counseling, consultation, and referrals” (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006, p. 286). The use of observation to note performance, to assess outcomes, and then to provide feedback, are the essential elements of clinical supervision.

Developmental supervision addresses the supervisees’ base of counseling knowledge. “Its purpose is to direct the supervisees’ cognitive and affective growth and development” (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006, p. 278). Examples of developmental activities for the supervisee may include in-service education, conference attendance, and involvement in professional organizations. Other strategies that may be used in developmental supervision could be to involve the supervisee in formal, planned case conceptualization, or to have a mentor assigned to the supervisee.

Administrative supervision addresses other professional aspects of the counselor such as one's soundness of professional judgment, "their mental health, their work habits, their adherence to rules and standards, and the effectiveness of their relationships with colleagues and clients" (Gysbers & Henderson, 2006, p. 288). Strategies used for feedback to supervisees may involve individual conferences, confrontation and/or suggested improvement strategies, or departmental team meetings.

Many school counselors in Georgia report that they want supervision. Black, Bailey, and Bergin (2011) surveyed school counselors in southeast Georgia to determine the role of clinical supervision in their professional experiences as well as to determine the percentage of those polled who wished to receive supervision. They found that of those responding to the survey, only 5% received clinical supervision whereas 60% would choose to receive these services if available. It becomes evident that these school counselors (the 60%) could see the value in this practice.

Often those counselors with years of experience who provided clinical supervision for interns have had little to no training in supervisory skills (Borders & Brown, 2005). Graduates of master's level school counseling programs who meet the minimum requirements (CACREP, 2009) to be site supervisors typically have had little to no training for fulfilling this essential role. Lack of preparation for clinical supervisory roles does not mean that supervisors are not responsible for facilitating interns' skill development. Nelson and Johnson (1999) noted that "a supervised school counseling internship is one of the most important and rewarding components of a graduate student's preparation" (p.89) for refining and enhancing basic counseling or student development skills, and for the integration of professional knowledge. The Association for Counselor Education and Supervision's Ethical Guidelines for Counseling Supervisors (1993)

and Standards for Counseling Supervisors (1990) stipulate that site supervisors are to receive training in supervision before accepting an intern to supervise. Because of the paucity of opportunities to receive such training, most school counselors provide supervision to interns without the benefit of formal training in supervision.

Based on the need for professional supervisory skills and techniques combined with little opportunity to receive training in this area, the purpose of this paper is to provide current and future site supervisors with general guidelines for organizing and administering a learning experience for interns based on best practices of supervision. It is not the intention to replace formal training in supervision with this Tool Kit; however, use of these suggestions may provide a site supervisor with guidelines to conduct supervision with a measure of confidence in their methods.

Requirements to be a Site Supervisor

The Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009) itemized minimum requirements to be a site supervisor. While not all school counseling master's programs are CACREP accredited, if your intern's program is CACREP accredited, you must meet these minimum requirements to be a qualified site supervisor:

1. Have a master's degree in "school" counseling;
2. Have appropriate certification (certified school counselor);
3. Have a minimum of two years of pertinent professional experience in the area in which the student is completing clinical instruction;
4. Have knowledge of the master's program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedure for students.

Responsibilities of a Site Supervisor

Supervising an intern can be an overwhelming responsibility, especially given how poor training or supervision can result in inadequate service to stakeholders. However, empirically supported guidelines for conducting supervision include the following:

Points to consider before accepting an intern:

1. Consider your qualifications to be a site supervisor (CACREP, 2009);
2. Do you know what the University expects from you (in your role as University Supervisor) prior to agreeing to host an intern?
3. Review all written documents provided by the school counseling training program (Universities most likely will have a “Memorandum of Understanding” that outlines the university’s responsibilities to the student and to the site, and that outlines the site and site supervisor’s responsibilities to the student and to the University; ask your intern for a copy).
4. Meet with the counseling student and University supervisor to discuss goals and objectives of the internship.
5. Site supervisors should not agree to accept a school counseling intern if they cannot assist them in fulfilling the requirements of their master’s level program.
6. Each University may have a “Site Supervisor’s Manual” (CACREP, 2009) available to site supervisors. Be certain to obtain a copy from the internship instructor.
7. Know about providing audio or video taping access for sessions if required, and whether or not signed permission forms are required.

8. Inform the counseling student of the procedures and policies of the school including responsibilities, schedule, assignment of student-clients, emergency procedures, record keeping, confidentiality, and release of information.
9. Determine if your site can provide the intern with the variety of activities and number of hours required by the University.
10. Provide regular ongoing evaluation and feedback to the intern as to their performance.
11. Can you meet at least once a week with the intern to provide regular supervision and consultation?
12. Is there appropriate space for counseling (rooms that maintain confidentiality)?
13. Are your administrators supportive of having an intern? Acquire all official authorization necessary from the school administration for the counseling student to work in the school under supervision.
14. Meet with the university supervisor a minimum of two times during the semester and at other times as dictated by the situation.
15. Submit to the University supervisor an evaluation of the intern at the completion of the term (CACREP, 2009).

If the potential site supervisor cannot provide the proper supervision, then ethical behavior indicates that he or she has an obligation to turn down hosting an intern.

Characteristics of an effective supervisor

Standards for Counseling Supervisors was published in 1990 by The American Counseling Association (ACA, 1990) and provides 11 core areas of personal traits, knowledge and competencies that characterize effective supervisors.

1. Be an effective counselor;
2. Have personal traits and characteristics that are consistent with the role;
3. Be knowledgeable regarding ethical, legal and regulatory aspects of the profession and are skilled in applying this knowledge;
4. Have the ability to think conceptually and to integrate theory with practice;
5. Have knowledge of supervision methods and techniques;
6. Have knowledge of the counselor development process;
7. Have knowledge and competence in case conceptualization and management;
8. Can demonstrate knowledge and competency in client assessment and evaluation;
9. Can demonstrate knowledge and competency in oral and written reporting and recording;
10. Can demonstrate knowledge and competency in the evaluation of counseling performance;
11. Have knowledge of research in counseling supervision (Association for Counselor Education and supervision, 1990);

The next step is to interview potential interns for your site.

Interview questions and information to share.

1. Is there a fit of personality and goals for the internship?
2. Will I be able to work with this person?
3. Do we have similar values related to school counseling?
4. Do the logistics work out (times, hours, needs of supervisee, needs of supervisor)?
5. Does the intern understand the purpose of supervision?
6. What is my method and type of evaluation, and can I clearly explain this to the intern?
7. Can I explain the duties and responsibilities of the supervisee and supervisor?

8. Check for an understanding of ethical and legal issues, confidentiality, counseling theory, and process for complaints and due process to be included in the informed consent.
9. What kind of person do I work best with, i.e., a self-starter, someone to follow my directions, someone to take initiative, others?
10. What does the intern need: direction, instruction, support, “hand holding,” and can I provide for these needs?
11. Try to discover anything that may hinder or help the experience being mutually successful. (These were anecdotal suggestions from site supervisors as well as interns applying for a site.)

Practical Suggestions for the Supervision Process

Chronological Listing of Preparation Tasks for Supervision

Date	Not Needed	Item
		Prepare a supervision disclosure statement (consent form and agreement)
		Give copy of consent form and agreement to the supervisee
		Give supervisee instructions on preparing for supervision* Appendix A
		Secure a private space for sessions and for audio/video taping
		Plan agenda for supervisory session* Appendix B
		Have supervisee complete “Intake”* Appendix C
		Ask supervisee to come prepared to discuss his or her cultural background
		Discuss supervisory relationship, leadership style, what to expect
		Schedule minimum of one hour of supervision per week

(Adapted from Fall & Sutton, 2004) *See examples in appendices.

Use of a Supervision Model

Supervision models provide frameworks for “organizing knowledge and skills for conducting supervision” (Borders & Brown, 2005, p.6). As counseling theories provide a guide for understanding client issues, supervision models help the supervisor choose best ways to facilitate growth and development in interns and for evaluating one’s effectiveness as a supervisor. Bernard’s Discrimination Model (1979) presents three roles for the supervisor to

employ when working with the supervisee. The role of teacher, counselor or consultant is determined by the supervisor when taking into consideration the developmental level of the intern. A more in-depth explanation of the roles can be found in an article entitled *School Counselors as Supervisors: An Integrated Approach for Supervising School Counseling Interns* (Nelson & Johnson, 1999).

As a teacher, the supervisor instructs interns on assessment, case conceptualization, counseling approaches, legal and ethical issues, among many things, and provides experiential learning activities. Constructive feedback is given after most activities as a means to teach. The supervisor provides information to interns about how the process of supervision works and how they can maximize their supervision experience (Haynes, Corey, & Moulton, 2003).

In the role of counselor, the supervisor focuses on the intern's professional development rather than on personal issues, and uses their counseling skills to guide the intern. A supervisor is not to provide personal counseling for the intern as this would constitute a dual role and be a breach of ethical standards (Bernard & Goodyear, 2009). Counseling skills are used to understand, motivate, and relate to the intern.

The consultant role is the least definitive role for the supervisor. Consultation comes in the later stages of competency development when the intern has demonstrated their confidence in their abilities. The teacher role takes on less significance and the equality of the relationship takes on greater prominence. The intern still has contact with the supervisor on a regular basis but more as a consultant than as a teacher (Borders & Brown, 2005).

Supervisory Duties

Following are some examples of supervisory duties (CACREP, 2009).

1. Provide opportunities for intern to develop their counseling performance skills in both individual counseling and group counseling,
2. Develop intern's professional behaviors,
3. Co-establish goals for internship; check on progress periodically,
4. Establish learning objectives and evaluate outcomes,
5. Provide feedback on all activities of the intern,
6. Provide an hour of supervision each week based on an agenda,
7. Provide the intern with guidelines to prepare for the supervisory hour,
8. Understand the developmental stages of the school counseling intern (early, middle, late) (CACREP, 2009).

Maintaining proper relationships

It is common for new site supervisors to express concern over their authoritative role in this unique training experience. To avoid discomfort and misunderstanding,

1. Establish early on clearly written goals for supervision.
2. Discuss how the roles of supervisor and intern are different.
3. Disclose the process of supervision and supervisor expectations.
4. Discuss the evaluation process, including expectations, timing, and criteria to be used (See Appendix D, Benchmarks for Intern Skill Development, for criteria to use for establishing and evaluating learning objectives for the intern); these criterion can facilitate skill development throughout the internship.
5. Establish a process to resolve conflicts.

6. Create an atmosphere in which support and challenge coexist.
7. Use humor.
8. Encourage a more egalitarian relationship (consultation) as the supervisee gains in counseling skills.
9. Use the Performance Assessment Instrument for Supervisee* for establishing goals for improvement; do this as often as weekly; have no surprises; keep intern aware of areas to improve (CACREP, 2009).

University Expectations of the Site Supervisor

The internship experience is intended to provide counseling students with a broad-based practical experience in school settings. This experience is designed to have interns relate academic and theoretical learning to field experience in the five areas of developmental guidance: 1) individual counseling; 2) small group counseling; 3) classroom guidance; 4) consultation with staff, parents, and community; and 5) program planning and evaluation (CACREP, 2009).

Evaluation and Goals for Internship

Each University may provide an evaluation form for the site supervisor to complete for the intern at the completion of the internship. This form should be discussed on the first day of the internship. Also, Appendix D contains a list of important benchmarks for interns to attain during the course of their training to be a school counselor. This approach to evaluation is flexible and can be modified to meet the unique needs of the intern. Together, the site supervisor and the intern should choose and set standards for several items to guide skill development each week; bring the results to the weekly supervisory meeting, and evaluate the results. New goals

(evaluation benchmarks) can be established for the next week. Both the site supervisor and the intern are aware of the progress to be made.

Ethics

The site supervisor is to communicate the expectation of adhering to the ethical codes and guidelines sanctioned by the American Counseling Association (Resource List), the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision (Resource List), other ACA divisions, relevant credentialing bodies (CACREP, 2009) and models of ethical behavior (Author, 2011). Areas of prime concern are: a) Professional disclosure statement and written informed consent as needed or relevant; .b) Client welfare and rights: Primary obligation of supervisors is the promotion the welfare of their clients; c) Supervisory role: monitor client welfare, monitor clinical performance of supervisee, have training in supervisory skills, d) Parameters of confidentiality of the client and of the intern, and e) dual roles. Resource for the Ethical Guidelines for Counseling Supervisors can be found in the Resources List.

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Appendix A

Supervisee Guidelines for the Supervision Session

Come prepared with a list of your supervision goals for each supervisory session.

Phase 1: Advanced Preparation for the Supervision Session (the supervisee is to do these)

1. Content

- a. Introduce new cases
- b. Review previously discussed cases
- c. Personal awareness (Personalization)
- d. Evaluation of counseling outcomes
- e. Cultural influences
- f. Crisis issues
- g. Ethical and legal issues
- h. Professional development

2. Process (reflections on self, on clients, on their behavior in session, on their affect, on their thoughts)

- a. Counseling technique dilemmas
 - 1) What are you doing to assist the client?
 - 2) What ideas do you have about helping your client?
 - 3) What is stopping you from trying out your ideas?
 - 4) How could you behave differently?
- b. Client Problems
 - 1) What puzzles you about your client?
 - 2) What would you like to know about his or her problem?
 - 3) How could you find out what you do not know?
 - 4) What resources do you need?
- c. Personal Issues (Process questions for supervisee to present to supervisor)
 - 1) What is happening to you in this situation?
 - 2) How are you feeling?
 - 3) How are these feelings influencing your counseling?
 - 4) What is your purpose?
 - 5) How is your counseling behavior related to assisting your client?
 - 6) What are your hypotheses about your own behavior?
 - 7) What needs to happen for you to behave differently?
- d. Administrative Questions
 - 1) What are the ethical/legal issues involved with this client?
 - 2) What assistance do you need with maintaining your professional qualifications and development?

- e. Treatment Planning/Action Issues (adapt to the school setting and developmental level)
 - 1) What are your client's symptoms/problems?
 - 2) What hypotheses do you have about your client and/or your client's behavior (theoretically based)
 - 3) What meaning do your client's situation/personal issues have for treatment?
 - 4) What are the counselor's goals, and are they separate from the client's goals?
 - 5) What are the client's goals?
 - 6) In what stage of change is the client?
 - 7) What treatment modalities/interventions will be used?
 - 8) What additional resources are necessary?
- f. Unresolved Issues
 - 1) What are the multicultural issues between you and the client?
 - 2) Between you and your supervisor?
 - 3) How will you address these issues?
 - 4) What disagreements do you have with your supervisor?
 - 5) How will you handle these disagreements?
 - 6) Have you asked how your supervisor would like you to implement his or her suggestions?
 - 7) What do you need from your supervisor? How will you present this topic to your supervisor?

Phase II: Supervision Session

Present your supervisor with your agenda at the beginning of the session.

Make sure that you get your needs met.

Phase III: Translation of Ideas into Action

Have a plan to translate new information into action with your client and know how you will incorporate this new information into your counseling sessions. (Adapted from Fall & Sutton, 2004)

Appendix B

Supervisor Guidelines for the Supervision Session

1. Your supervisee should come to supervision with a prioritized agenda.
2. As each agenda item is introduced, you are to help the supervisee clarify issues and how supervision can assist with resolution.. Questions to ask:
 - a. What is confusing to you about this case/student/issue/group/guidance lesson?
 - b. What would you like to happen as the result of our discussion?
 - c. What puzzles you about this client?
3. What will be the focus for supervision?
 - a. Skill development?
 - b. Case conceptualization?
 - c. Personal awareness?
 - d. Professional behavior?
 - e. A combination?
4. What role will you use?
 - a. Teaching?
 - b. Counseling?
 - c. Consulting?
 - d. Why?
5. Check and recheck with the supervisee:
 - a. Did you get what you need?
 - b. Are we finished with this?
 - c. Have we covered this enough?

****Using this guideline, develop a checklist for each session with your supervisee; keep the completed form as part of the supervisees' records.***

Adapted from: Fall, J., & Sutton, J. M., Jr. (2004). Clinical supervision: A handbook for supervisors. New York, New York: Pearson Allyn and Bacon

Appendix C

Intake Information from the Supervisee**Gather During the Interview for Site Placement**

1. Demographic information
2. Education/training
3. Experience in the school setting
4. Previous supervision experiences
5. Liability insurance
6. Ethical training/code followed
7. Any previous complaints/legal action
8. Theoretical orientation
9. Supervisee goals/objectives
10. Strengths and weaknesses as a school counselor
11. Professional development plans
12. Description of settings/clients previously served
13. Supervision requirements (# hours, course requirements, reporting, etc.)
14. Supervisee personal issues that may affect client/student treatment (i.e. are there personal issues on-going in the supervisee that need resolution before he or she can be an effective counselor/school counselor?)
15. Supervisee's counseling modality/theoretical orientation (individual, group, theory used).

Topics to Discuss with the Supervisee

1. Purpose of supervision
2. Details of where, when, and for how long supervision will take place.
3. Method and type of evaluation
4. Duties and responsibilities of the supervisee and supervisor
5. Documentation responsibility of the supervisee and supervisor
6. Supervisor's scope of practice
7. Supervision model used by supervisor
8. Confidentiality
9. Ethical and legal considerations
10. Supervisee's commitment to follow all pertinent ethical and legal standards
11. Process for addressing supervisee complaints
12. Emergency and back-up procedures
13. Use of supervision modalities (audio/videotaping, observation, etc.)
14. Supervision session structure
15. Cultural background of the supervisor and supervisee
16. Practicing within supervisee's level of competence
17. Complaints and due process rights

Adapted from: Clinical supervision: A handbook for practitioners. (2004). Marijane Fall & John M. Sutton, Jr. New York, NY: Pearson Allyn and Bacon.

Appendix D

Benchmarks for Intern Skill Development**Performance Evaluation Suggested Guidelines**

The site supervisor could use many of these benchmarks for cumulative evaluation of the intern throughout the semester. Items could be selected for determining weaknesses and strengths, then for setting goals for improvement. Once goals have been determined, a summative evaluation could be made at the end of the semester. A copy of this form could be given to the intern for self-evaluation and to use for goal setting. Understandably, all of this information will not be addressed each time during the supervisory meeting.

With your supervisee, choose appropriate items from these suggestions to evaluate your supervisee's skills. For any skill rated at 2 or 1, describe the type of intervention you will use to help the supervisee improve.

4-Effective; 3-Somewhat effective; 2-Somewhat ineffective; 1-Ineffective; NA-not applicable

Intervention Skills

- ☐ Establishes rapport with student; projects warmth, caring and acceptance
- ☐ Gets the student's story
- ☐ Assists students in identifying and exploring presenting problems
- ☐ Listens to verbal and nonverbal communications
- ☐ Communicates empathy and genuineness with students
- ☐ Conducts session effectively, using basic skills such as paraphrases, reflections, questions, and summaries
- ☐ Observes in-session behavior (e.g., student language) and uses it to facilitate the student/counselor relationship
- ☐ Uses silence as an effective intervention technique
- ☐ Demonstrates effectiveness in making formal assessments
- ☐ Assists students in goal setting
- ☐ Helps students build on their strengths
- ☐ Assists students in assuming responsibility for their progress in therapy
- ☐ Assists students in normalizing their behavior
- ☐ Uses theoretical techniques to help students change their behavior
- ☐ Understands how to assist students who are in crisis
- ☐ Demonstrates an ability to be concrete and specific
- ☐ Demonstrates the use of multiple approaches to treatment
- ☐ Works effectively with immediacy
- ☐ Exhibits control of the session
- ☐ Models effectively for students
- ☐ Uses reinforcement appropriately

- ___ Rehearses new behaviors and skills with students
- ___ Effectively uses contracts and homework assignments
- ___ Makes referrals when necessary
- ___ Is knowledgeable about termination:
- ___ Gives and receives feedback

Conceptualization Skills

- ___ Identifies important student themes and patterns
- ___ Assists students in perceiving situations from different points of view
- ___ Uses student information to develop working hypotheses or hunches
- ___ Makes relevant observations about student behavior
- ___ Identifies and uses student discrepancies
- ___ Perceives underlying student issues
- ___ Uses student cultural background in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment
- ___ Encourages students to hypothesize about their own behavior
- ___ Assists students in developing relevant focus and direction
- ___ Evaluates the efficacy of interventions
- ___ Is knowledgeable about how systems impact the student
- ___ Accurately ascertains the reality of the student
- ___ Adapts theory and techniques to meet the student's reality
- ___ Grasps the complexity of issues involved with each student
- ___ Willing to reevaluate the conceptualization of the student

Personalization Skills

- ___ Recognizes personal assets and liabilities
- ___ Perceives self in relationship with student
- ___ Directly addresses the relationship process
- ___ Understands the dynamics of transference and countertransference
- ___ Perceives and addresses countertransference
- ___ Understands power and influence and their use in enhancing student development
- ___ Understands difference between student and self
- ___ Perceives and understands boundaries in the student/counselor relationship
- ___ Sets and maintains appropriate boundaries
- ___ Understands the advantages and disadvantages of self-disclosure
- ___ Responds effectively to personal questions
- ___ Is knowledgeable concerning out-of-office contacts
- ___ Works effectively with students who are culturally different
- ___ Is aware of own cultural background and how it may influence

- ___ the student/counselor relationship
- ___ Is aware of own feelings and
- ___ Uses time line in assisting students

Professional Behavior

- ___ Participates in continuing education activities such as supervision, consultation, personal counseling, courses, workshops, teaching, reading, writing
- ___ Completes paperwork, such as intakes and case notes, in a concise and timely manner
- ___ Communicates written information clearly and effectively
- ___ Provides a thoughtful informed consent to students
- ___ Communicates orally, clearly and effectively
- ___ Respects appointment times with students and supervisors
- ___ Possesses working knowledge of relevant professional literature
- ___ Dresses appropriately
- ___ Is aware and responsive to relevant ethical standards
- ___ Is knowledgeable about the profession's primary ethical standards
- ___ Effectively applies ethical standards to practice situation
- ___ Has begun to think ethically
- ___ Seeks consultation on complex ethical situations
- ___ Is aware and responsive to relevant legal standards:
- ___ Is knowledgeable concerning laws that pertain to counseling practice
- ___ Makes a conscious effort to improve counseling knowledge and skill
- ___ Exhibits willingness to work on personal issues
- ___ Exhibits respectful behavior towards students and peers
- ___ Demonstrates an awareness of personal influence and impact on student

Supervision Skills for the Supervisee

- ___ Arrives prepared at each supervision session
- ___ Identifies questions, concerns, and issues relevant to current cases
- ___ Creates professional development goals for supervision
- ___ Understands and incorporates suggestions
- ___ Willing to take risks for learning and identifying troublesome situations
- ___ Accepts encouragement and constructive criticism
- ___ Actively participates in the supervisory process
- ___ Initiates dialog with the supervisor

(Adapted from Fall & Sutton, 2004). *Clinical supervision: A handbook for practitioners*. New York, NY: Pearson Allyn and Bacon)