COUNSELING PROGRAM

PRACTICUM HANDBOOK
Students and Site Supervisors
COUN 614

Practicum Coordinator:
Caroline A. Baker, Ph.D., NCC
Associate Professor of School Counseling
Counseling and School Psychology
University of Wisconsin-River Falls
224 Wyman Education Building
410 S. Third Street
River Falls, WI 54022
Office: 715-425-3237
Fax: 715-425-3242
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome and Overview ........................................................................................................ 3  
Course Description ........................................................................................................... 3  
Preparing for Practicum .................................................................................................... 3  
  Students ....................................................................................................................... 3  
  Site Supervisors ......................................................................................................... 3  
Practicum Requirements ................................................................................................... 4  
  Site Supervisors ......................................................................................................... 4  
  Students ....................................................................................................................... 4  
  Greenwood Elementary Kids Club .............................................................................. 4  
Assignments/Tasks ........................................................................................................... 5  
Appendices
  A. Evaluation Forms ..................................................................................................... 6  
  B. Taping Permission Form ......................................................................................... 8  
  C. Malpractice Coverage ............................................................................................ 9  

Revised 9/2016
Counseling Practicum Handbook  
Department of Counseling and School Psychology  
University of Wisconsin River Falls

WELCOME!

Practicum is the first field experience in the course sequence of the Counseling Program. Students will:

- practice counseling skills with real clients in an authentic environment,
- focus on individual counseling,
- focus on small group skills, and
- conduct classroom lessons.

During Practicum, students focus on honing counseling skills while learning about how to attend to the comprehensive duties of a school counselor. This Handbook provides students and site supervisors with information to support a successful and enriching practicum experience.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

*COUN 614: Practicum* is a 100-hour practicum placement that requires students to work with clients, under the supervision of program faculty and licensed counselors, to practice individual and group counseling skills. Audio/video tapes, live supervision, and written transcripts will be required to facilitate supervision. Pass/Fail. Pre-requisites: COUN 610. Practicum occurs during your 2nd or 3rd semester in the program.

Approximately 50 hours will be obtained at a site under the supervision of a licensed counselor with 2+ years of experience with that developmental level. A list of approved sites will be provided to students the semester prior to enrolling in the course, so that students can practice securing a field placement site. The remaining 50 hours will be obtained through collaboration with River Falls School District at Greenwood Elementary School in the Kids Club after school program.

PREPARING FOR PRACTICUM

**Students:**

- In the semester before Practicum, students must attend a Pre-Practicum meeting. Here, you will receive course information and a list of sites that will host Practicum students. **DO NOT** start contacting sites until you have attended this meeting. You will not be permitted to take the course without attending this meeting.
- Review the handbook, the site agreement, and what you will be expected to achieve during Practicum. Be ready to discuss this with potential sites.
- Review and gather application materials and prepare any questions you have for your desired site. Create a plan for contacting sites and finding your placement. Update your resume and cover letter. Print copies of the handbook and site agreement to share.
- Initiate your plan, and obtain signed agreements from the sites that agree to work with you. Make a copy of the agreement and submit the original to the Practicum Coordinator. Pay attention to deadlines.
- Meet with your site supervisors before the semester to get acquainted with the specific qualities of the site.
  - Background checks will be required, as well as name badges and other documents.
- Consider personal and property safety. Participating in field experiences is at your own risk, so make sure you have made accommodations for this.

**Supervisors:**

- Students will get a list of approved sites, based on Practicum Coordinator discussions with schools and districts. If you question whether you are on or should be on the list, please contact the Practicum Coordinator. You must feel confident in your ability to provide the student the opportunities needed to fulfill the Practicum requirements, outlined below.
- Students will be contacting sites in fall and spring to secure placements for the following semester. They will be provided with system rules for obtaining placements. Please remind them to go through the appropriate channels if needed.
- A signed agreement must be submitted by the student. They will present that document to you for review and signature. Please read through it carefully.
• Please review the evaluation forms found in Appendix A and on the website. These will be completed periodically throughout the placement time.
• Contact the Program Coordinator with questions or concerns.

PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS
Practicum is a time for students to practice individual and small group counseling skills, as well as classroom curriculum with authentic clients. This should occur in partnership with the site supervisor. Practicum students have taken only a few initial counseling courses and are not ready to be working independently. It is not a time for students to be involved with scheduling, test administration, data entry, and duties that comprise the cumulative duties of the counselor in each school.

Practicum sites must be able to provide a student with the following:
1. Opportunities to work with individual students from diverse backgrounds
2. Opportunities to participate in, plan, and execute small groups
3. Opportunities to participate in, plan, and execute classroom curriculum

Site supervisors must:
1. Have a master’s degree in counseling, and be a licensed counselor for the desired developmental level.
2. Have a minimum of 3 years experience in the desired developmental level, and 1 year in the current position.
3. Understand the UWRF Counseling Program’s expectations for students.
4. Have relevant training and experience with supervision. The UWRF Counseling Program offers a free online supervision training module for those who have not completed training. Please contact the Practicum Coordinator for more information.
5. Be willing to observe the student and offer regular, weekly feedback, averaging at least 1 hour each week the student is in the site. This will include providing information on special topics and signing off on case studies, provided by the student.
6. Be willing to consult bi-weekly with the University Faculty Supervisor about the student’s progress. This could include site visits, emails, and phone calls.
7. Be willing to complete regular evaluations of the student.

Students must:
1. Have completed COUN 610 and additional 600-level courses, and be in either their 2nd or 3rd semester in the program.
2. Conform to the policies of the University, Counseling Program, school district, and the school.
3. Consult with site supervisors regularly, providing client information and progress.
4. Adhere to professional ethical and legal codes. Advocating for self is important around appropriate tasks for a school-counselor-in-training.
5. Contact site and/or university supervisors early and often with questions and concerns.
6. Complete 100 total field placement hours, at least 40 of which are direct work with clients.
7. Maintain a regular schedule, in agreement with the site supervisor. This must occur over at least 10 weeks during the semester.

GREENWOOD ELEMENTARY KIDS CLUB
In addition to 50 hours in an external and approved site, 50 hours will be obtained weekly at Greenwood Elementary School Kids Club in River Falls, Wisconsin. Students will arrive on the designated night of class (currently on Thursdays), and will participate in and lead activities with students, collecting 1-1.5 hours of direct contact with students each week. These activities will focus on the 3 domains of comprehensive school counseling programs: academic, personal-social, and career. Students will complete a RFSD background check, will consult with Kids Club staff, and will be under the supervision of a UWRF Counseling Program faculty member at all times. Further consultation with the Greenwood school counselor will occur regularly throughout the semester.
ASSIGNMENTS/TASKS
Students must complete the following assignments/tasks to successfully complete Practicum:

a. Attend a weekly seminar that will include supervised direct contact hours with students in an after-school program, and group supervision to process cases and practicum experiences. This time is crucial for your development as a school counselor, due to observation of peer activities, participation in skill-building and case presentations, and learning about special topics; therefore, absences are strongly discouraged. Missed time must be made up during the semester.

b. Obtain 100 total Practicum hours. Of this, 40 hours must be direct hours working with clients. Hours will be obtained during the weekly seminar as well as additional hours at your site (40-50 hours over 10-15 weeks).
   a. Hours must be completed during the official UWRF semester, but over at least 10 weeks.
   b. Maintain weekly hour logs that will be signed by the site supervisor and submitted during seminar. Copies must be kept by the student.

c. Complete and submit a self-evaluation with Appendix A.

d. Receive live supervision of counseling interactions with clients. Preferably, students will obtain permission to audio or visually tape counseling sessions for use in supervision. See Appendix B for example permission forms.

e. Present case studies in group supervision. Each will need a write-up, with a focus on counseling skills. They must be spread out over the semester to show counseling student growth.
   a. Each case study must have either an audio/visual tape (with permission) or a transcript of the counseling session.
   b. Each case study will need the signature of the site supervisor to indicate that a case discussion has occurred.
   c. Copies for each group supervision member must be provided. No copies may be made at the seminar site.

f. Submit a Portfolio, which will require responding to all 19 standards regarding the Practicum experience.

g. Research and share materials on special topics as outlined in the syllabus. Materials will be any information or documentation that you can share from your placement, and could include school crisis plans, classroom management, and mandatory reporting processes.

h. Additional assignments as required.
APPENDIX A

Site Supervisor Evaluation Form

Please review this with the student at the start of the placement. Formal completion and review with the student must occur at least twice during the placement time—at the mid-point and end. The original document is placed in the student’s file, and student and site supervisor should maintain a copy. Program Faculty rely on these evaluations to determine the student’s final grade.

Student’s Name: _____________________ Site Supervisor’s Name: _____________________ Date: ___________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Evaluation (Circle one)</th>
<th>Total Hours Completed to Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Improvement needed - Concern warrants plan for remediation</th>
<th>Focus for growth - Does not merit plan for remediation</th>
<th>Developmentally appropriate</th>
<th>Advanced for developmental stage</th>
<th>Unable to assess - Not enough information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>NEI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PROFESSIONAL DEMEANOR

1. Treats others (e.g., colleagues, clients, staff, faculty) respectfully. 1 2 3 4 NEI
2. Is prepared, reliable, and shows an appropriate work ethic. 1 2 3 4 NEI
3. Completes assigned responsibilities. 1 2 3 4 NEI
4. Responsive to supervision and feedback. 1 2 3 4 NEI
5. Maintains poise under stress. 1 2 3 4 NEI
6. Exhibits ethical behavior and decision-making. 1 2 3 4 NEI
7. Engages in self-assessment and reflection. 1 2 3 4 NEI
8. Openness to culturally competent learning. 1 2 3 4 NEI
9. Works collaboratively with colleagues. 1 2 3 4 NEI
10. Displays effective communication with others. 1 2 3 4 NEI

COUNSELING SKILLS

1. Level I Skills - Initial Skill Sets
   • Communicates interest and attention in client 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Demonstrates appropriate “Yes sets” (e.g., nodding head) 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Sensitive to cultural preferences 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Sensitive to developmental differences 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Open body positioning and posture 1 2 3 4 NEI
2. Level II Skills - Advanced Listening Skills
   • Displays appropriate level of empathy 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Reflects accurate feelings 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Restates content 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Hears underlying feelings and concerns 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Does not unnecessarily interrupt client 1 2 3 4 NEI
   • Concentrates completely on the client 1 2 3 4 NEI
3. **Level III Skills- Connection and Introduction**
   - Utilizes opening that was inviting and set the tone for change  1 2 3 4 NEI
   - Finds common ground with the client  1 2 3 4 NEI
   - Self-discloses appropriately.  1 2 3 4 NEI

4. **Level IV Skills- Minimal Questions/Wrap up**
   - Uses furthering responses appropriately (e.g., “tell me more”)  1 2 3 4 NEI
   - Allows client to lead the conversation  1 2 3 4 NEI
   - Provides closure to the session, with future focus  1 2 3 4 NEI
   - Appropriately terminates with a client  1 2 3 4 NEI

5. **Utilizes ethical, developmental, & cultural case conceptualization.**  1 2 3 4 NEI

**COMMENTS:**

By signing the document, both student and supervisor acknowledge reviewing the progress, nothing areas for growth. Submit the original to your Practicum/University Supervisor; keep copies for your files.

Printed names and signatures of site supervisor and student:

________________________________________________________________________ Date: ________________

Site Supervisor

________________________________________________________________________ Date: ________________

Practicum Student
APPENDIX B

Example consent form for taping - if using this you must rewrite for your specific site, consulting with your site supervisor throughout this process.

Your counselor is a counseling intern who has completed most of the required coursework for a graduate degree in counseling at the University of Wisconsin River Falls. Your counselor has successfully completed the coursework and training by national standard to be prepared to provide counseling services. The University of Wisconsin River Falls graduate program in counseling is accredited by the Wisconsin Department of Public instruction and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education; its faculty and students adhere to the American Counseling Association’s (ACA) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. Standards require graduate students participate in on-the-job training internship during which experience licensed counselors supervise them. The ACA Code of Ethics and Standard of Practice require that persons receiving services from counseling interns are aware that the interns are being supervised. Counseling interns receive supervision by more experience counselors, both on-site and at the University of Wisconsin River Falls graduate training program. All records of counselor services are considered confidential professional information. Counseling interns are required to demonstrate their skills in interactions with clients by providing supervisors work samples in the form of recorded tapes (audio and video) of their counseling sessions. If you agree to be taped, these tapes are considered to be confidential and will be protected by the intern and supervisors of the counseling intern. The only time this confidentiality may be breached is at your request, or in instances of abuse or harm to self or others.

Consent to tape counseling sessions:

I ___do/ ___ do not (check one) grant permission to allow these counseling sessions to be taped. I understand that only counseling intern supervisors and counseling interns will be allowed to review these tapes, and that these tapes will be subject to the same standards of confidentiality as all counseling records as specified by the American Counseling Association’s Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice, as well as the laws of the State of Tennessee. I understand that I may withdraw my permission to tape at any time.

_____________________  ________________________________________________
Signature of Client       Date

_____________________  ________________________________________________
Signature of Client’s Parent or Guardian     Date
APPENDIX C

All University of Wisconsin System student counselors/teachers/interns are covered for personal injury and property damage under the State of Wisconsin Insurance Fund. The following areas are included in the policy:

1. Personal Injury
2. Property damage (includes intangible properties such as defamation of character)
3. Libel and slander
4. Wrongful eviction (out of living quarters)
5. Malicious prosecution (arrested in error)
6. Wrongful entry
7. Assault of battery committed for the purpose of preventing injury
8. Corporal punishment of pupils
9. Automobile liability coverage in state cars (Student Driver Authorization Forms must be completed for liability coverage by all non-payroll personnel. These forms may be obtained from your local university insurance coordinator.)

Neither the U.W. System nor the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities carry health insurance for interns or student counselors/teachers. The student may, however, be covered by programs at the individual college or university. You may wish to join the Student Education Association in your major for additional benefit packages offered by those associations (i.e., WEA, MEA, etc.).