**Department of Psychology**

University of Central Oklahoma

**Practicum Guidelines for Counseling and MFT Students**

1. Enrollment in practicum requires instructor permission. Students are required to attend a pre-practicum planning meeting for orientation and must complete an application for practicum**.** Once the completed application has been submitted, it will be reviewed by the counseling faculty for approval. Only after a student has been approved and met with the practicum coordinator may she or he contact potential sites. Students are required to schedule a minimum of three practicum interviews. Students make their final site selection in consultation with the practicum coordinator. Students may not to sign a contract until the site has been approved by the practicum coordinator.
2. Students must have completed all required classes (as shown on the applications) by the anticipated starting date of their practicum with a grade of “B” or higher. Students should indicate on their application which courses they are currently completing. Students may not take more than 9 hours of additional course over the two-semester period of their practicum. In addition, students will not be approved for practicum if they have any “Incomplete” grades in their coursework at the time of their application.
3. Personal difficulties may affect a student's capacity to perform well and to maximize learning opportunities in practicum. Personal problems that may interfere with a student’s performance should be discussed with the practicum instructorprior to enrollment. The instructor can provide consultation regarding the appropriateness and timing of enrollment. The instructor and site supervisors should also be informed of any personal problems that emerge during practicum that may affect the student's work (e.g., divorce, death of a family member, serious health problems, serious family problems). In such instances the instructor and site supervisors will work supportively with students toward resolution of personal difficulties. Serious, unresolved personal problems may require interruption of and/or termination of practicum.
4. It is not advisable for practicum students to work full time during the practicum. Students are required to attend all of the following functions on a weekly basis: practicum class, supervision sessions at the practicum site, and other activities as required by the practicum site.

5. Practicum students are required to secure malpractice insurance through ACA (American Counseling Association), APA (American Psychological Association), NAMP (Northamerican Association of Masters in Psychology), or another agency of their choice.

6. Students will be enrolled in three credits hours per semester, and as such need to work a minimum of 18 hours per week (300 total hours per semester).

7. Students are required to keep a log of all hours worked which documents services, supervision, staff meetings, and other activities. This log will be turned in weekly to your instructor. Students should have 25% direct service hours each semester (i.e., 75 hours for a three-hour practicum). The site supervisor is required to approve the hours logged by the practicum student each week; the practicum instructor will then approve the hours as well.

8. Students in practicum provide services under supervision in counseling/mental health facilities in the greater Edmond/Oklahoma City area. Site selection is jointly determined by the student, the site, and the practicum instructor. An orientation to sites and procedures regarding site selection will be provided at the pre‑practicum planning meeting. Students are required visit with the practicum coordinator prior to contacting any potential sites.

9. All practicum work is to be done in assigned sites or locations authorized by sites. Students should not provide any services independently or alone in a facility. Students are not authorized to provide transportation to clients.

10. Practicum students are held responsible for following the ethicalcodes of APA, ACA, or AAMFT. Students should familiarize themselves with these codes.Serious violations of the professional and ethical principles will result in a grade of F and the terminationof the student’s practicum.

11. All practicum work is done under supervision. Primary supervision is provided by the practicum site supervisor. Students are required to receive a minimum of one hour of individual face-to-face supervision per week (and additional supervision as needed) from their site supervisor. The practicum instructor also provides supervision as needed. Students are required to attend the weekly practicum class and to meet individually with the practicum instructor as required by the professor. It is the student's responsibility to notify the practicum professor and site supervisor(s) of any concerns regarding supervision to insure that service delivery by students is appropriate, competent, and ethical.

12. There are two key roles that are critical to securing a practicum placement. The first role is the person who agrees to the practicum placement and signs the contract with UCO on behalf of the agency. This person is typically the director of the agency or program, and may be a licensed mental health professional. In rare cases, the person who signs the contract could be someone with a MD or MBA. The second key role is the site supervisor, who may or may not be the same person who signed the contract. The site supervisor should optimally be a LPC or a licensed psychologist for counseling students and a LMFT for MFT students. A differently licensed supervisor would need to be approved by the practicum coordinator ahead of time.

13. Practicum students should limit work with emergency cases. Cases should be screened for appropriate assignment. Should an emergency arise, the student should seek immediate consultation. Students should know how to seek immediate consultation from their site. The practicum instructor must also be notified as soon as possible.

14. Practicum students will keep case notes of every session that will be reviewed by site supervisors. Students are also required to complete all paperwork required by their site.

15. Practicum students are considered junior staff members of the sites where they work and will maintain professional relationships there. Practicum students must immediately report to the instructor any involvement in staff conflicts.

16. First semester practicum students will request a written evaluation from their site supervisor at mid‑term and again at the end of the semester. Second semester students will request the written evaluation at the end of the semester. Your instructor will provide a site evaluation form that will be returned to the instructor. Site supervisors may, if they prefer, provide written evaluations in an alternative format.

17. Students who are encountering difficulty with counseling skills may be asked to discontinue client contact and may be provided with an opportunity to remediate the skill problem through simulation and role play or other appropriate activities.

18. Grades for the course will be assigned based on each professor’s criteria outlined in the syllabus.

19. Practicum positions are unpaid positions.