



CENTER FOR COUNSELING AND FAMILY STUDIES

**Ph.D. in Professional Counseling
Practicum Fieldwork Manual 2010-2011**

COUN 998 Practicum



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From the Coordinator of Clinical Training:

Dear Student:

Congratulations on reaching this milestone in your professional counselor educational program! The Practicum and Internship are some of the most crucial professional preparation activities in your educational journey. These experiences are meant to be the culminating experience in your program of study by allowing you the opportunity to apply, evaluate, and refine clinical skills by bridging the gap between theory and practice. For the Christian counselor, these experiences provide opportunity to synthesize one's biblical worldview into applied practice regardless of whether that setting is explicitly Christian in nature and function.

All prerequisite coursework has been intended to prepare you for your supervised clinical training experiences. By incorporating what you have learned through your coursework, you can become a reflective practitioner who can use critical thinking and sound decision-making skills that are well-grounded in established research and a biblical worldview. Effective counselors must be more than mere technicians. Rather, they must be professionals who have a strong theoretical and ethical foundation, have personal mastery of their own beliefs, values, knowledge, and skills, and have the ability to integrate these aspects into their practice.

This manual is designed to help you prepare for and successfully complete the Practicum, an integral and indispensable part of Liberty University's counselor education programs. I encourage you to carefully read and review this manual as you progress through the Practicum. We trust that the information will be useful in helping create positive learning experiences between students, supervisors, and faculty while providing quality services to those we are called to help. As the knowledge base in our field rapidly expands, it is clear that students cannot learn everything they need to know about professional counseling during their coursework. Professional growth and development are ongoing processes, and key patterns for this growth are established during your supervised clinical training experiences.

Our faith has profound implications for counseling by shaping our values, giving us a unique love for others, enlightening our thinking about human problems, and illuminating pathways to healing. We have been called by God to help people redeem their past soul-wounds, transform their present circumstances, and teach them how to live a God-centered life. As the apostle Paul wrote in Colossians 2:28, "And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man [and woman] complete in Christ."

May God continue to richly bless you through your clinical training experience!

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Ph.D. in Professional Counseling Practicum Fieldwork Manual 2009-2010 COUN 998 Advanced Practicum

1. Course Overview

1.1 Course Description:

(from the Graduate Catalog): Supervised practice of counseling. Focus is on the skills and development of the counselor under the supervision and guidance of staff in that setting. Students will actively participate in counseling situations with individuals and groups.

1.2 Rationale:

This Advanced Practicum course involves participation in a planned clinical experience in an approved agency or other setting under an approved supervisor. During the Practicum experience, professional identity continues to develop, consolidate, and mature. Since clinical prerequisites and foundational competencies have been completed by this time, Practicum students can contribute to the cooperating agency by assisting its staff in carrying out many of the normal clinical activities of that agency. The purpose of the Advanced Practicum is to provide a supervised, field-based, work experience that allows students to:

- a. integrate and synthesize theories and techniques learned in the classroom in a real work setting;
- b. develop more fully the personal and professional qualities, characteristics, and behavior of a professional counselor;
- c. transition from “trainee” to “professional practitioner.”

1.3 Prerequisites:

To be adequately prepared for this course, the student must have completed the following graduate-level courses in counseling with a grade B or above: Students must complete all Clinical Prerequisites and Foundational Competencies. Academically, students must be in good standing with the University, must have passed the qualifying exam, and must have a 3.0 cumulative GPA or above in order to be approved for COUN 998 Practicum.

Important Notes:

- a. The prerequisites are non-negotiable and must be successfully completed prior to the start of the Practicum.
- b. In order to be approved to register for the Practicum, all approval documents must be submitted through the Blackboard of the approval course at least 30 days prior to the start date of the semester the student plans to begin the Practicum. Students must receive approval from the Coordinator of Ph.D. Clinical Training in order to register for the course.
- c. **Advanced Standing:** doctoral-level students who possess a professional license in counseling (e.g. LPC, LMFT, LMHC, etc.) for at least 10 years may apply for Advanced Standing for the Practicum. Even though a student may have counseling certifications and may have been counseling for more than 10 years, he or she is not eligible for Advanced Standing. In order to be considered for Advanced Standing, students must apply to the Ph.D. Program Director (contact 434-592-4049). The student must submit documentation of the following: (a) a cover letter expressing the desire and rationale for Advanced Standing; (b) a detail of professional experience; (c) a copy of professional license(s); (d) a copy of the personal, professional liability

insurance; and (e) a current vitae.

1.4. Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- a. Establish rapport and effective working relationships with client(s) during the first session.
- b. Conduct a psychosocial history that includes client background information, behavioral observations, current functioning, quality of relationships, and resources and challenges.
- c. Develop client case conceptualizations that lead to accurate diagnosis using the DSM-IV-TR. Develop treatment plans that will motivate clients through the use of evidence-based strategies for clients' identified problem(s).
- d. Present case studies in scheduled supervision sessions.
- e. Maintain an effective counseling process and relationship until the client(s)' problem(s) have been resolved.
- f. Utilize feedback, direction, and constructive criticism from supervision and consultation in order to enhance professionalism in counseling.
- g. Document clinical work in a way that meets the standards of the counseling site, insurance companies, and the state in which the student is working.
- h. Work cooperatively and effectively within an agency setting and initiate appropriate professional relationships with mental health professionals outside that agency as needed.

1.5 Course Textbooks:

(recommended, but not required): While doing the Practicum the student will frequently make diagnoses and treatment plans. For diagnostic work:

American Psychiatric Association. (1994). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders* (4th ed. revised). Washington, DC: Author.

Baird, B. N. (2005). *The internship, practicum, and field placement handbook: A guide for the helping professions*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education. [ISBN 0-13-118116-5]

While the student will not see specific readings that are assigned in this text, it is meant to answer many of the problems and issues that commonly arise during the Practicum and Internship experiences. Use this book as a true manual. The student should read it and follow it through the clinical experience. Naturally, it is best if the student reads in advance of each experience. The text will give specific instructions and suggestions - even on mundane topics such as what to wear to work, and how to prepare for an interview. The student should use this text as an ongoing resource for those times when unsure of how to proceed. This text is recommended material for both Practicum and Internship, therefore the student will only need to purchase it once.

Students are encouraged to spend time at the site before purchasing any of the following recommended material. However, if the student determines that additional material is needed to help develop detailed treatment plans, one of the following books for the most common presenting problems is recommended:

Johnson, S. L. (2004). *Therapist's guide to clinical intervention: The 1-2-3s of treatment planning* (2nd ed.). San Diego, CA: Academic Press. [ISBN-10: 0123865883 or ISBN-13: 978-0123865885]

Reid, W. H., & Balis, G. U. (1998). *The treatment of psychiatric disorders: Third edition revised for DSM IV* (3rd ed.). New York: Brunner-Mazel. [ISBN-10: 0876307659 or ISBN-13: 978-0876307656]

Seligman, L., & Reichenberg, L. W. (2007). *Selecting effective treatments: A comprehensive, systematic guide for treating mental disorders* (3rd ed.). San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons. [ISBN-10: 0787988685 or ISBN-13: 978-0787988685]

(As newer editions become available, the staff recommends the purchase of the most current edition.)

TheraScribe Software Program (*Computer software program for recording client notes, making diagnoses and treatment plans.*) Wiley Publishers: 1-800-753-0655 extensions: 23518, 23520, or 23521

2. Practicum Requirements

2.1 Deciding on a Practicum Site to Submit for Approval:

When deciding on a Practicum site, keep the following considerations in mind:

- a. Do the supervisor, activities, and site meet the requirements for COUN 998? (see appropriate sections in this manual for requirements)
- b. Will the activities at the site provide the student opportunities for advancing clinical knowledge and skills beyond present levels, and not simply provide more of what the student already possesses? (The focus is on *qualitative* rather than merely quantitative change.)
- c. Is the clientele of the agency similar to the clientele whom the student wishes to work with during his/her professional career?
- d. Is there enough diversity in the clientele to provide a wide range of experiences (e.g., adults, adolescents, children, married couples, singles, group therapy, etc.)?
- e. Does the agency have a large enough client base to have adequate face-to-face client hours for licensure, certification, or to meet Liberty University requirements?
- f. Are qualified supervisors available who are willing to invest the time to provide a quality Practicum experience which includes provision of individual supervision? Do they have the credentials (i.e., doctoral level or master's level and licensure) so that a licensing board will accept clinical work completed under their supervision?
- g. Is this Practicum in the same state in which the student would ultimately like to practice? (Becoming familiar with state laws and insurance practices within the state where the student ultimately wants to practice will be very beneficial after the Practicum is over.)
- h. Is this agency one in which the student might be interested in employment after the Practicum is completed?

2.2 Things to do Before the Start of Practicum:

Please note that to complete a semester of Practicum requirements within the time limit, students will need to do several things during the semester prior to the one in which they plan to begin their Practicum. Because of ethical, legal, and liability precautions that must be taken, the process of registering for this course is more extensive than for most other courses.

Please read and follow these steps carefully.

- a. **Obtain professional liability insurance.** *The student is responsible for obtaining insurance in the student's name and sending a copy of the policy face sheet to the university supervisor before beginning the Practicum experience. The face sheet should include the amount of coverage, the effective dates of the policy, and the minimum amounts acceptable.*

Healthcare Providers Service Organization (HPSO) 1-800-982-9491 or hpso.com

American Association of Christian Counselors (AACC) 1-800-526-8673
American Counseling Association (ACA) 1-800-545-2223
American Professional Agency, Inc. 1-800-421-6694

Professional liability insurance coverage must start on or before the start of the Practicum so that coverage starts on or before the first day on site and remains in effect for the duration of class enrollment.

Special Cases for students who do not have a mental health related undergraduate degree: Current underwriting guidelines (for some companies) state that students will not be insured unless they are unpaid in their fieldwork experience. This is primarily with American Professional Agency. The student may need to check with HPSO.

Note: *Students must still obtain their own liability insurance (ACA recommendations & Liberty requirements) even in cases where a Practicum student's fieldwork site provides liability insurance coverage for the student.*

- b. **Find a Practicum site.** Interview the potential supervisor(s) to see what kind of training experiences the agency can offer. The choice of a Practicum site should be a mutual one. The student should be satisfied that this would be a good training site, and that professional growth is encouraged under this supervisor. The supervisor should feel comfortable with the clinical Practicum student and must meet program requirements for an approved supervisor (see a. below). The supervisor should also be comfortable with the responsibilities he or she is being asked to assume (see b. below and the Clinical Supervisor Responsibilities Form). It may be wise to have the interview, and then take a day or two for both people to consider the possible practicum before making the final decision.

1) **Supervisor Requirements:**

Supervisors must meet either requirement i. or ii. or both.

- i. Must hold a Ph.D. or Ed.D. in Counseling, Psychology, or a ***closely related*** field from a regionally accredited university
- ii. Must hold a valid state license in counseling, marriage and family therapy, or clinical social work and have a master's degree in Counseling, Psychology, or Social Work.
 1. Supervisors must be licensed at an independent level of practice, meaning that supervisors are able to practice without being under supervision.
 2. Licenses that typically qualify include licensed professional counselors, licensed marriage and family therapists, licensed clinical social workers, and licensed psychologists.
 - a. Licenses that typically ***do not*** qualify include those of school counselors and teachers, social workers not licensed at an independent clinical level, "national" licenses, and licenses related primarily to ministerial/pastoral duties.

2) **Supervisor Responsibilities:**

The supervisor assesses the student's progress, consults with the student regarding strategies and procedures, consults with the Coordinator of Ph.D. Clinical Training, and completes two written evaluations of the student during the semester. The supervisor has significant influence on the outcome of the clinical counseling experience. Therefore, the supervisor's relationship with the student is a matter of vital importance. It should serve as a model, exemplifying professional behavior in daily counseling activities. The supervisor ensures that relevant work experience, on-site feedback, counseling, and consultation are

provided for the student counselor.

Typically, approved supervisors will:

1. Provide an orientation with the agency and staff for the student unless the supervisor is off-site. This should include such items as agency policies, structure, personnel, and resources.
2. Insures access to agency manuals, policy statements, and files as needed for the student.
3. Assist the student in refining details of Practicum activities appropriate to the specific setting.
4. Provide structure for the student to achieve Practicum objectives.
5. Establish weekly supervisory meetings with the student. The supervisor uses this time to listen to session recordings, provide feedback, plan tasks, and discuss other aspects of the Practicum experience with the student.
6. Critique observed and recorded interviews. The supervisor shall have access to all recorded counseling sessions by the student (if they choose to have them recorded).
7. Provide Midterm and Final Evaluations of the student's counseling skills and progress, review these with the student, and give the original evaluations to the student. The student is responsible for uploading these forms on Blackboard.
8. Initiate immediate contact with the Coordinator of Ph.D. Clinical Training if problems are encountered with the student during the placement.

3) **Site Activities:**

Practicum sites need to be able to provide students with a variety of clinical activities that meet the course requirements for COUN 998 Practicum. Please see section **C. Practicum Documentation** below for descriptions of the required activity categories.

4) **Remember:**

- i. Most supervisors give their time and expertise with no monetary reimbursement. One way students can help the practicum be a rewarding experience for supervisors as well is to lighten their workload through the cases the student takes on, and by doing clinically-related tasks that they might otherwise not be able to do.
- ii. Students are encouraged to check their state board's requirements for supervision during their educational program. Some states will allow credit toward post-degree licensure residency requirements for supervised experience obtained during their degree program if the supervisor/supervision meet the board's requirements.

c. **Complete required approval documents.** If the student, supervisor, and other site leadership agree to proceed, the student should develop the Fieldwork Contract using the template available in the course. After discussing this contract with the on-site supervisor and revising it if necessary, both should sign it. The supervisor must complete the Supervisor Information Form and the Practicum Site Information Form. The student must read and sign the Student Agreement Form and the Waiver of Liability Form. All of these forms must be scanned and submitted through the links available in the Blackboard approval course. The student should retain copies of all documents for his/her own records.

d. **All approval documents must be submitted to the Practicum/Internship office through the**

Blackboard approval course at least one month prior to the start date of the course. No late documents will be accepted. Submission of the above forms does not mean automatic acceptance of the proposed site and/or supervisor: they must be approved first. The University wants to make sure the student's proposed site will provide a good educational experience and that it has adequate oversight and safeguards built in.

- e. International students must contact the Office of International Student Services to obtain a Counseling Practicum and Internship Approval Form. Their email address is: intlstucenter@liberty.edu. As an international student, this is an additional approval required before beginning the Practicum/Internship.

C. Practicum Documentation:

Practicum documentation will be a very important for the purposes of this course, but equally so in the years ahead as the student uses it in the process of applying for certification, licensure, and/or employment. The course requirements for COUN 998 are intended to help structure the Practicum so that it will be acceptable to state licensure boards. **Students should be sure to verify their state's requirements.** Documentation should include the following:

1. **Logs** (Mid-term and Final): Log sheets documenting the time the student spent in various activities at the Practicum site. Always include totals for the time spent in each activity category on the appropriate sheet in the Excel log. Also, include your cumulative totals on the Summary Sheet. Please see **D. Due Dates for Practicum Documentation** below regarding deadlines for submitting these assignments.

The 200 hours of activities related to the Practicum should fall into one of four categories:

1. Face-to-face client contact (minimum of 100 hours required)
2. Individual supervision (minimum of 10 hours required)
3. Group supervision (at a 2:1 ratio can be counted toward the individual supervision total but is but not required)
**Some states may require group supervision during the clinical training experience. Students should check their state board's requirements in regards to group supervision.
4. Related activities (minimum 80 hours recommended, but not required)

Keep a separate log sheet for each category and a summary sheet for the total hours acquired during the Practicum. **Logs are to be typed (not handwritten) in Microsoft Excel** and include the date, the specific activity, and the time spent in that activity (in hours or portions of hours, expressed in decimals). Logs will only be accepted when submitted via Blackboard in the Excel format. **Important Note: Please see rubric on Blackboard and example on the Practicum/Internship webpage for further details on how to complete the logs successfully.**

Description of Practicum Activity Categories:

Face-to-Face Client Contact (minimum 100 hours required):

To qualify as a Practicum, a growing number of states require a minimum of 200 hours of work, with at least half of that time spent in face-to-face client contact. For the purposes of the Practicum, face-to-face client contact includes time spent:

1. as a **co-therapist**
2. as an individual, marital, family or group therapy as a **solo therapist**
3. in intake interviews
4. if approved, as a supervisor of other counselors' sessions

5. observing counseling sessions conducted by experienced therapists at the student's site (if the supervisor is willing, try to observe counseling done by several therapists)
Note: *maximum of 15 hours* is permitted for observation of sessions
6. therapeutic interaction with individuals (such as therapeutically oriented conversations with persons in a group home setting, informal sessions during in-home visits, etc.)
Note: *maximum of 15 hours* is permitted for informal therapeutic interaction

In order to be counted as face-to-face client contact, time spent with clients in sessions must occur in appropriate blocks of time based on the following:

- 90 minute sessions count as a two hour session
- 45 and 60 minute long sessions may be counted as a one-hour session
- 20 and 30 minutes counts as a half-hour session
- Sessions shorter than 20 minutes should be counted as Related Activities
- More than 1 session with the same client in the same day must occur as separate sessions, with at least one hour between. They must be discrete sessions and not time spent in client observation or monitoring with some scattered therapeutic conversation.
- Time spent preparing or writing notes for client sessions should be included under Related Activities.

While some activities spent on-site may be considered as “therapeutic,” the following is a list of activities that **will not** be counted towards face-to-face client contact hours:

1. Case management
2. Telephone interviewing or counseling
3. Behavior monitoring
4. Classroom observation
5. Specific treatment modalities that do not allow discrete sessions to occur
6. Going to a movie or watching a movie
7. Playing pool, video games, etc.
8. Driving time spent with client

Important Note: Although the program allows students to use employment settings to obtain the required hours for practicum, not all “on-the-job” activities may qualify as face-to-face contact. Issues of this nature related to employment settings should be negotiated with the site and supervisor prior to formally beginning the practicum. If there is a question of whether a job-related activity will count as face-to-face client contact, then students are responsible for getting the activity approved by the University.

Individual Supervision (minimum 20 hours required):

One of the most important aspects of students’ clinical training is the quality of the individual supervision received. The expected ratio of face-to-face client contact and individual supervision is 10:1—for every 10 hours of face-to-face client contact, students should receive 1 hour of individual supervision with their approved supervisor. One hour of individual Supervision should occur at least weekly. Students will not be permitted to continue their clinical training if regular individual supervision does not occur throughout the duration of the practicum experience. For the purposes of the Practicum, individual supervision includes time spent in:

1. **individual supervision sessions** with approved supervisor. Students must have a minimum of 10 hours of Individual Supervision in this type of supervision activity.

Group Supervision (not required):

Group supervision that allows for interaction between different counselors regarding students’

clients can be a very valuable part of the clinical training experience. This category of activity may include:

1. **group supervision sessions** where the approved supervisor meeting with two or more supervisees at the same time. This activity will count as group supervision on a 1:1 ratio (i.e., 2 hour session = 2 hours group supervision). A group supervision session may only count under one category (i.e., Individual Supervision or Group Supervision).
2. **case consultation** at the counseling site. The approved supervisor must be present during case consultation sessions. If the case consultation time is spent discussing the student's client(s) only although other counselors may be present, this may count as individual supervision time. If it includes time spent on a variety of clients including the student's own and other counselors', this should be counted as Group Supervision.

Important Note: Group supervision may not be possible at every site. Students are encouraged to find a site that will provide group supervision to enhance the learning experience. If students are unable to receive group supervision, the 36 hours must be completed in one or more of the other categories (face-to-face client contact, individual supervision, related activities, or a combination of the three).

Online/Residential Students within 1 hour drive of Liberty University: Those students (both online and residential) within a one hour drive of the Liberty campus can take advantage of the on-campus Group Supervision. ***Contact the Practicum & Internship office for meeting time and place.***

Related Activities (minimum 46 hours recommended, but not required):

Many activities performed as part of the practicum are important to students' development as counseling professionals. This category of activity may include time spent:

1. learning the policies and procedures of counseling agency,
2. discussing clients or therapy-related issues with any of the agency staff,
3. researching effective treatment strategies for clients,
4. reviewing case notes, preparing for sessions, and writing up case notes after sessions,
5. updating intake histories for ongoing clients with whom other therapists are working,
6. learning to use the DSM-IV-TR effectively and accurately, and mastering the material in treatment planning books,
7. researching issues or assisting supervisor in clinically related tasks.

Other Issues and Questions related to Logs:

- If the student has difficulty getting enough face-to-face client hours to meet the Practicum requirements, the student should talk with the supervisor first to see if something can be done to increase them. If not, the student may need to add another site. The student should contact the Coordinator of Ph.D. Clinical Training if any other problems develop at the clinical site.
- The student should plan to take the DSM-IV-TR and other clinical materials and textbooks (such as Johnson, Seligman, or Reid) to study in the event that there are hours between appointments and other activities. In addition, it is important to be proactive—look for things that need to be done that would increase educational experience, and see if the staff would like the student to do them.

2. **Evaluations** (Mid-term and Final): The supervisor's midterm and final evaluations of completed clinical work. Mid-term and Final Evaluation forms are available through the Blackboard course

and on the Practicum/Internship web page. These evaluations are part of how students' progress and development is evaluated, monitored, and graded. Instructions for completion of the evaluations are included on the evaluation forms.

Evaluations should be completed by the approved supervisor and discussed as part of a regular individual supervision session. While feedback to students regarding their progress and development should be an ongoing part of the supervision process, the mid-term and final evaluations provide opportunities for a more detailed focus on specific items of interest and/or concern.

Important Note: Students who have multiple supervisors will need to have each supervisor complete mid-term and final evaluations. Additional links for submission of evaluations from multiple supervisors are available through the Blackboard.

Once evaluations have been completed and discussed, students should be given the evaluations so that they can scan them and upload these assignments into the Blackboard for the course. Please see **D. Due Dates for Practicum Documentation** below regarding deadlines for submitting these assignments.

The expectation is that the supervisor discusses the mid-term and final evaluations directly with the student, prior to the student submitting them through the Blackboard. In the rare event that the supervisor will not share the evaluation with the student, the student and/or supervisor should contact the Coordinator and/or Assistant Coordinator and provide the reasons for not doing so. If there are issues that prevent the sharing of evaluations between supervisor and supervisee, then those issues should have already been dealt with or have been brought to the attention of the Coordinator of Clinical Training.

3. **Site Evaluation** (Final): The Site Evaluation is the student's personal evaluation of the Practicum site. This assignment provides students the opportunity to give feedback to the University about their supervised clinical training while at their sites. The Site Evaluation form and format are available on the Blackboard for the course and on the Practicum/Internship web page. Once completed, this assignment should be submitted through the Blackboard. The Practicum Site Evaluation will not be shared with the site or supervisor. Please see **D. Due Dates for Practicum Documentation** below regarding deadlines for submitting these assignments.
4. **Liability Insurance Face Sheet:** The Liability Insurance Face Sheet is required as students begin their clinical training, but also at the end of each completed semester. This helps to document that there has been continuous professional liability coverage throughout the duration of the clinical training experience.

D. Due Dates for Practicum Documentation (all dates and other requirements subject to change at the discretion of the instructor):

Mid-term Logs and Mid-term Supervisor Evaluations:

Due when the student reaches 50 Face-to-Face client contact hours and at least 5 Individual Supervision hours, or at the midpoint of the semester (date posted on Blackboard), whichever comes first. Logs and supervisor evaluations need to be submitted via Blackboard. Please make sure only the student uploads the documents and does not share confidential student passwords.

Final Logs, Final Supervisor Evaluations, Site Evaluation, Liability Insurance Face Sheet:

Due when the student completes the Practicum hour requirements or at the endpoint of the semester (dates posted on Blackboard and Practicum/Internship web page), whichever comes first. Logs, supervisor evaluations, site evaluation, and Internship fieldwork contract need to be

submitted via Blackboard. Please make sure only the student uploads the documents and does not share confidential student passwords.

Points will be deducted for late submissions of up to a week. Assignments submitted after one week will receive a grade of "0" and will not be given grade credit.

E. Obtaining Approval to Register for COUN 999 (Internship):

In order to obtain approval to register for COUN 999 Counseling Internship, the following requirements must be met:

1. Student must have successfully passed the Candidacy Examination.
2. Midterm and Final Practicum documents including Supervisor Evaluation(s), Logs, Site Evaluation, up-to-date Liability Insurance Face Sheet.
3. Internship Fieldwork Contract, even if the student will be continuing with the same site and supervisor for the Internship.
4. Site Information Form (if Internship site is different than the Practicum site)
5. Supervisor Information Form (if different than the Practicum supervisor)

The student may begin accumulating hours toward Internship course requirements once all Practicum course requirements have been met and all Internship prerequisites and approval documents have been submitted and approved. Approval will be granted by the Coordinator of Ph.D. Clinical Training.

F. Remember:

- It is the student's responsibility to make sure all paperwork is received by the deadline dates, so plan accordingly (e.g., vacations, holidays, etc., including those of the approved supervisor).
- It is strongly recommended that the student keep records of all Practicum documents including logs, evaluations, and supervisor/agency contact information for certification and licensure purposes in the years ahead.

III. Grading Policies:

A. Assignment Weights and Grading Scale:

COUN 998 Practicum assignments will be graded based on the following:

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Midterm Evaluation: | 20% |
| 2. Midterm Logs | 20% |
| 3. Final Evaluation: | 20% |
| 4. Final Logs | 20% |
| 5. Site Evaluation: | 15% |
| 6. Liability Insurance Face Sheet: | 5% |

Course grades for COUN 998 Practicum will be based on the following scale:

- | | |
|----------|---------------|
| A | 94-100 |
| B | 86-93 |
| C | 76-85 |

Important Note: All course requirements, including required hours and documentation, must be successfully completed and submitted in order to pass the course. No course credit, including obtained hours, is given for a grade below C. Students obtaining a grade lower than C will be required to register for and complete an additional semester of Practicum until the course is successfully completed.

****NOTE:** Due to the number of students submitting Practicum and Internship course and approval materials at the beginning, middle, and end of each semester, please allow a turnaround time of three weeks for submitted materials to be graded and posted on Blackboard.

B. Policy Regarding Late Submission of Assignments:

Points will be deducted for late submission of graded assignments up to a week. Assignments submitted after one week will receive a grade of “0” and will not be given grade credit.

C. Quality of Required Assignments:

Successful completion of the COUN 998 Practicum course involves more than simply showing up at the approved site. Required assignments must be completed according to course requirements, formats, and deadlines in order to receive course grades of A or B.

IV. Students Needing More than One Semester to Complete Practicum:

If the student is unable to complete the Practicum hours prior to the deadline date, the student must contact phdpracticum@liberty.edu to request approval to register for another semester. This contact must be made at least **two weeks** prior to the semester end date (the specific date will be posted in Blackboard). The student is responsible for then contacting Academic Advising to enroll in the additional term ***after*** receiving approval. The Practicum may only be taken for a maximum of 3 terms (9 credit hours).

Important Notes:

1. If the student fails to enroll in the additional term and therefore the consecutive enrollment cycle is broken, **the student will need to enroll in the next available term and the previous hours accumulated towards the Practicum will *not* count.**
2. If the student fails to enroll in the Internship and therefore breaks the consecutive enrollment cycle, **the student will need to enroll in the next available term and the hours that had been previously approved to accumulate towards the Internship will *not* count.**
3. Midterm/final supervisor evaluations ***and*** midterm/final logs must continue to be submitted ***each*** semester according to course and assignment deadlines until students have successfully completed the Practicum. Liability Insurance Face Sheets must also continue to be submitted in order to demonstrate continuous coverage throughout the Practicum.

V. Other Expectations:

A. Professionalism, Ethics, and Correspondence:

When pursuing a degree for a career in the helping profession, character is of utmost importance, not just for the clients the students will work with, but with supervisors, state licensing boards, and other professionals students come in contact with. Therefore, it is expected that professionalism and ethical behavior begins with University administrators, professors, staff, and fellow students. This includes all means of correspondence from telephone conversations, face-to-face interactions, and email correspondence. Violations of this expectation are subject to program and university disciplinary action.

B. Email Communication:

As a reminder, since e-mail will be our primary method of correspondence with students, the Practicum/Internship staff does expect this communication always to be courteous and respectful.

Per the Liberty Way, “Liberty student email accounts are the official means of communication for the Liberty University community. Students must check their email account on a regular basis” (p. 14).

The Liberty account will be the primary email address where important information and reminders will be

sent regarding this course. The staff is unable to include other email addresses in regular communications; therefore, the student is responsible for checking their account for any relevant information sent to that account.

C. Ethical Standards:

When doing the Practicum, students should work in accordance with the *Ethical Standards of the American Counseling Association* (or a suitable alternate if preferred by the Practicum agency). Please review these standards carefully prior to beginning the Practicum and at the midpoint of the first semester of Practicum work. Be aware that violation of ethical standards can result in a loss of Practicum site and dismissal from the graduate counseling program. Students are responsible for following HIPAA guidelines.

D. State Licensure Requirements:

Students are expected to review their state licensing board requirements (typically available on the board's web site) regarding their educational program and supervised experience. Furthermore, they are expected to meet whichever standard is higher, whether Liberty University's or the state board's, during the time provided by the school's established deadlines. Students are responsible for knowing what additional requirements, if any, are required by their state boards.

The following is a link to the National Board of Certified Counselors directory of state licensure boards:

<http://nbcc.org/directory/Default.aspx>

VI. Contact Information:

Students and supervisors are expected to contact University personnel with comments, questions, and/or concerns that arise during the Advanced Practicum. Generally it is best to contact us sooner rather than later in the event challenges arise during the course of your clinical training.

For questions, comments, and concerns regarding the Ph.D. Advanced Practicum please email:

phdpracticum@liberty.edu

For questions not addressed in the manual please contact:

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