

# **WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY**

**College of Applied Human Sciences  
School of Education and Counseling**

## **M.S. in Counseling Program**

**Clinical Mental Health Counseling and School Counseling**



### **Practicum & Internship Fieldwork Manual**

**(2026-2027)**

revised 9/25/2026

## INTRODUCTION

Practicum and Internship provides students with supervised counseling experiences, which are designed to consolidate, integrate, and link theory to practice. In short, fieldwork provides students with opportunities to develop, refine, and evaluate their counseling skills. The purpose of this manual is to provide information, procedures, timelines, guidelines, objectives, necessary forms, and information that should be helpful to students. Also, included are recommendations for maximizing the learning experience during both practicum and internship. Any student who is applying for and/or completing practicum or internship should read this manual. Becoming familiar with the procedures and policies described in this manual will help students:

- Identify appropriate fieldwork sites
- Apply to appropriate sites
- Meet important timelines and requirements
- Develop appropriate supervision and learning goals
- Appropriately document fieldwork hours
- Maximize their learning experience
- Maintain clear communication with their site and faculty supervisors

In addition, students applying for or completing practicum or internship should also be familiar with and adhere to:

- Fieldwork site policies and procedures
- Program requirements
- Fieldwork course syllabus
- ACA/ASCA Code of Ethics
- WV Department of Education requirements for placement in public schools in WV (School Counseling students only)

## IMPORTANT TERMS and DESCRIPTIONS

### Practicum

Practicum is a supervised counseling experience (minimum total of **100 contact hours, with 40 being direct hours**) designed to orient students to the role and responsibilities of the professional school or clinical mental health counselor.

*Practicum must be completed before internship.*

This experience is defined more comprehensively in the pages that follow.

### Internship

Internship is the culmination of the academic preparation to become a professional counselor. This supervised, **40 hour a week** clinical training experience enables students to focus more intensely on a broader range of competencies and skills. It generally occurs during the last semester of the program and requires a minimum total of **600 contact hours, with 240 direct hours**. This experience is defined more comprehensively in the pages that follow.

### Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track Placements

Clinical Mental Health Counseling placements are designed to provide the knowledge and skills required for counselors to work in a variety of clinical mental health settings, including mental health centers, substance abuse treatment programs, social service agencies, residential and intensive outpatient, home/school-based programs, and employee assistance programs in business and industry. Accordingly, Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track students will have experiences that may include but are not limited to:

- Diagnosis and assessment
- Intake and treatment/discharge planning/outcome assessment
- Crisis response
- Psychoeducation
- Short- and long-term personal counseling,
- Substance abuse treatment
- Family and relationship counseling
- Long term supportive counseling for those with chronic emotional problems
- Group counseling

### School Counseling Track Placements

School Counseling placements are designed to provide the knowledge and skills required to be an effective professional school counselor.

Accordingly, School Counseling students may have experiences that include but are not limited to:

- Group and short-term individual counseling to help children deal with developmental concerns, school related problems, and other personal concerns

- Referral of and advocacy for children who require specialized assistance
- Coordination efforts with teachers, parents, support personnel, and community resources to promote program objectives, and facilitate successful student development and achievement
- Integration of guidance curriculum into the total school curriculum.
- Students must do elementary placement during internship. Students must also do all three levels of K-12 during fieldwork.

### Direct Service Hours

Direct Service hours are interactions with clients/students during which counseling, consultation, or human development skills are utilized. This term refers to time that is spent directly with clients either in person, on the phone, or live distance/virtual sessions. It specifically refers to the following activities: *intake assessment, individual counseling, group counseling, crisis appointments, triage, classroom guidance, and presentations.*

### Indirect Service Hours

Indirect Service hours are interactions and/or responsibilities which by their very nature are intended to benefit clients who are served at the student's practicum or internship site. Indirect Service hours include but are not limited to:

- Training
- Staff meetings
- Documentation
- Record-keeping
- Time spent reading or researching topics related to client concerns, community resources, counseling, etc. (topics must be documented)
- Consultation
- Workshop presentations
- Research
- Time spent learning the policies and procedures of the counseling site
- Time spent assisting the student's supervisor with clinically related tasks (document specific task)
- Supervision

### Site Supervisor/Supervision

Site supervisors provide on-site training and supervision of practicum and internship students. Site supervisors provide scheduled weekly, one hour minimum, individual supervision sessions. During supervision sessions, students have the opportunity to discuss ethical/professional concerns, client issues and interventions, application and integration of theories, practicum procedures and policies, and professional development issues. Supervisors can ask students to be prepared to present audio/video tapes of counseling sessions during these sessions as well as review session notes. Many on-site supervisors also augment these individual supervision sessions by electing to have students sit in on sessions with clients as a co-counselor or by observing sessions or interactions with clients.

Consistent with the 2024 CACREP Standards, fieldwork on-site supervisors must have:

1. a minimum of a master's degree, preferably in counseling or a related profession;
2. active certifications and/or licenses in the geographic location where the student is placed, preferably in counseling or a related profession;
3. a minimum of two years post-master's professional experience relevant to the CACREP specialized practice area in which the student is enrolled;
4. relevant training for in-person and/or distance counseling supervision;
5. relevant training in the technology utilized for supervision; and
6. knowledge of the program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students.

### Faculty Supervisors/Supervision

Faculty Supervisors conduct group supervision, for an average of 1 ½ to 2 hours each week in a semester. In group supervision, students will discuss their cases, clinical concerns, present cases, and learn about other professional development topics. Group supervision with the faculty supervisor occurs as part of the course COUN 685-Practicum or COUN 686- Internship.

## **GRADE REQUIREMENTS FOR PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP**

In most cases, fieldwork placement is contingent upon students being in *good standing* in the counseling program. If a student is on academic probation, fieldwork placement will likely be delayed until they are removed from probation. If a student has an incomplete (I) or a failing grade (F) in any course, internship may not be approved until the incomplete or unsatisfactory is changed to a satisfactory grade. Internship placement will not be approved if the student has an incomplete (I) or a failing grade (F) in practicum.

One or more grades of “C” or less in required courses suggests that a student may have competency deficits that will jeopardize his/her success in a fieldwork setting. In such cases, the disposition committee may recommend one of the following: delay of placement, delay with special remediation, enrollment in fieldwork with remediation, termination of the student as a degree candidate.

## **PRACTICUM**

### **Prerequisites**

**Anyone applying for practicum must have completed or be enrolled in the following courses:**

| <b>School Counseling</b>                | <b>Clinical Mental Health- In-Person*</b>   |
|-----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| COUN 501 Coun Theory & Tech I           | COUN 501 Coun Theory & Tech I               |
| COUN 536 Theories of Human Development  | COUN 536 Theories of Human Development      |
| COUN 610/611 School Services I & II     | COUN 622 Clinical Mental Health Counseling  |
| COUN 634 Cultural Issues                | COUN 634 Cultural Issues                    |
| COUN 606 Coun Theory & Tech II          | COUN 606 Coun Theory & Tech II              |
| COUN 630 Coun Children/Adoles/Parents   | COUN 630 Counseling Children/Adoles/Parents |
| COUN 640 Addictions Counseling          | COUN 640 Addictions Counseling              |
| COUN 664 Ethics                         | COUN 664 Ethics                             |
| COUN 665 Diagnosis & Treatment Planning | COUN 665 Diagnosis & Treatment Planning     |
| COUN 668 Crisis, Trauma, & Grief        | COUN 668 Crisis, Trauma, & Grief            |
| *COUN 609 Group Coun & Tech             | *COUN 609 Group Coun & Tech                 |
| *COUN 620 Lifespan Career Counseling    | *COUN 620 Lifespan Career Counseling        |
| *COUN 645 Couples/Family Counseling     | *COUN 645 Couples/Family Counseling         |
|                                         | **COUN 684 Supervision Models               |
| * concurrent with practicum             | ** concurrent with internship               |

### **\*Clinical Mental Health -Online**

Please review your plan of study and speak to your advisor for which courses must be completed prior to fieldwork.

## DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICUM

The practicum experience is designed to orient students to the role and responsibilities of the professional school or clinical mental health counselor. This experience provides students with closely supervised opportunities during which they can develop individual and group counseling skills. Operationally, practicum is defined as a professional experience consisting of a total minimum of **100** contact hours (3 graduate credit hours) in an approved agency or educational setting. Practicum can occur during the fall or spring semester but generally takes place during the fall. Practicum is 100 total hours, with 40 hours being direct service. **Practicum credit is not available during the summer.**

### Goals of Practicum

- To acquaint students with and provide them with opportunities to engage in the roles, duties, and responsibilities of a professional school or clinical mental health counselor.
- To enable students to develop counseling techniques that are best acquired and developed in actual counseling relationships.
- To help students learn to integrate counseling theories acquired through course work to actual client/student issues and concerns.
- To help students develop the skills of a counselor so that they can begin to feel confident in their ability to function as professionals in the field.
- To help students work and function as a team member with other professionals in the counseling process.
- To provide students with experiences which enable them to comprehend and respond to feedback from supervisors.

### Application Timeline

Students are required to complete all placement processes including documents and the practicum contract prior to the beginning of the semester. Failure to complete these items may result in a denial of the application, delay in

starting at the site, and/or a need to withdraw from practicum and take it in the following semester. The site placement process takes time to complete and involves both the site supervisor and clinical coordinator to finalize documents. Students should adhere to the deadlines and instructions given by the clinical coordinator so they can remain on track in their plan of study. Under no circumstances should a student begin work at a site that has not been approved in Tevera, begin working with a supervisor who has not been approved in Tevera, or begin accruing hours if a contract has not been signed. Students who fail to follow these guidelines may be removed from the site, removed from the practicum class, and faculty will meet to determine if a remediation plan is necessary.

### Practicum Requirements

Generally, practicum consists of a placement of at least one day per week for one semester (15 weeks) at an **approved** agency, service, or institutional setting. Meetings with the faculty supervisor and the practicum group supervision may be counted toward these contact hours. A minimum of **100** contact hours is required. **Forty (40)** of these must be direct service hours. *It is important to note that some practicum sites (clinical mental health as well as school sites) require additional hours and may specify that the hours be scheduled over the course of **two** days.* Increasingly, students are opting to maximize their practicum experience by scheduling additional hours at their sites. These students may be more competitive as they interview for internships and ultimately full-time employment.

A weekly 1 ½ to 2-hour group supervision session with an assigned faculty member is required- COUN 685 (3 credits). This meeting provides opportunities for students to share experiences, discuss ethical concerns, and counseling and consultation interventions. Case presentations and assigned readings may also be required by faculty supervisors. These meetings count towards the **100** contact hours.

Weekly individual supervision by the on-site supervisor is also required, at least 1 hour per week. On-site supervisors are encouraged to include the following activities in their supervision:

- Case/client discussion and feedback
  - Review of audio and or video-tapes where applicable
  - Observation of the student's sessions
  - Co-counseling opportunities with the site supervisor or other counselors at the site
  - Review of session notes
  - Ongoing performance feedback
  - Discussions regarding linking theory to practice
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## **Practicum Requirement Summary**

- Practicum is a minimum of one day per week for 15 weeks
- 100 approved contact hours (remember this is at a minimum)
- 40 of these 100 hours must be direct service work
- Weekly individual supervision with the site supervisor
- Attendance at all scheduled group supervision class with faculty supervisor.

## DESCRIPTION OF INTERNSHIP

### Prerequisites for Internship

The prerequisites for internship are the same as for practicum plus a passing grade in practicum and B's or better in the core courses taken during the practicum semester. A student must complete practicum before enrolling in internship.

### Description of Internship

Internship is the culmination of the academic preparation to become a professional counselor. This clinical experience enables students to focus intensely on a broader range of competencies and skills. In evaluating possible sites, students should carefully consider their professional goals, previous/related experiences, learning needs, interests, and expectations for fieldwork. Optimally, students will find a site that represents a "good fit" with their experience, learning needs, career goals, values, interests, and licensure requirements. Operationally, internship is defined as a professional, clinical training experience consisting of a minimum of **600** contact hours (9 credit hours) in an approved agency or educational setting. Two hundred forty (**240**) of the designated hours must be direct service contact hours.

### Application Timeline

Students are required to complete all placement process documents, and the internship contract prior to the beginning of the semester. Failure to complete these items may result in a denial of the application, delay in starting at the site, and/or a need to withdraw from internship and take it in the following semester. The site placement process takes time to complete and involves both the site supervisor and clinical coordinator to finalize documents. Students should adhere to the deadlines and instructions given by the clinical coordinator so they can remain on track in their plan of study. Under no circumstances should a student begin work at a site that has not been approved in Tevera, begin working with a

supervisor who has not been approved in Tevera, or begin accruing hours if a contract has not been signed. Students who fail to follow these guidelines may be removed from the site, removed from the practicum class, and faculty will meet to determine if a remediation plan is necessary.

### Internship Requirements

Internship is a full-time counseling experience at an APPROVED clinical or educational site. It is scheduled over the course of the fifteen-week semester. Note: Policies regarding absences during WVU's Thanksgiving, spring break, and scheduled holidays which occur during the semester are site specific; that is, a student may or may not have the same break as the University. The site can require students to be present during these breaks.

During internship, a minimum of **four** hours each day should be spent providing direct counseling services to clients. A minimum of **240** hours of Direct Service hours are required for internship.

Group supervision sessions with an assigned faculty member are required and provide opportunities for students to share experiences and discuss cases, intervention strategies, and ethical concerns. This requires enrollment in COUN 686 (for a total of **9 credits**). Group supervision (1 ½ -2 hours) will be similar to the those required for practicum. Case presentations and assigned readings may also be required by Faculty Supervisors. These meetings count towards the 600 contact hours.

Weekly, one-hour, individual supervision by the on-site supervisor is also required. On-site supervisors are encouraged to include the following activities:

- Case/client discussion and feedback
- Review of audio and or video-recordings where applicable
- Observation of the student's sessions
- Co-counseling opportunities with the site supervisor or other counselors at the site
- Review of session notes
- Ongoing performance feedback and review of student's learning goals

- Discussions regarding linking theory to practice
- Discussions regarding personal and professional development
- Review of agency/school procedures/requirements and resources
- Employment/job/ search/licensure related discussions

### Internship Requirement Summary

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- *Minimum* of 600 contact hours (9 credit hours) (5 days per week across 15 weeks of semester)
- *Minimum* of 240 Direct service hours (4 hrs. per day)
- Weekly on-site supervision (1 hour weekly)
- Weekly group supervision with faculty supervisor (1.5 hours weekly)
- NOTE: Students in the online program may complete internship across two semesters.

## QUESTIONS AND CONCERNS

**Denial of Admission to Fieldwork** After students have successfully completed the fieldwork prerequisites or are enrolled in classes that are prerequisites, they may apply for practicum or internship. On rare occasions, students are denied field placement. Reasons for denial may include but are not limited to the following:

- Unsatisfactory academic performance.
- Failure to complete prerequisites.
- Unfavorable faculty recommendations.
- Pending or unresolved academic dishonesty or student conduct issues.
- Previous criminal convictions.

## Scheduling

Full-time in-person students generally enroll in practicum in the fall semester and internship in the spring semester of their second year.

Students who vary from this sequence should meet with their advisor to ensure that they meet the requirements.

Students in the online program (part-time or full time) may take practicum in either the fall or spring semester providing that it is offered and there is space in the section.

## Enrollment

Students must enroll for three (3) credit hours for practicum and nine (9) credit hours for internship. Students are responsible for confirming with their advisors that they have met course pre-requisites. **Enrollment does not guarantee admission to fieldwork.**

## Semester Calendar

Fieldwork activities can only be scheduled during the academic semester. Hours must be scheduled throughout the semester to ensure that the student's counseling skills develop and are supervised within a developmental framework. In other words, students cannot work overtime so

that they can finish in 10 or so weeks. Exceptions to this policy must be approved in advance by the Fieldwork Coordinator.

## **FIELDWORK SITE SELECTION**

The fieldwork site selection process can initially seem confusing and even daunting to students (particularly if they do not read this manual). In the next three sections of this manual, students are provided with timelines, procedures, important suggestions, interview questions, and an outline of related responsibilities. This information should answer most if not all the questions which students typically have.

### **Fieldwork Coordinator**

To facilitate the process of applying for Practicum or Internship, the department designates a person to be the Fieldwork Coordinator. Questions and paperwork should be directed towards the Dr. Lisa Platt, your advisor, or your faculty supervisor.

### **Timelines for Application for Field Placement**

The timelines for **practicum** applications and interviews may vary from semester to semester.

- Around the fourth week of each semester the coordinator will hold a fieldwork orientation. Attendance is strongly encouraged.
- Students will also be provided with information about sites with openings. Students can then rank order their choices of sites.
- Student will then be notified of a site to reach out to for an interview.
- Online students in other communities should start early in seeking a site. Please work Dr. Ramsay-Seaner and Dr. Platt to start this process.

- **By Feb 1**, Students meet with field work coordinator or their faculty advisor to discuss potential sites for placement
- **May 1**: Placements for the fall will be finalized in Tevera. *Students without placements at this time must contact the Fieldwork Coordinator.*
- **By Oct 1**: Students meet with field work coordinator or their faculty advisor to discuss potential sites for placement
- **By Nov. 15**: Placements for the fall will be finalized in Tevera. *Students without placements at this time must contact the Fieldwork Coordinator.*

### **Fieldwork Sites**

When selecting potential fieldwork sites, students should consider the following factors:

- The type of client served by the site: will there be exposure to a diverse group of clients or a specific population (children, adolescents, adult, or the elderly) and will the presenting problems of these clients be of clinical interest?
- The type of services provided: Does the site provide enough variety and depth of services required to meet the fieldwork requirements? What type of interventions/ services do student interns typically provide? Is there enough client base to ensure that students can more than meet the fieldwork requirements?
- The facilities: Is there adequate, appropriately equipped office space?
- Supervision: Will there be a qualified master's prepared supervisor on site? What is the supervisor's theoretical orientation? In the absence of the supervisor, who provides supervision?

\*Fieldwork sites must be willing to:

- Provide (1) hour of scheduled weekly supervision
- Provide the depth and range of experiences required for a practicum or internship.
- Be willing to communicate regularly with the department
- Be willing to participate in an onsite interview
- Engage in clinical practices and conduct which are consistent with and/or exceed those required by the ACA Code of Ethics.
- Sign a fieldwork agreement with the department.
- Review and sign semester hour logs.
- Participate in ongoing evaluation of students.
- Provide a written description of the agency goals, characteristics of client populations, proposed activities for the practicum or internship student, and the name of the designated field supervisor.
- Encourage the student to engage in site sponsored activities, such as continuing education and consultation with other professional agencies.

## Telehealth Policy

Telehealth is a common modality in our post-Covid era. The program is aware of the value of receiving proper training in telehealth techniques and ethics.

As such, conducting telehealth session during field placement is allowable, as long as the following conditions are met:

-Telehealth sessions should be **no more than approximately 25%** of the direct hours earned.

-All telehealth sessions **should be conducted in the office, with a supervisor available.**

Students should not be conducting telehealth sessions outside of the office, such as their homes.

Any limited time exceptions to these policies must be approved by program leadership and/or a faculty supervisor.

## **SCHEDULING PLACEMENT INTERVIEWS**

The fieldwork selection process has become increasingly competitive. Because of this, students will likely be asked to participate in interviews with prospective sites. Students who delay contacting and interviewing may discover that the sites they were most interested in are no longer available. Resumes should be provided to the sites during the scheduled interview. If a site address, phone number or supervisor is no longer current please contact Dr. Lisa Platt.

- Students contact the site supervisors and schedule interviews.
- After reviewing the available information regarding their potential sites, students will interview with their respective sites (clothing appropriate to the site and interview context).
- Students may wish to follow-up their interviews with an email note of thanks or to ask any remaining questions.
- If offered a fieldwork experience, students should confirm their interest or lack of interest in a placement to the site supervisors and the Fieldwork Coordinator.
- Next, site supervisors should return the fieldwork contract to the counseling department via Tevera (students may need to follow-up with site supervisors to ensure that this happens).
- Students must work with site supervisors to ensure that they understand the Tevera process and complete all required paperwork.
- It is important to remember that fieldwork sites have the option of declining or accepting applicants. Therefore, candidates should carefully consider how they can make the best possible impression when they visit sites on an informal or formal basis. Students who take the time to research their site, learn about the population served, prepare and present related work samples and a professional resume are more likely to be selected.

- Students should also consider the likely possibility that potential fieldwork sites may review content which students have blogged or posted about themselves on social media sites. Web pages or blogs which show students in a negative light may reflect unfavorably on the student
- Site supervisors should be reminded to contact the student and Fieldwork Coordinator and communicate the outcome of the interview.

### **Potential Interview Questions (before and during the interview)**

- Is this the type of work you want to be potentially doing?
- Is this the type of client population you want to work with?
- Does the site provide a wide enough range of clinical and training activities?
- Does the site provide orientation and/or in-service training? When is it? Will you be able lead or co-lead a group?
- Are there opportunities to interact with various kinds of professionals (teachers, social workers, psychiatrists etc)?
- How many semesters are you expected to be involved with the agency (some agencies leave this up to the student, but many requires at least a two-semester commitment)?
- Have previous students been able to easily meet the fieldwork requirements in terms of number and types of clients?
- How have former students evaluated this site and/or supervisor?
- Location --can you reliably transport yourself to the site?
- For students with counseling experience, does the site provide opportunities that will develop and enhance existing skills?
- Does the supervisor/site operate from a theoretical base that is of interest and will help you develop new skills?
- What kind of training is provided for students?

## **PRACTICUM/INTERNSHIP SITE LOGISTICS AND REQUIREMENTS**

**Professional Liability Insurance** Counseling students at West Virginia University *who are engaged in practicum or internship experiences designated by the Counseling Department* are covered by a state insurance policy to the amount of \$1,000,000. (Copies of this insurance policy can be made available to practicum and internship sites if site personnel wish to review the policy.) **However, to protect yourselves individually, students are required to purchase their own professional liability insurance.** Insurance may be acquired through one of two counseling associations: ACA ([www.counseling.org](http://www.counseling.org)) or ASCA ([www.schoolcounselor.org](http://www.schoolcounselor.org)) or from CPH & Associates ([www.cphins.com](http://www.cphins.com)). Students must purchase insurance that will provide at least 1 million dollars annual aggregate coverage and the easiest way to apply is on-line.

### **Student Teaching Permits**

Students in the School Counseling Track are required by the WV Department of Education to obtain student teaching permits prior to beginning their fieldwork. The permit process includes a background check and an application; there is a fee for each. Beginning in the fall of 2017, students are required by the WV Department of Education to take and pass the PRAXIS II (Professional School Counselor) exam PRIOR to applying for the student teaching permit. Student teaching permits will not be issued to students who do not take and pass the PRAXIS II prior to application. Information including registration deadlines, fees, and test preparation may be found at the Educational Testing Services website ([www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org)). Students may obtain the student teaching permit application packets from the CAHS Certification Specialist, Kristin Pinkney.

## **Professionalism**

Students are expected to adhere to agency/school standards and expectations regarding professionalism. Prior to the first day of practicum and internship it is especially important for students to be familiar with policies regarding dress, conduct, use of titles and contact with clients. During practicum and internship, students will be transitioning into more professional roles. Agencies and schools will expect students to dress and conduct themselves accordingly. Operationally, this means students must be especially mindful of their attire and personal presentation, strictly adhere to work/lunch hour time frames, and consider how their conduct at the site and in public may impact how clients and their colleagues perceive them. Failure to adhere to professionalism standards such as attire, reliable attendance, and professional work behavior, can be grounds for a grade of F in the field placement course and/or removal from the program.

## **Departmental Meetings and Classes**

Scheduling fieldwork hours, required courses, and personal responsibilities can be challenging, particularly during internship. In our experience, this process is less stressful and complicated when expectations are clearly communicated. *Fieldwork hours must be scheduled around required counseling classes, supervision, and infrequent departmental meetings.*

## **Illness/Emergency**

Infrequent illness and other emergencies may cause students to be absent from their fieldwork

site. In the event of illness or emergencies, students are expected to contact their site supervisor as soon as possible.

Faculty supervisors should be notified of absences that extend beyond two days or which occur frequently. Plans for making up extended absences must be discussed with the site and faculty supervisors. Extended or frequent absences from fieldwork may result in a student removal from the site and/or an unsatisfactory grade.

## **Inclement Weather/Snow Days**

During inclement weather, students should make every effort to report to their fieldwork site and should follow agency /school policies regarding closings. When it is impossible for students to get to an agency/school that remains open, the hours will need to be made up. Students are responsible for developing a plan for making up missed fieldwork hours with their site supervisors. When an agency or school is closed due to inclement weather or a work stoppage, students must make every attempt to reschedule those hours.

## **University Holidays and Breaks**

During fieldwork placements, students will experience many of the advantages and some of the disadvantages of being part of an agency or a school. One of the disadvantages however, is that students are expected to adhere to the agency/school holiday schedule unless alternative arrangements are made with the site supervisor. Students should not plan Thanksgiving or Spring Break trips without their site supervisor's approval.

## **Agency Holidays/Other Closings**

Students may take any holiday or other closing as long as the required fieldwork hours are completed.

## **Employment during Internship**

Employment during internship is discouraged. With that said, we are aware that personal circumstances may require that students continue to be employed during internship. Students who

must work during internship may wish to consider applying to sites that have expanded or more flexible operational hours. Students who are employed during internship must keep in mind that in almost all cases their *employment hours must be scheduled around their required internship hours*. Site supervisors will (and should) expect students to put the needs of the agency/school and clients as their top priority. Some students request extending internship over two semesters. Students who complete their internship over two semesters will have to attend the group supervision meetings during both semesters.

### **Fieldwork Placement in Student's Place of Employment**

Practicum and internship placements by their very design are educational, not employment experiences. Placements are meant to give students new, challenging experiences. If a student seeks field placement at their place of employment, it must be determined that the placement offers counseling training and the training experience offers new experiences.

### **Terminating the Clinical Experience**

Although rare, there may be instances where a student, or the site, feels it necessary for the clinical experience to terminate before the end of the semester. Students should communicate concerns with their faculty supervisor as they arise at the site. Often, issues at a site can be remedied through conversations that involve all parties and the student can complete their clinical experience as intended. If necessary, the faculty supervisor, site supervisor, and field experience coordinator may meet to discuss and address concerns raised by a student. In situations where it is determined that the student should no longer continue at a site, the student is required to work with their site supervisor to appropriately transfer clients to avoid client abandonment. A student should not "quit" a site without appropriate notice to the site supervisor (minimum of 2 weeks). This should only occur

when there is faculty supervisor and field experience coordinator support. If a student is terminated from a field placement or a student fails to adhere to these policies regarding leaving a placement, a student may be subject to termination from the program.

## **SUPERVISION**

Supervision is one of the most essential components the fieldwork process. During supervision students will have opportunities to discuss ethical/professional concerns, client issues and interventions, application and integration of theories, practicum/internship procedures and policies, and professional and personal development issues. Current and former students have consistently described the supervision experience as among the most valuable of their graduate training.

Attending supervision sessions is critical. Students are expected to be on time. During each session students should be prepared to discuss the progress of ongoing counseling, to present cued audio/video recordings of counseling sessions where applicable, and review session notes (on site supervision only). Many on-site supervisors will also augment these individual sessions by electing to have students sit in on sessions with clients as a co-counselor or by observing sessions or interactions with clients. The format for individual supervision sessions is at the discretion of the on-site and faculty supervisor and may vary from student to student, depending on his or her developmental needs, client issues and the demands or requirements of the site.

Supervisors have vicarious responsibility for the counseling and counseling related responsibilities performed by their supervisees. This means that they are ethically and legally responsible for the cases and activities they supervise. Supervisors must act to ensure that their supervisees (practicum and internship students) perform their responsibilities in an ethical, legal manner and which promotes the well-being of clients. On-site supervisors have many more opportunities to observe, support and evaluate a student's on-site work. They, in fact, have the most oversight for a practicum and

internship student. Accordingly, they also have the primary ethical and legal responsibility for a practicum and or internship student's work.

Practicum and internship students must be provided with back-up supervision when the supervisor is out of for any extended period (vacation, prolonged illness, etc.). Cancelled supervision times should be re-scheduled and students must be provided with clear instructions on how to contact their supervisor (and/or their designee) in case of an emergency.

## **GENERAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP**

There are several responsibilities that apply to both practicum and internship. Many (but not all) of these responsibilities are provided below:

### **Student Responsibilities**

1. Complete all course prerequisites prior to practicum and internship.
2. Be familiar with departmental and agency/school fieldwork policies, procedures, and deadlines.
3. Select potential sites in consultation with their advisor and the Fieldwork Coordinator.
4. Be familiar with and use Tevera for all placement paperwork, time tracking, and faculty assignments
5. Schedule and participate in interviews with potential fieldwork supervisors.
6. Attend meetings scheduled by the Fieldwork Coordinator. A meeting regarding potential practicum sites and fieldwork procedures and policies will be scheduled in early fall of each academic year. The date and time of this required meeting will be provided to students during the fall semester.
7. Participate in agency/school orientation/training prior to the start of internship (or before seeing clients). At a minimum, students should be familiar with site operations/procedures/policies, resources, professional literature, computer systems, referral procedures, and assessment instruments.
8. Obtain liability insurance and provide a copy of insurance verification to be uploaded into Tevera prior to the start of field experience
9. Familiarity with and adherence to the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA) available at:  
<http://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics>
10. School counselors must also be familiar with and adhere to the ASCA ethical standards available at:  
<https://www.schoolcounselor.org/school-counselors-members/legal-ethical>
11. Prompt and regular attendance at the fieldwork site and at all the practicum or internship course and supervision meetings.
12. Dress appropriately and conduct themselves in a professional manner
13. Clearly communicate with clients regarding their status as a counseling student/trainee
14. Communicate problems and concerns in a timely manner to the site and/or faculty supervisor. Client emergencies, conflicts with agency/staff, and/or ethical concerns must be communicated immediately to the site and/or faculty supervisor.
15. Notify the Fieldwork Coordinator in a timely way should emergency circumstances or illness prevent them from keeping to their agreed upon schedule.
16. Seek out, prepare for, and utilize supervision. This means being prepared to discuss cases, concerns, and questions when attending weekly supervision.
17. Complete all case records and progress notes in such a manner as to fully comply with Federal and state law, the ACA Ethical Code, the ASCA Ethical Code, and site policies (For clinical mental health students this means completing all required HIPAA training).

19. Maintain an accurate and timely log of their fieldwork activities in Tevera
20. Complete Site and Supervisor Student Evaluation forms and submit in Tevera according to prescribed timelines in that semester.
21. Fill-out fieldwork log forms accurately, regularly, and complete and submit them to the Faculty Supervisor in Tevera according to the timelines provided by the faculty supervisor.

Failure to adhere to the above responsibilities is grounds for probation and/or termination from the program.

### **On-Site Supervisor Responsibilities**

1. Provide students and the Counseling department with updated contact information (including email address and site web address).
2. Communicate with interviewed students (and the department) regarding their outcome of the selection process.
3. Clearly communicate expectations, requirements, and evaluation criteria and work with students to develop goals for their fieldwork training.
4. Engage in ongoing professional development in supervision.
5. Follow the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA) or the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) applicable federal and state laws, and departmental and university procedures regarding fieldwork and evaluation of students. Supervisors should be particularly familiar with Section F: Supervision, Training and Teaching.  
<http://www.counseling.org>
6. Provide adequate workspace and necessary supplies and equipment to students
7. Provide training, which orients students to agency mission, goals, internal operating procedures, staff, emergency procedures and available related agency and community resources.
8. Assign clinical and site responsibilities which consider student's learning needs, the ongoing development of their skills, and the needs of the agency.
9. Supervise student's on-site fieldwork. Logistically this means that the on-site supervisor is responsible for supervising the diagnosis of clients, the process and consequences of treatment, and all counseling-related responsibilities and outcomes.
10. In their absence, ensure that back-up supervision is provided to students.
11. Assess student's counseling skills by observing sessions, co-counseling and/or reviewing video/audio recordings of the student's work.
12. Ensure that students are assigned appropriate responsibilities and clients within their approved counseling site.
13. Contact the faculty supervisor early in the semester in the event the student is not performing satisfactorily.
14. Inform students of the legal and ethical issues pertinent to counseling and our profession.
15. Regularly review case records kept by student to ensure that these case records are kept according to site requirements, the ACA ethical code, and federal and state laws.
16. Schedule weekly individual supervision with students.
17. Provide ultimate responsibility for client issues.
18. Provide ongoing feedback to students regarding their skill development and

- thoughtfully complete the required midterm and final evaluation of students.
20. Review and sign student's fieldwork and supervision log in Tevera
  21. Support student's professional development by providing them with supervision, training, and in the case of interns, time away from the site to participate in required (infrequent) departmental meetings, academic courses, and employment interviews.

### **Faculty Supervisor Responsibilities**

1. Provide the student and the site supervisor with contact information (email and telephone #).
2. Arrange to meet with students for the appropriate number of group sessions.
3. Engage in ongoing professional development in supervision, ethics, and counselor education.
4. Follow the ethical standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA) or the American School Counselor Association (ASCA), departmental and university procedures, and federal and state laws. Supervisors should be particularly familiar with Section F: Supervision, Training and Teaching <http://www.counseling.org/Resources/CodeOfEthics/TP/Home/CT2.aspx>
5. Clearly state expectations, requirements, and evaluation criteria.
6. Provide group supervision as outlined in the Counseling 685 or 686 syllabi.
7. Inform students of the ethical responsibilities and standards of the counseling profession.
8. Inform students of legal issues related to the counseling profession (e.g., confidentiality, privileged communication, duty to warn and protect, malpractice, and negligence).
9. Ensure that the student is maintaining case records on each client, according to the site requirements, ACA ethical code,

and pertinent state and federal laws (in conjunction with the site supervisor).

10. Provide ongoing feedback to students regarding their skill development and professional growth.
11. Help students recognize and navigate problems related to interpersonal dynamics/conflicts between the intern and professionals at the fieldwork site.
12. Help students regularly and accurately evaluate their professional development and growth during the fieldwork experience.
14. Inform students at the earliest opportunity if their progress is not satisfactory and when appropriate, work with on-site supervisor to develop a remediation plan.
15. Facilitate and develop discussions, lectures, and/or other training experiences to meet the learning needs of their students.
16. Review student's fieldwork logs, evaluations, and performance in class and assign fieldwork grades in a manner consistent with the guidelines outlined in this manual.
17. Notify the Fieldwork Coordinator of the existence of conflicts which could necessitate the removal of a student from a site.

### **Fieldwork Coordinator Responsibilities**

1. Regularly update the fieldwork site list.
2. Schedule and facilitate fieldwork meetings (orientation to practicum in the fall and meetings with students by appointment in the fall and spring).
3. In conjunction with other faculty, review requests by students to use sites not typically used in the past by students.
4. Communication with sites regarding the availability of fieldwork opportunities.
5. Develop and evaluate new fieldwork opportunities.

6. Maintain appropriate contact with students, faculty advisors, and university and site supervisors.
7. Consult with site and university supervisors regarding problems with student's fieldwork placements.
8. Ensure that contracts and evaluations are completed via Tevera.
9. Update fieldwork manual, site list, and forms.
10. Help students obtain an appropriate practicum and internship site.
11. Serve as a liaison between the site personnel, faculty, and students.
12. As time permits, develop supervision training and resource materials for on-site supervisors.

NOTE: *Practicum and Internship grades will not be assigned until the evaluations (and student logs) are received.* Ultimately, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that their evaluations were completed and sent to the department. Students should work with site supervisors to ensure that all documents are completed in Tevera.

## **Grading**

Students will be assigned a grade of A - F by their Faculty Supervisor in consultation with the student's On-Site Supervisor. A grade of A or B must be earned to successfully advance or graduate from the program.

## **STUDENT EVALUATIONS & GRADING**

### ***Mid-term and Final Evaluations***

Evaluation of student performance is an ongoing process. What this means essentially is that students should receive feedback about their performance as the semester progresses not just at the mid and final points. Ideally, students should be getting continuous feedback and not be surprised by midterm or final evaluations.

During the 7<sup>th</sup> or 8th week of the semester site supervisors will complete mid-semester evaluations with their students. Final evaluations are completed during the last week of the semester. Sample student evaluation forms are available in the appendix.

Site supervisors will complete these evaluations in several different ways. Some supervisors ask students to complete a self-evaluation and then complete the student evaluation collaboratively. Other supervisors complete the evaluations independently and submit them to the Counseling program via Tevera. All site supervisors however, are encouraged to share evaluations with students and indeed students have the right to request to review them. ***ALL*** evaluations are to be completed in Tevera.

## **OTHER FIELDWORK/TRAINING CONCERNS**

### **Endorsement Policy**

The Counseling program faculty follows the American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice (2014) as it related to student endorsement. The code states:

Supervisors endorse supervisees for certification, licensure, employment, or completion of an academic or training program only when they believe supervisees are qualified for the endorsement. Regardless of qualifications, supervisors do not endorse supervisees whom they believe to be impaired in any way that would interfere with the performance of the duties associated with the endorsement (p. 14).

Given this commitment, counseling faculty will only provide endorsement for students who have met the requirements of their program. Additionally, the Counseling Department will usually only provide endorsement consistent with a graduate's program track and field placement experience. A graduate who has completed internship in School Counseling will most likely not be recommended for clinical mental health agency counseling. A student who has completed a degree in Clinical Mental Health Counseling will most likely not be recommended for placement in school counseling.

The Counseling program also maintains strict endorsement standards regarding credentialing. The faculty of the school and clinical mental health counseling programs will not endorse or recommend any master's degree graduates for licensure as a psychologist or suggest or imply that the master's program prepares graduates to function as psychologists.

In addition, it should be noted that certain criminal convictions may prevent eligibility for fieldwork, licensure, and/or practice.

### **Professional Affiliation**

Students are strongly urged to join the American Counseling Association (ACA) or the American School Counselor Association (ASCA). ACA and ASCA are nationally recognized professional and educational organizations dedicated to the growth and enhancement of the counseling profession. ACA and ASCA offer students a special membership rate, which provides access to:

- Professional workshops and conferences
- Membership in various divisions (e.g. Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC), Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development (AMCD), American Mental Health Counselors Association (AMHCA), and many others.
- Discounts on professional journals and books
- A wide range of on-line resources (including Counseling Today and School Counselor)
- ACA and ASCA liability insurance at a low rate.

More information about ACA (<http://www.counseling.org>) and ASCA ([schoolcounselor.org](http://schoolcounselor.org)) membership is available on their respective websites.

### **Licensure and Certification**

Although licensure does not pertain directly to practicum or internship, we know that many students have questions concerning licensure. *Do not confuse National Certification (NCC) with state licensure or state certification for school counseling.* NCC Certification is required by many states as part of the requirements for licensure as a Professional Counselor. To become NCC certified an applicant must achieve a passing score on the National Counselor Examination (NCE). State licensure laws may prohibit a person with an NCC certification alone from legally engaging in private practice.

Students who wish to become a Professional Counselor in West Virginia must complete 3000 additional post Master's hours of client contact while being supervised by a licensed person (WV-ALPS). Six hundred hours of internship may be counted as part of these hours *even if a licensed person did not conduct the on-site supervision*. More information about these requirements is available at <http://www.wvbec.org/>

Licensure guidelines vary from state to state. Students who are interested in licensure in a state other than WV are strongly encouraged to contact that state's licensure regulatory board.

## NCE Examination

Satisfactory performance on the National Counselor Examination (NCE) is required for West Virginia state licensure and National Certification. The NCE is composed of 200 multiple choice questions (only 160 are scored) and is scheduled over a four-hour period. It is designed to assess the knowledge, skills, and abilities which are required to provide effective counseling services. It assesses the following content areas:

- Human Growth and Development
- Social and Cultural Foundations
- Helping Relationships
- Group Work
- Career and Lifestyle Development
- Appraisal
- Research/Program Evaluation
- Professional Orientation & Ethics
- Fundamentals of Counseling
- Assessment and Career Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Clinical Intervention
- Professional Practice Issues

Students may take this exam in Morgantown during the last year of their program. Testing windows historically open in early April and students can request a date and time that works best for them student. The program assistant works to inform students of the testing window opening. Additional testing dates and sites must be approved by the West Virginia Board of Examiners in Counseling (WVBEC).

Students interested in pursuing licensure in the State of West Virginia may acquire materials from the WVBEC website ([www.wvbec.org](http://www.wvbec.org)) or from Dr. Christine Schimmel, the Campus Coordinator for WV Licensure.

## NCE Exam Preparation

The National Certified Counselor (NCC) shows colleagues and the public that you have voluntarily met national standards for the general practice of counseling. In addition to resources NBCC provides to the counseling profession and to the public, several resources are made available for applicants, including specific information for student applicants and for department faculty interested in offering the NCC application opportunity to their well-advanced master's-level students. Students are strongly urged to utilize these materials to prepare for the NCE. More information about NCE is available at the website below.

<http://nbcc.org/resources/applicants>

## REQUIREMENTS FOR SCHOOL CERTIFICATION

Students in the school track must plan for practicum and internship to take place in accredited schools. The student must, without exception, complete internship in accredited school settings according to WV School Board Policy 5100.

WV Board of Education Rule 5100 States that:

*Any Pre-K-Adult program of study is required to contain clinical practice at two levels: (1) elementary and (2) middle or high school level. Experience at the middle and high school level not covered during the clinical practice shall be completed by field experience. (Policy 5100, November 13, 2017)*

Graduates in the school track, having completed field work according to Policy 5100, may be certified in West Virginia through grade levels Pre-K-Adult.

Students who wish to be certified as a school counselor in a state other than WV are advised to

contact the state in question and determine certification requirements of that state. Students may also ask the College of Education and Human Services Certification Analyst for the document entitled “West Virginia Interstate Agreement Contract States.” This document lists the states that will accept West Virginia certification without requiring any additional coursework or activities. A few of these states will not grant persons without teaching experience a regular certificate until they complete a year’s activity as a counselor. Remember that state regulations can change at any time and students are advised to check on the status of certification requirements.

Students with special problems and concerns are advised to contact the Student Advising Center in Allen Hall or the Departmental Fieldwork Coordinator. Michelle Principie can be reached at [michelle.principie@mail.wvu.edu](mailto:michelle.principie@mail.wvu.edu)

## **EMPLOYMENT**

### ***Applying for Counseling Positions***

Early during internship (if not before) students should actively begin to research employment options. There are a number of web-based resources that our students have successfully used in the past including but not limited to the following web based services:

- <http://www.socialservice.com/?gclid=CKLH0sqHqo0CFSMOgQod0lAAug>
- [http://promotions.monster.com/healthcarepop/?s\\_kwcid=therapy%20job%20search|777631879](http://promotions.monster.com/healthcarepop/?s_kwcid=therapy%20job%20search|777631879)
- <http://www.ihirehealthandsocial.com/default.asp?campaigntype=searchengine&ca>

[mpaign=google&searchterm=counseling+job+search&iq\\_id=3214419](https://www.google.com/search?q=counseling+job&searchid=3214419)

(Note: we do not endorse any of these resources and suggest that there are many other appropriate ones available to students).

Although internship will be a busy time, it is important to begin the job search process early in the semester. Many internship sites will support your job search process by helping students network with other professionals, providing access to job announcements, discussing student’s interests and skills and by providing them with some time off to interview for positions. Students should keep site and faculty supervisors aware of their job search needs and plans.

During internship (at a minimum) students should:

- Clarify the kind of settings in which they are interested (supervisors can help with this process).
- Research potential employment options.
- Clarify geographical /personal limitation variables
- Research licensure and certification requirements
- Update their resume (by now it should be 1-3 pages in length). It is appropriate to ask supervisors to review a resume and to provide feedback.
- Obtain letters of reference from site supervisors and program faculty (keep in mind that many department faculty are on nine month contracts and may not be available during the summer).