

**COUNSELING 738:
COUNSELING PRACTICUM
SCHOOL SETTINGS
Spring 2008**

Practicum Supervisor:

Donna A. Henderson 758-1890 (office)

Practicum Overview

Counseling practicum occurs in the second semester of your preparation program. It is a pre-internship experience designed for student to develop their individual counseling and group work skills under careful supervision. Practicum includes a **minimum of 165 hours of field experience** in a school setting plus individual/pair and group supervision by university faculty. The time requirements include the following:

- 165 hours of work in a school setting over a period of one semester. This is an average of 11 hours per week for 15 weeks) and should include 65 hours of direct contact, 10 hours of group work and 7 hours of supervision by the site supervisor.
- 14 hours of individual or paired supervision by a faculty member
- 21 hours of group supervision (1 ½ hours per week) by faculty and with other students
- 200 total hours

Course Description

Practicum is a highly individualized learning experience in which you will grow in personal development, knowledge, and skills. In this course, you should increase understanding of your self and your impact on others as well as augment your understanding of the school setting.

Each member of the practicum group is capable of and responsible for facilitating professional growth and development and we will approach this opportunity as a group. Practicum group meetings will be composed of various experiences to be determined by the needs, abilities, and concerns of the group members and of the supervisor.

Examples of these activities include any of the following:

- Structured skill development exercises
- Unstructured group interaction
- Role playing
- Peer counseling, taping, and critiquing
- Selected assigned readings about problem areas
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Self-assessment

Course Objectives and Expectations

1. **Professional Behavior:** You and your supervisor should determine the hours you will be at the school and you should let your supervisor know about any scheduled time off such as spring break or attendance at counseling conferences. You should treat this experience as though you were an employee. You should dress as a professional, be there on the agreed upon time, know how

to contact someone if you are ill or will be out for another unexpected reason, follow all confidentiality and record keeping procedures and always conduct yourself in an ethical and legal manner. You will be responsible for adhering to all school and district policies and procedures and should ask to see those as you begin. Pay particular attention to the steps to be followed in crisis situations such as severe weather or impending danger. Talk about reporting child abuse and ask your supervisor who to find if he or she is not available. As soon as you have finalized your schedule for being on site, please bring me a copy with telephone numbers and other contact information. I will need to be able to get in touch with you sometime during the semester.

- 2. Entering and Belonging:** Become familiar with the school setting, policies, and schedules, counseling office, forms and procedures. Your site supervisor will be introducing you to the principal and teachers. Spend time getting to know the school as a social setting with the complexities of interactions that occur. At the end of the second month you should have talked with a variety of school personnel including bus drivers, cafeteria workers, media specialists, front office personnel, maintenance people, resource teachers and school specialists. Talk with them to understand their work in the school building as well as their impressions of students. You should discuss with them these things and any other material you think might be helpful:
 - What are their duties in school?
 - What kinds of interactions do they have with students?
 - What is their typical day?
 - How many years have they been doing this work?
 - What do they consider the most important thing to know about students?
 - Any other information that seems relevant.

- 3. Field Experiences:** You will have opportunities to accumulate contact hours with people in school. Your experiences may include four different roles:
 - **Observer:** You will be watching and learning. Pay attention to things that work well or not as well. Consider how your style is similar to or different from what you are seeing.
 - **Participant/Observer:** In this case you are primarily an observer, but you might also participate some of the time. Your assistance if timed right may be appropriate. Follow the lead of the counselor you are observing.
 - **Co-leader:** In some cases, you might share responsibility with the on-site counselor. Typically you and the counselor will reach an agreement about who will initiate the process and who will provide primary leadership and support.
 - **Leader:** You will conduct the individual or group counseling session by yourself.

- 4. Counseling:** As the semester proceeds develop a caseload to accomplish your hours of direct service with clients. Clients should be mostly students although consultations with faculty, parent meetings, and classroom guidance may be included. With the clients' (and parents if a minor) permission, tape the counseling sessions. Your on-site supervisor will help you identify situations in which taping would be possible. You will need to develop (or modify) a taping permission form to obtain consent.

5. **Skills:** Concentrate on building some essential counseling skills rather than concerning yourself about the scope of things a counselor might do. The areas on which you should concentrate and some representative expectations include:
- **Individual Counseling:** Develop your counseling and interviewing skills with individuals. Learn to structure a counseling session and to follow the lead of the “counselee.” Your goal is to build a working alliance with that person. You will focus on listening and reflecting. Begin with one student and monitor your progress with that person as you start with other young people.
 - **Group Counseling.** Hopefully you will be able to hold one or two groups during your practicum experience. Concentrate on developmental or problem-focused groups that run for four to six sessions. Be prepared to share your overall plan, your evaluation method and your reactions to the group leadership experience.
 - **Classroom Guidance.** Begin by observing teachers at each grade level in the school. Plan a one-session classroom or large group guidance unit that might be implemented during the last part of the semester. If possible work with one or two classes or large groups and present the unit.
 - **Consultation.** Sit in on one case conference where the counselor is consulting with teachers or parents. Be an observer only.
 - **Case Records.** Develop and experiment with your own personal record keeping system. Become familiar with the system used at the school including your site supervisor’s personal preferences for record keeping.
 - **Other Experience.** Learn the procedures and process for exceptional student education and placement. Examine the referral process and tests that are most frequently used in the school. Investigate all the materials available on the WS/FC school system website.
 - **Case Study.** Complete one systematic case study on a student with whom you are working. Provide a brief history, the presenting problem and the assessment process you have used, your intervention efforts, results, conclusions and evaluation. We will be discussing this in individual supervision.
6. **Confidentiality:** Information shared during group and individual supervision is confidential and should be treated as such. If you think there is cause to breach confidentiality, confer with me first

Student Responsibilities

1. **Participation:** Attend and actively participate in weekly group and individual supervision sessions.
2. **Consent form:** Using the sample you have been given, modify a taping consent form. Have it approved by your site supervisor and whoever else in the school needs to see it. **Please bring a copy of the consent form to your faculty supervisor as soon as you have it approved at your school site.** Talk with your site supervisor about taping. Some sites have special requirements or circumstances with which you must comply. You **ALWAYS** need permission to tape. Minor clients will need to have the permission forms signed by a parent or legal guardian. Talk to your site supervisor **before** you send out a consent form to anyone.
3. **Goals:** Develop two goals you have for yourself in this practicum experience. Write them as clearly as possible and explain how you will know when you have accomplished the goals. The goals should focus on two of these areas: counseling skills, case conceptualization skills, self-awareness, professional growth. Have them prepared by our last meeting in January. We will discuss and modify them in group and in individual supervision.
4. **Logs and Journals:** On the first Wednesday of each month, turn in your monthly time logs and your journal entries for the previous month. Journal entries should be reflections on your growth as a counselor. They may include things about what has had the most impact on you for the week, something that confuses you, what you are doing well and what you want to do better, how you are making sense of yourself as a counselor. Focus on your growth and on things you need to understand better rather than on a summary of activities.
5. **Tapes:** Submit a **minimum of three** audio and/or videotapes of client counseling sessions for review and critique. Each tape should be accompanied by a written critique. Prepare a written transcript of 15-minute sections of each tape. These tapes may be reviewed by your classmates.
 - a. Taping should comply with the school policies.
 - b. You must have signed consent forms that include the notice that tapes may be used for educational purposes and will be heard in supervision.
 - c. LISTEN to your tape before you give it to your supervisor.
 - d. Tapes should be accompanied by a written analysis of the session using the form attached to the syllabus.
 - e. Tapes must be audible and recorded on full-size tapes because I do not have the equipment to listen to other types of tapes.
 - f. Use an external microphone.
6. **Case presentations:** Present two counseling cases to the supervision group. You should provide each class member with a write-up of your case using the format you have been given. You should use one continuous 10-minute segment of your tape for the presentation.
7. **Site contribution:** Contribute something lasting to the site such as a study of a particular problem, a computer application, monitoring

something, a counseling unit, or any other possibility that arises from your work there. Write a description and turn it in at the end of the semester.

8. **Self-evaluation:** For our last meeting submit a self-evaluation paper (2-4 pages) that describes your personal and professional achievements during your practicum. Discuss what you learned as a result of this experience. Include your goals for your next clinical experience.

Evaluation

Assignment	Points
Individual Case Study	150
Tapes and written critique	300 (100 points each)
Weekly logs and journals	100 (on time)
Self-evaluation paper	50
Activity	
Participation in Group Supervision	100
Participation in Individual Supervision	100
Site Evaluation	200
	1,000

940 – 1000 = A

939 - 900 = A-

870 - 899 = B+

840 – 869 = B

800 – 839 = B-

Students who earn grades lower than B- must repeat practicum

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

DATE	SUBJECT	ASSIGNMENTS
January 16	Introductions	Review ethical standards, policies, etc.
January 23	Review & Demonstration	Review basic counseling skills
January 30	Skill Practice	Focus on individual perspective
February 6	Case Presentations	
February 13	Case Presentations	
February 20	Case Presentations	
February 27	Case Presentations	
March 5	Skills Practice Case Presentation	Tape 1 due
March 12	Case Presentation	
March 19	Case Presentation	Tape 2 due
March 26	ACA	No Class
April 2	Spring Break	No Class
April 9	Skill Presentation Case Presentations	Tape 3 due
April 16	Case Presentations	
April 23	Case Presentations	Tape 4 due
April 30	Reflections	Self-evaluation, Site evaluation due

PRACTICUM TRACKING CHART

Schedule and contact information

Signed legal & ethical document

Summary of discussions with school personnel

Taping consent form

Goals

Logs _____ Jan. _____ Feb. _____ March _____ April

Journals _____ Jan. _____ Feb. _____ March _____ April

Tapes _____ #1 _____ #2 _____ #3 _____ #4

Case presentation _____ # 1 _____ #2

Contribution to site

Self-evaluation