

Sarah Anderson

Mr. Speice

Independent Study and Mentorship

08 April 2019

Redundant Information

Assessment 17 - Final Product Progress

Assessment:

Research:

After about a few weeks into work on the final product, much progress has been made toward developing a case study on mental illness in the court system and spreading this information to attorneys. For the most part, information on the calendar developed in March has been followed, especially in regards to the research portion of the assignment. Many articles have been read and annotated to learn more about different types of mental illness and how these conditions affect an individual. Along with this, much research has been done on various treatment plans, how inmates with mental illness are affected, and what is being done to solve these issues.

Case Study Progress:

With weeks of research and a few mentor visits to discuss my progress, I recently finished the first draft of my case study. This study includes most of the research completed so far throughout its five pages. The most beneficial aspect in better understanding the work of a criminal defense attorney is the background section that Ms. Petty has helped me develop. This shows how an attorney works through a case, whether it goes to trial or not, and what may

change if the defendant has mental health issues that could impact the case. While it was a bit challenging to start the writing portion of this project, Ms. Petty also helped explain the challenges she has faced while defending clients with mental illness and how she resolves these issues. This helped form a base for the study and helped clarify the common issues to discuss through real examples. After explaining what common issues an attorney can expect and how to creatively respond to them, I used my research to develop my own solution to another common issue individuals with mental illness face in the court system. To aid in the transition from prison to the community following a given sentence, a program based on various treatment plans around the nation would allow newly released individuals to better adapt and maintain their treatment. Furthermore, while there is still much information to add and expand upon, Ms. Petty now has the opportunity to review and edit it in the following weeks while I continue research and work on the brochure.

Difficulties:

While this portion of the final product has been successful and informative so far, it has created additional challenges that need to be addressed in the coming weeks. The initial final product proposal was to first write the case study on how to defend an individual with mental illness and how to work through common issues that arise. Then I was going to write a proposal that focused more on the funding for mental health facilities and treatment plans compared to that of prisons. This would allow me to create a plan to help increase treatment for inmates suffering with mental illness. However, after writing the majority of the case study, it has become difficult to differentiate between the case study and proposal since much of the background and issues overlap. Because of this, I am considering combining the two written

aspects of the study and including the funding information as part of the background information and key issues section. This would create a holistic study that includes all relevant information without needing to read both documents. Before moving forward with this plan however, a mentor visit will be scheduled with Ms Petty to ensure all necessary information is included.

Going Forward:

Following a mentor visit to determine if part of the project should be altered in the coming days, there will still be much to do regardless of this. The first draft of the case study is completed and still needs to be reviewed but additional information and statistics still need to be added based off of previous research. While this should not take much longer and is expected to be complete soon, additional sections or subsections may be added later to included funding information that was initially in the proposal. A brochure that would summarize this information also needs to be made which can then be printed and handed out to attorneys in nearby counties. By doing this, my research and case study would help spread information on defending individuals with mental illness to attorneys who are not already on the mental health wheel and hopefully provide solutions to issues those already on the wheel may face. While there is still quite a bit to complete, I am pleased with the way my project is turning out so far. So much about mental illness and how little treatment inmates receive has been found, as well as its impact on defendants. This has been very eye opening and I am excited to see how it turns out in the next few weeks.