Counselor Education Field Experience and Internship

Field experiences and internships provide our counselors-in-training with diverse, real world experiences that are designed to help them develop requisite counseling skills and knowledge in the counseling profession. These experiences include classroom didactic and experiential activities, small group seminars, and supervised field experiences. All of these components provide students with experience in all aspects of professional functioning applicable to their program of study.

**Practicum - MHS 6800**

Practicum involves counselors-in-training completing 100 hours in a school. This equates to approximately 1 day a week, or two half-days a week, for an entire semester. Of the 100 hours, students must accumulate 40 by providing direct services to students (i.e., individual or group counseling, or classroom guidance). The remaining 60 hours apply to indirect services to students. Non-direct contact hours are individual or group supervision, on-site meetings, and research or preparing of service delivery activities, observation, etc.

**Internship – SDS 6820 and SDS 6830**

Internship involves the counselors-in-training completing 300 - 600 hours in a school. The 300 hours equate to approximately 2 1/2 days a week, or five half-days a week, for an entire semester. Of the 300 hours, students are expected to provide 120 hours of direct service work to students and 80 hours of indirect service. Counselors-in-training who do not have an education degree must complete 600 hours of coursework that equates to 240 hours of direct service and 160 hours of indirect service. In completing 600 hours of coursework, they may elect to do all hours in one semester or divide the coursework into two semesters.

**Other Field Experiences**

It is the belief of the Counselor Education Program that counselors-in-training need the opportunity to combine their didactic learning with actual experience in professional settings with persons who have the knowledge, skills and dispositions to assist them in the formation of a professional role and identity as a counselor. Hence, counselors-in-training are required in various courses to go into the field and interview school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers and others about their role and function. Additionally, some courses have a Service Learning component where counselors-in-training are allowed to go into schools and conduct action research on some relevant issue or topic, develop a consultation project for the school or simply to shadow the professional for a day of observations. Lastly, counselors-in-training have the benefit of hearing from knowledgeable professionals in the field, such as school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, board attorneys, etc. who are invited to come and speak to students about the current trends and issues in the field and their roles and responsibilities. The interview technique, shadowing activities, service learning and on-site presentations by professionals all provide an opportunity for the counselor-in-training to gain clinical insight from professionals who work directly with the client population and to learn from these professionals who are familiar with the requirements and demands of the profession. Some examples include:
MHS 5005 – Introduction to Counseling  
students shadow and Interview a School Counselor - (approx 6-8 hours)*

MHS 5340 – Career Development  
students administer and interpret a battery of career assessment instruments  (6-8 hours)

MHS 5400 – Theory /Practice of Counseling  
Use several theory-based counseling interventions with a volunteer client  (4-6 hours)*

MHS 6220 – Individual/Psy Educ Testing  
Presentation from School Psychologist and/or observe the administration of a testing instrument (approx. 2-3 hours)*

MHS 6600 – Consultation Skills  
Conduct a consultation project in a school and/or have a consultant from the city come and speak  
(Approx 2 weeks or 20 hours)*

MHS 5780 – Legal and Ethical Issues  
Field trip to Florida Supreme Court and/or have a school board attorney come and speak  (2-3 hours)

MHS 6050 – Personality Theory  
Field trip to mental health facility and/or observe personality disorders in schools and/or mental facilities  (3-6 hours)*

MHS 6420 – Counseling Minorities  
Attend an ethnic event such as Jewish Festival, Catholic Red Mass, Unity Day, Riley House Museum, etc. and develop paper  (4-8 hours)*

MHS 6930 – Substance Abuse  
Attend AA/NA meetings; volunteer at a drug detox center, interview a substance abuse counselor  (6-8 hours)*

- **These activities require a 6-10 page critique of perceptions, lessons learned, and applicability to counseling.**

These training components are designed to provide counselors-in-training with meaningful professional and personal growth opportunities. They also help counselors-in-training acquire proficiency and gain confidence by applying their emerging skills not only under the supervision of experienced counselors, but hearing from professionals in the field themselves about their roles and responsibilities. The clinical courses are designed to ensure skill development along with a strong knowledge base that results in the formulation of a professional role and identity as a counselor.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time spent in field-related activities that are not with clients or students.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Direct client contact</strong> Time spent in direct contact with clients or students. Examples of direct contact hours are all forms of counseling sessions and service provision, outreach/consultation, parent meetings or consultation, and classroom guidance, etc.</td>
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