I. SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the School Counseling Program at St. Cloud State University is to educate students in the areas of school counseling, developmental guidance, and related psychological and educational services. In this program, students develop the professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to help those they serve achieve their maximum level of independence and functioning. The School Counseling Program embraces a multicultural and developmental philosophy in preparing students to provide counseling and related services in a democratic and pluralistic society. The Program’s philosophical framework encompasses enhancing personal growth and development; creating awareness of self in relation to society; developing an identity as a professional school counselor; and attaining the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to work effectively with others.

a. Program Objectives:

The School Counseling Program is designed to:

1. Develop student professional knowledge, skills, and dispositions including helping students:
   - learn to communicate more effectively.
   - develop a greater self-understanding.
   - learn and adhere to the legal and ethical guidelines of the profession.
   - learn to work effectively with K-12 students, school personnel, and parents.
   - learn and apply evidence-based best practices to school counseling work.
   - learn how to develop a comprehensive school counseling program.
   - become prepared for doctoral level training.

2. Develop student professional identity by:
   - encouraging students to join and participate in appropriate professional activities and to develop support networks with practicing school counselors by attending events such as the CMCA/Dugan Symposium, MSCA Annual Conference, and MSCA Day on the Hill.
   - encouraging students to become members of professional organizations such as the American Counseling Association, the American School Counselors Association, and the Minnesota School Counselors Association.
II. SUPERVISED SCHOOL COUNSELING INTERNSHIP INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the supervised school counseling internship is to provide students with the opportunity to put their knowledge, skills, and dispositions into practice and to learn and demonstrate the ability to function as a professional school counselor. In addition to the beneficial opportunity provided to the intern and university, it is expected that the sponsoring school will also benefit from the internship experience. The intern is expected to enter the school with an enthusiasm for learning and a willingness to accept guidance and direction from established professionals. Following the orientation phase of the internship, it is anticipated that the intern should be ready to function semi-independently, and carry out many of the duties and responsibilities of a school counselor. In this way, the intern, school, and university all benefit from the internship experience. In some cases this transition may be difficult. The three parties of the university, intern, and school are partners in ensuring appropriate and beneficial experience. Should any concerns arise, the concerned party should inform the others of the issue immediately so the three can work together for the best resolution.

a. Internship Objectives
1. To ensure the intern develops a sound understanding of the role of the professional school counselor within a comprehensive school setting.
2. To ensure the intern can apply theory to practice.
3. To ensure the intern gains a sound level of multicultural competence.
4. To ensure the intern practices in accordance with legal and ethical guidelines.
5. To ensure that the intern gains a sound level of competence in functions common to the professional school counselor by having the intern engage in and be evaluated on:
   a. Providing academic, career, and personal/social counseling.
   b. Providing counseling and advisement in both individual and group settings.
   c. Assuming responsibility for a reasonably-sized case load of students.
   d. Conducting developmental classroom guidance lessons.
   e. Consulting with teachers, parents, administrators, and other school personnel.
   f. Participating in related school counseling committee meetings.
   g. Participating in student assistance team, IEP, and 504 meetings.
   h. Participating in peer helper and/or conflict management work.
   i. Becoming acquainted with community services for support and referral purposes.
   j. Engaging in team work opportunities with other school personnel.
   k. Administering or assisting in the administration of group tests.
   l. Interpreting test and other appraisal data to students.
   m. Using scheduling software and other relevant educational technologies.
   n. Participating in program evaluation for individuals and/or institutional decision making.
6. To ensure that the intern completes a minimum of 600 total hours of field experience with 100 hours at an alternative grade level site and from which, 240 hours are in direct service.
7. To ensure that the intern attains these hours of experience over the course of a K-12 academic year, averaging 20 hours per week at the site/s.
8. To ensure that interns are appropriately supervised by being provided with:
   a. one hour per week of face-to-face individual supervision, throughout the internship, performed by a field supervisor.
   b. one and one half hours per week of group supervision performed by a university supervisor.
   c. an opportunity to audio or video record several counseling sessions
   d. a formal evaluation of intern performance during the internship by the university supervisor in consultation with the field supervisor.
b. Procedures to Acquire Internship Sites

**Step One: Identify and contact possible internship sites:**

Prospective interns should investigate at least three possible internship sites. These sites should: 1) provide the intern with an opportunity to experience a developmental school counseling program, 2) provide the intern with an opportunity to do classroom guidance activities, 3) have a field supervisor with at least a master’s degree, who is currently licensed as a school counselor, and who has worked at least two years as a licensed school counselor, 4) have a field supervisor willing and able to provide, support, and supervise the intern in her/his completion of the above internship objectives including being responsible for overseeing the day-to-day activities of the intern as well as providing one hour of weekly individual supervision, 5) allow the intern to attend the mandatory weekly group supervision and courses held at the university for one day per week throughout the internship experience, 6) allow the intern to video and/or audio record some work with students for the purposes of supervision (following appropriate attainment of parental consent), and 7) be within a 75 mile radius of St. Cloud.

Prospective interns must also secure a secondary site for completion of the 100 hours at an alternative level. For this site, the prospective intern must obtain the agreement of an individual at the alternative site who can serve as a site contact and additional supervisor for the intern. This individual must be willing to support the intern while she/he is at the alternative site. However, the primary field supervisor is the official field supervisor for the internship experience. The alternative site supervisor’s signature must also be obtained on the contract.

**Step Two: Complete the following application requirements**

The prospective intern must submit all internship application materials to the School Counseling Program coordinator by no later than April 12th of the spring semester prior to internship. These materials must include: 1) a cover letter summarizing your proposal as to why your first desired site will be an optimal placement for your internship and your goals for interning at this site (1 page, typed), 2) your resume, and 3) the Internship Application Form. You must also have completed and have had satisfactorily processed the Proposed Program of Graduate Study form (blue forms) by April 12th of the spring semester prior to internship.

**Step Three: Await University decision and secure a signed contract**

The School Counseling Program coordinator and faculty reserve the right to approve or disapprove internship sites and will work with the prospective intern and field supervisor to ensure the most appropriate placement occurs. Once sites are approved, the prospective intern will be notified and required to obtain a signed contract. The contract must be returned to the university by the end of the universities spring semester. The School Counseling Program coordinator will then sign off and give copies to all parties involved.

**Step Four: Begin internship at agreed upon date and time**

The beginning of the school counseling internship often precedes the beginning of the university academic semester. Therefore, the intern must only work in an observatory and support capacity until the university semester begins, on-campus supervision can be provided,
and liability insurance is activated. Interns must not work alone with students prior to the beginning of the university semester.

c. Components of the Internship Experience

Supervised internship work can be divided into three phases: orientation, participation, and evaluation. These phases, no doubt, will overlap and recycle. The level of intern active participation in the duties of a school counselor should increase at a pace commensurate to the intern’s learning and ability, and in the end, have comprised the majority of the internship experience.

Phase One: Orientation

To help the intern understand the setting, it is desirable to provide her/him with a period of time for observing and becoming oriented to the activities of the school counselor. Recommendations for such orientation at the beginning of the internship include: a) attending in-service trainings, b) reading school policy and procedures including school crisis plans and student handbooks, c) assisting with support duties to develop a procedural knowledge base (i.e. scheduling system, etc.), d) begin working with school personnel, and e) observing and assisting school counselor work with students (until the university semester begins interns should not work alone with students). Field supervisor assistance in intern orientation is critical to later intern progression to independent work and success.

Phase Two: Participation

Interns should be permitted to engage in as many activities as their individual readiness, time, and supervision allows. The intern should be monitored and guided to move from more dependent participation to more independent participation over time. By the end of the internship, experiences should have been assigned in all areas of the total developmental school counseling program and the intern should be functioning at a high level of independence to provide the supervisors with the opportunity to see if the intern is truly ready to be endorsed for licensure. The following are some recommendations to help interns move from orientation and observation to participation in school counseling activities:

a. Provide the intern with the appropriate work space, computer, and phone access necessary to perform school counselor duties.
b. Provide closer supervision on new tasks until intern demonstrates ability to act independently.
c. When ready, provide the intern with a reasonable portion of a typical school counseling case load, representative of the students in the school.
d. Move interns from lower complexity tasks to higher complexity tasks at a pace that is commensurate to intern’s abilities and also which challenges her/him to gain more skill. (i.e. have interns observe your work in a classroom before they solo).
e. Encourage the intern to attend key school counselor functions such as: parent nights, school personnel meetings, career fairs, etc.

Phase Three: Evaluation

Evaluation is a joint and on-going process involving the intern, field supervisor, and university supervisor. The emphasis is on the intern’s growth toward professional maturity. Together, the supervisors evaluate the intern’s progress and ultimately, readiness to enter the profession.
Evaluations may be written, verbal, or both, and should be communicated regularly to the intern. Evaluation should be seen as an opportunity for growth and feedback which provides the intern the opportunity to acknowledge and build on strengths and change and improve weaknesses.

For grading, an evaluation form is to be completed by the field supervisor and returned to the university supervisor at the end of each semester. The objectives listed on the internship contract are evaluated as part of this process to assess intern performance on each item. Interns earn either a Satisfactory or Unsatisfactory grade during grading periods based on their evaluation. The university supervisor is responsible for determining the grade following consultation with the field supervisor.

III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE INTERN

The intern’s responsibility is to learn and perform school counselor functions under the guidance and supervision of the field and university supervisors. In addition, the intern has the responsibility to:

1. Adhere to all applicable Federal, State, and Local laws as well as the ACA and ASCA ethical codes of conduct.
2. Adhere to the policies and procedures of the school and uphold the same level of professionalism expected of all school personnel at the site.
3. Follow through on all obligations of attendance and agreed upon time commitments. Leaves of absence should be worked out with the field supervisor and/or university supervisor and handled in a professional manner. Time lost shall be made-up in a way that is agreeable to the supervisors.
4. Communicate in a timely, clear, and consistent manner with the field and university supervisors regarding any concerns or questions.
5. Immediately seek consultation regarding potential threats to student safety or mandated reporting issues.
6. Be open to learn and receptive and responsive to supervisory feedback.
7. In the case of an intern grievance, the intern shall contact the university supervisor and/or appropriate individuals in a timely manner.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR

The university supervisor’s responsibility is to work with the intern and field supervisor to support and monitor the internship experience. In addition, the university supervisor has the responsibility to:

1. Conduct a meeting early in the beginning of each semester of the internship with the intern and field supervisor with the intent of clarifying expectations and helping establish goals for that semester of the internship experience.
2. Provide contact information and procedures for additional consultation and supervision needs of the intern and/or field supervisor.
3. Provide weekly on-campus group supervision for the intern. The general purpose of this supervision is to:
   a. Provide an opportunity for the intern to process experiences and questions with fellow interns and the university supervisor.
   b. Assist the intern in applying theory to practice.
   c. Provide the university supervisor the opportunity to monitor and evaluate intern progress.
4. Help resolve and/or mediate any concerns arising between the intern and school.
5. Offer the university’s support to assist the school to provide the most effective internship experience possible.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE FIELD SUPERVISOR AND SITE

The field supervisor is a staff member of the school who agrees to fulfill the supervision obligations of the internship contract and sign to this agreement. The field supervisor must hold a current school counseling license and have worked as a licensed school counselor for a minimum of two years. The role of field supervisor is critical to the success of the intern’s experience. This individual helps determine, guide, and supervise the daily on-site activities of the intern and helps mentor the intern toward professional independence and readiness for licensure. The field supervisor is expected to work to:

- ensure the intern’s responsibilities fall within their level of competence and readiness
- ensure the intern upholds all legal and ethical guidelines of the profession
- ensure the intern is given the opportunity to meet the requirements of the internship
- ensure the intern is treated with professional respect and fairness
- monitor and evaluate the intern’s performance
- ensure the intern is not represented as a fully trained school counselor
- keep open communication with the university supervisor regarding any concerns

The school and/or university may decide to terminate the internship agreement at any time should circumstances warrant such action. The school is encouraged to keep open communication with the intern and university should any potential changes to the internship agreement be foreseen.