

Supervised Community Counseling

Internship Manual

Community Counseling

Graduate Programs
St. Cloud State University

2007-2008

I. MISSION STATEMENT

The general purpose of the community counseling program is that of educating students in the area of psychological services, and helping them develop the professional understanding, knowledge, attitude, and skills needed in working with a diverse clientele.

By means of course work and interaction with professional staff and settings students should:

1. Develop knowledge, understanding and a professional attitude toward the counseling and therapy setting in which she/he will work as well as any related “helping” community agencies.
2. Develop an understanding of the research process as it applies to community counseling (and where applicable, specialty tracks in marriage and family therapy and chemical dependency).
3. Develop knowledge, understanding, and professional attitude and skills needed to relate effectively with individuals, families, groups, and institutions, and to develop an understanding of principles of program design, implementation, and evaluation within the work setting which will help those individuals and families.
4. Develop awareness, knowledge and skills needed to work effectively with multicultural populations including but not limited to racial/ethnic groups, GLBT populations, persons with disabilities; people in poverty; gender-based issues, etc.
5. Learn to communicate more effectively, both orally and in writing.
6. Understand the philosophies and techniques pertinent to community counseling/ marriage and family therapy (and where applicable, specialty tracks in and chemical dependency) and should develop his/her own professional acceptable skills in using these techniques to help others.
7. Develop greater self-understanding.
8. Be prepared for doctoral level training and/or certification.

Students are encouraged to join and participate in appropriate professional activities and to develop enthusiasm for work in Counseling, Psychology, and Marriage and Family Therapy. For example, the Minnesota Counseling Association (MnCA); American Counseling Association (ACA).

II. SUPERVISED COUNSELING INTERNSHIP INTRODUCTION

Students are required to complete an internship in an appropriate agency setting as part of their academic training. It is anticipated that this work experience will provide the student with an opportunity to put into practice the theoretical concepts and skills learned in their course work.

The student and university profit from the internship experience in that the student is given the opportunity to put into practice, theory and skills learned in the classroom. The university's responsibility is not completed until the students have realistically tried out what they have learned, and feel confident in facing the challenges of the counseling profession.

In addition to providing practical experience to the counseling intern, it is expected that the sponsoring agency will also benefit from the internship experience. The student comes to the agency with an enthusiasm for learning and a willingness to accept guidance and direction from established professionals. Following the orientation and observation phases of the internship, it is anticipated that the counseling intern should be ready to function semi-independently, and carry out many of the duties and responsibilities of a counselor.

In some cases this transition may be difficult, and in most cases it involves testing theory against practice. It provides each student with the opportunity to determine his/her own strengths and weaknesses. If this transition is made with adequate supervision, the student will find greater strength and security in what he/she is doing. Thus, the student has the opportunity to make an adaptation to the professional life he/she is about to enter.

III. OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of the supervised counseling internship program is to provide counseling students the opportunity to gain actual on-the-job experience in an agency or institutional setting.

1. Guide the intern toward the development of specific professional skills and technical knowledge relating to the counseling process.
2. Supplement the knowledge and skills learned in the academic setting.
3. Provide an opportunity for practical application of classroom instruction.
4. Provide the intern an opportunity to develop confidence in his/her ability to apply learning theory and techniques in counseling situations.
5. Help the intern develop case management and resource allocation skills.
6. Assist the intern in determining appropriate diagnosis and prognosis.

7. Help the intern develop relationships with supervisors, colleagues, and personnel from other agencies.
8. Provide counseling services within the sponsoring agency.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR SUPERVISED COUNSELING INTERNSHIP

The supervised counseling internship will provide practical agency experience in a work setting. Students should investigate at least three possible internship sites according to each student's emphasis area(s). In general, the sites should 1) provide interns with an opportunity to do counseling, 2) have an on-site supervisor with at least a master's degree, 3) have an on-site supervisor that is certified or licensed, and 4) be within a 60 mile radius of St. Cloud. A list of approved sites can be obtained from the Community Counseling Office.

Graduate students in the Community Counseling and Marriage and Family Therapy program need **600 hours** of internship in order to graduate. Students must also determine the duration of their internship. Students needing to complete 600 hours of internship have two options. They may choose to intern for 40 hours per week over one semester, for a total of 6 credits, or they may intern for 20 hours per week over 2 semesters, for a total of 6 credits (3 credits per semester). Double track students choosing to do 9 credit internships may count the additional 3 credits as elective credits.

All students, full-time and part-time, must complete the following requirements for all internships to be conducted during the succeeding academic year.

1. Attend internship orientation scheduled in January/February.
2. Complete the Proposed Program of Graduate Study forms (blue forms), have them approved by the counseling psychology faculty, and have them forwarded to the Graduate Dean.
3. Obtain Liability Insurance **prior** to starting your internship. Liability insurance for students can be found at www.counseling.org
4. Complete Internship Approval Form and hand it in to your on-campus supervisor **prior** to starting the internship course.

Students will be assigned to a faculty member who will help you set up your internship. This faculty member may, or may not be your supervisor. Internship placements should be finalized during Spring Semester.

Community Counseling Internship Requirements

Consistent with CACREP requirements, the program requires students to complete a supervised internship of 600 clock hours. The internship provides an opportunity for the student to perform, under supervision, a variety of counseling activities that a professional counselor is expected to perform. The internship requirements includes all of the following:

1. The student has completed core course work in community counseling;
2. 240 hours of direct service with clients appropriate to the program of study;
3. Weekly interaction with an average of one (1) hour per week of individual and/or triadic supervision, throughout the internship, (usually performed by the on-site supervisor;)
4. An average of one and one half (1 1/2) hours per week of group supervision provided on a regular schedule throughout the internship, usually performed by a program faculty member;
5. The opportunity for the student to become familiar with a variety of professional activities in addition to direct service (e.g., record keeping, supervision, information and referral, in-service and staff meetings);
6. The opportunity for the student to develop program-appropriate audio and/or videotapes of the student's interactions with clients for use in supervision;
7. The opportunity for the student to gain supervised experience in the use of a variety of professional resources such as assessment instruments, technologies, print and non print media, professional literature, and research.

Double Tracking in Community Counseling and Rehabilitation Counseling

Double track students must do a 900-hour internship divided between two separate sites, meeting the accreditation/licensure requirements of each emphasis area. Community majors must have on-site L.P. supervision for at least 600 hours of the internship. Rehabilitation majors must have CRC supervision from either the on-site or faculty supervisor.

To meet the licensure requirements for Certified Rehabilitation Counselor, you must meet at least one hour a week in face-to-face supervision with either your on-site, or faculty supervisor. Either your on-site, or faculty supervisor must be licensed or certified.

All interns are required to attend weekly supervision meetings held on-campus each semester of their internship. The purpose of these meetings will be to share internship

experiences, and receive face-to-face supervision from the faculty supervisor.

V. PHASES OF TRAINING

It is suggested that the supervised internship work be divided into three phases - orientation, observation, and participation. These, no doubt, will overlap to some extent in time sequence. Time devoted to participation necessarily will be much longer than that devoted to orientation and observation.

A. Supervision

The role of supervision in the internship is a difficult one and very often is the decisive factor in the success or failure of an intern's experience. Supervision involves at least four major dimensions: (1) planning, (2) assignment, (3) observation, and (4) evaluation.

An agency should have one staff member responsible for the supervised internship aspect of the agency's operation. Consideration should be given to the assignments available within the agency and how the student's interests and needs can best be met by the opportunities the agency will provide.

Student assignments which will best meet the needs of both student and agency will follow careful interviewing of intern applicants. Whenever possible, the counseling program should refer all interested candidates to each available site. The agency has the right to select or reject the candidates, providing that the candidates and the counseling program are informed of the rationale for actions taken.

B. Agency Supervisor

The persons responsible for selecting the supervisor should consider the following:

1. The immediate supervisor should be a **Licensed Professional in the mental health field (LP, LICSW, LMFT, LPC)**.
2. The supervisor should have sufficient experience not only in service areas of counseling, but also in representing the agency to other disciplines in the community so that he/she can help the intern explore his/her own reactions to the various roles which a counselor will be asked to assume, such as: functioning as a professional person in the community, and functioning as a professional counselor who may have to balance his/her own professional aspirations with the limitations of the agency.
3. Adequate time should be available for supervision of the intern.
4. Supervision involves day-to-day responsibility for the intern's activities, depending on the degree of responsibility the intern is able to assume.

5. Conferences between the supervisor and intern should be planned in advance to insure the following content:
 - a) The intern should be encouraged to present cases and bring up questions which may be troubling to him/her, to satisfy any and all questions the agency supervisor has about the intern's caseload, counseling, professional behavior, and agency contacts.
 - b) Assignment of new cases can be discussed.
 - c) Questions which the intern may raise in reference to agency procedure should be considered.

C. Observation

To help the intern understand the setting, it is desirable to provide him/her with a period of time for observation prior to being assigned a workload. Depending upon accessibility and appropriateness it is desirable for the intern to observe interviews of several types. These interviews should include whatever procedures are used in the agency.

Observation of team and case conferences, staff meetings, and counselor visits in the field to client homes, employers, and community resources are also beneficial.

The agency supervisor will be observing the intern as he/she performs the wide variety of duties of the internship. Observation is closely related to evaluation and the two aspects of supervision provide the contents of the training sessions between the intern and supervisor.

Evaluation is a joint responsibility of the university supervisor and the agency which is providing the internship. Evaluations may be written, verbal, or both, and should be communicated regularly to the student rather than once at the end of the internship. The evaluation should be seen as a feedback mechanism which provides the intern the opportunity to change and grow s a professional.

D. Participation

Student interns should be permitted to engage in as many activities as their individual readiness, time, and supervision allows.

1. With clients - under supervision, interns should participate in intake, diagnostic, vocational and personal adjustment counseling, placement, and follow-up of client.
2. With other professionals and community agencies - under supervision, the intern should be allowed to communicate with other professional personnel within the agency and with agencies as applicable outside of the internship agency.

3. Suggested criteria for case selection:
 - a. The case should be typical or representative of those carried or served by the agency.
 - b. There should be clear-cut function and purpose for the counselor.
 - c. Cases should represent the different types of services rendered by the agency.
 - d. Size and type of caseload should be reviewed and kept at a workable level.
 - e. Increasingly complex cases should be assigned as the intern gains self-confidence and skill.

Cases of increasing complexity can be assigned, including a variety of problems requiring services outside the agency, as student growth and capacity increase. Interns should have an opportunity to become totally involved, to test their impressions, and to develop awareness of their relationship skills from initial interview to final contact with the client.

VI. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT INTERN

The student intern has the all-important responsibility of learning, absorbing, and demonstrating through performance in the day-to-day work tasks his/her ability and accomplishment in becoming a counseling professional. The intern is the key to the entire learning experience. The student intern has the following responsibilities:

1. Adherence to Rules and Regulations: The intern will assume a role as a member of the agency's staff in adhering to policies, regulations, and procedures within the agency. Also, the intern will observe and work within the framework of the agency related to staff protocol and behaviors as well as mode of dress.
2. Attendance: The intern will fulfill the agreed upon time commitments. Time lost shall be made-up in a way which is agreeable to the supervisors.
3. Ethical Standards: Students are expected to conform to ethical standards, especially in regard to confidentiality.
4. Keep the agency intern supervisor regularly updated on the progress of all cases assigned.
5. Actively learn within the limits of the agency, and actively seek out information.
6. Ask for assistance and supervision when needed, so that the client receives adequate services.

7. Keep the university intern supervisor informed of significant learning experiences, problems, and progress in the internship.
8. Grievances: The student shall contact the faculty coordinator regarding any difficulties that should arise regarding the internship or the supervision.

VII. FACULTY SUPERVISOR

A member of the Community Counseling or Marriage and Family Therapy programs will be assigned to consult with the agency supervisor. In addition, this faculty member has the following responsibilities:

1. Conduct a meeting between the perspective intern and the agency personnel, which should follow an orientation to the agency by the agency supervisor.
2. The faculty supervisor is responsible for developing and maintaining the internship instruction program.
3. The faculty supervisor will conduct weekly supervision meetings on-campus. The purpose of these meetings is as follows:
 - a. Giving support and assurance to the student that the university is continuing an interest in his/her progress and studies.
 - b. Provide an opportunity for the student to discuss his/her experiences with the faculty supervisor.
 - c. Assist the student in integrating academic knowledge and theory with the internship experience.
 - d. Giving the faculty supervisor an opportunity to maintain an on-going evaluation of the effectiveness of the student's academic work in terms of his/her ability to relate it to current experiences.
4. Act as a mediator for problems that might arise between agency and intern.
5. Offer the university's services in whatever way necessary to assist the agency to provide the most effective internship experience possible.

VIII. EVALUATION

The evaluation process is a joint one participated in by the student, the agency supervisor, and the university supervisor. The emphasis is on the intern's growth toward professional maturity. Together they evaluate the intern's readiness to enter the profession, and his/her needs for further training.

The university's policies require that interns be assigned an S/U grade at the conclusion of the supervised internship. The agency supervisor's evaluation, along with that of the university supervisor, will be used to determine the intern's grade. The assignment of the final grade is the responsibility of the university supervisor.

The internship contract which was agreed to by the intern, the agency supervisor, and the faculty supervisor at the beginning of the internship will be used in the evaluation process. Each of the objectives will be assessed to determine whether or not the intern has successfully completed them.

In evaluating the student, these principles will be observed:

1. The underlying philosophy and approach of the evaluation will be directed constructively toward strengthening the student both personally and professionally.
2. The student will be included in the evaluation process.
3. The initial contract will be used for the final evaluation.