PRE 842/948: Counseling Practicum, Fall, 2012

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Contact: 785-864-9654
Office hours: By appointment
Text: None

Schedule: Wednesdays, 9:00 - 11:45
Location: 620 JRP

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Course Description from the Graduate Catalog

This course is taken as one of the last courses in the master’s degree counseling program. The primary purpose of the course is for the student to develop individual counseling skills while functioning in a counseling setting. In addition to individual skills, students are also encouraged to participate in group counseling and other counseling related activities within the particular counseling setting.

Course objectives

The department has proposed certain performance expectations for practicum students:

1. To be able to develop and sustain a basic helpful relationship with clients that is characterized by respect, trust, warmth, and regard for the client as a person.
2. To be able to focus on the central concerns of the client and not get lost in peripheral issues.
3. To be able to locate and use appropriate sources of information (e.g., test information, occupational/educational information, referral sources) needed to assist the client.
4. To be able to separate your concerns and agendas from those of the client.
5. To understand and honor individual and cultural diversity issues as they present themselves in your work with clients and supervisors.
6. To be able to establish and manage with clients appropriate and manageable goals.
7. To be able to conceptualize the process and direction single counseling interviews take, as well as the overall direction of work with a client.
8. To give and receive constructive comments regarding your work as well as that of other students in practicum.
9. To learn to use a variety of strategies in appropriate and purposeful ways.
10. To develop a clear sense of professional and ethical conduct in your work.
The Joint Council on Professional Education in Psychology (JCPEP, 1990) recommended the following criteria for student readiness for internship training:

1. the ability to apply theoretical knowledge
2. empirical skills in critical thinking
3. mastery of basic assessment and intervention techniques and procedures
4. conduct in keeping with the ethical principles of psychologists
5. effective interpersonal functioning
6. the ability and willingness to utilize supervision in a constructive manner
7. sensitivity to issues of human diversity (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, SES, lifestyle)

These criteria represent the consensus position of the membership of JCPEP, who represent the major APA practitioner divisions and other organizations concerned with professional preparation for the practice of psychology--specifically, divisions 12 (clinical), 16 (school), 17 (counseling), 29 (psychotherapy), 35 (psychology of women), 39 (psychoanalysis), 42 (independent practice), 43 (family), 44 (lesbian and gay), APA of Graduate Students, APPIC, CCPTP (counseling), CUDCP (clinical), and NCSPP (professional). It is reasonable, therefore, to keep these readiness criteria in mind as you reflect on your practicum and other supervised clinical experiences.

Minimum Contact Hours

Students are expected to accumulate a minimum of 100 direct face-to-face/clinical hours over the course of a 2-semester practicum (842/895 or 842/948). Direct client contact can include individual, group, couples, and family therapy. In addition to the actual therapy sessions, direct client contact can also include intake interviews, educational and psychological testing (conducted on a one-on-one basis), the taking of psychosocial histories, and anything where there is an interface between the client and the therapist, or collateral contact with the client’s family. At least 25 hours of this 100 must be conducted in one-on-one or couples counseling sessions (not in group therapy and not in assessment). Non-contact hours can fall into a large group of activities like charting, staff meetings, and case conferences, supervision, and session preparation. Students failing to meet this contact hour minimum will not successfully complete practicum. Student progress in practicum toward meeting the requirement will be monitored by the practicum instructor and the Practicum Coordinator. If a student has not accrued 50 face-to-face hours by the time grades are submitted in the fall, the instructor will assign a grade of Incomplete. Once the student has reached 50 hours in the spring semester and is progressing adequately in practicum, the grade will be changed to Satisfactory. Some sites start out slower than others, as they have more extensive training or have students observe prior to seeing clients, so it is not uncommon for students to reach the 50 hour milestone early in the spring semester.

Practicum site expectations

The clinical and professional opportunities available to students on-site will differ among the various sites. Since this is a counseling practicum, it is expected that the bulk of your time on-site will be spent counseling individuals-- in individual sessions or in groups. However, I also expect and hope that you will become involved in other aspects of your setting including, but not
limited to: (a) attending case/staff conferences, (b) familiarizing yourself with the assessment tools and practices used in your setting, (c) involving yourself in programs the setting has in progress, (d) participating in organizational/administrative functions, (e) consulting with other personnel, and (f) familiarizing yourself with the setting's referral sources.

The actual number of clients you see, as well as any additional clinical/professional experiences in which you may be asked or required to participate, will be dictated by the setting. As a general rule for this course, however, you are expected to be on-site a minimum of two days per week and to carry an average on-site case load of 4 clients (one-hour sessions) per week. For doctoral students, anything less than that may jeopardize your eligibility for internship. **If at any time you have difficulty meeting this expectation, please let me know IMMEDIATELY.**

**Supervision**

It is an expectation of this department that your practicum site will provide you with an on-site supervisor and at least one hour of individual supervision each week throughout the semester. Additionally, it is an expectation that you will be permitted to tape record (audio and/or video) your sessions with your clients. Ideally, those tapes will be available for review on campus as a part of your practicum.

Your on-site supervisor and I have very clear dual obligations, and it is important for you to keep both of these obligations in mind as you receive supervision and consultation feedback:

1. We have the obligation to you to provide you (within the constraints of time and resources) with the assistance you need to prepare for eventual practice and to develop into a competent counselor or psychologist. Neither of us will expect you to become a seasoned clinician by the end of practicum; but each of us will expect you to be inquisitive and open, willing to take reasonable risks, gaining in skill, and developing a sense of professional competence. You, in turn, may expect us to provide you with assistance in developing your professional competencies and identity.

2. We also have an obligation to the clients who come to you for assistance--to assure to the best of our ability that the services that you render are appropriate and helpful. Although we are concerned about your development as a counselor or psychologist, we must also be intensely concerned about the effects you have on your clients.

**Individual Consultation**

In addition to your on-site supervision, I or one of the Counseling Psychology doctoral student College Teaching Consultants will meet with you weekly for one hour to focus on specific skill development. While we will be discussing specifics of your sessions, we will be trying to develop or improve skills you are using in your work generally. **Responsibility for supervision of your CASES is completely in the hands of your on-site supervisor, and if anything that gets suggested in class or in your consultations should ever conflict with anything your site supervisor is telling you, it is YOUR responsibility to let your consultant and me know that at once.** None of us can afford for you to be receiving mixed signals about how you are to be
handling your cases. The focus in our sessions is on generic skill development, though we are using your cases as a starting point for which skills to work on.

Class Sessions: Our class sessions are intended to be both instructional and consultative in nature:

They will be instructional in that we will try to spend a part of each session discussing some topic central to professional practice. A part of this will include brief student presentations. The presentation of topics will be the shared responsibility of everyone in the class. The presentations should be applied in nature and should be of general interest to the entire class. The topic may be an issue, intervention, test, or assessment strategy, type of client, etc. You may choose to make a formal presentation, lead a discussion, or use some other presentational strategy. Regardless of your approach, however, you should be prepared to serve as the resident expert on the topic.

Class sessions will be consultative in the sense that you will be expected to present cases for review and discussion. The consultative aspect of these sessions serves the purposes of:

- sharing with others the kinds of clients with whom you are working, your style and strategies as a counselor in training, and the peculiar difficulties that you experience in your work with clients;
- receiving support and assistance in developing skill areas;
- receiving feedback concerning possible effects you are having on your clients;
- allowing others to learn from you; and
- extinguishing the anxiety each of us feels about presenting our work to others.

Each student will be required to make several case presentations. These should include

(a) a brief introduction to the case--including a description of the client and the circumstances that brought her/him into counseling.

(b) a summary and conceptualization (theoretical integration) of the case to date--including:

1. a summary of the psychological, social, medical, etc. factors relevant to the case;
2. an integrative summary of any assessment information that you have acquired (share profiles/protocols with the class when possible);
3. a summary of what you have done and what you are doing to assist the client with her/his concerns, and why (i.e., a case process conceptualization); and
4. an analysis of the effects of your interventions.

(c) EITHER a 15-minute segment of audio or video tape,
   - OR - a typed transcript of a 15-minute segment of the session.
Although your on-site supervisor will provide your case-specific supervision, you should **come to each class session prepared to review your cases with the group.** This requires some preparation on your part. In particular, be prepared to provide a summary of each of your cases to date, and your conceptualization of the cases. Be prepared to discuss what you think is going on with your clients and why, what you are doing with your clients and why, and what sort of help or assistance you think you need in order to work more effectively (and efficiently) with your clients. Review your sessions and identify those areas/interactions/issues that concern you and on which you want the help of the group. Most weeks you will only get to present a minimum amount of information about a subset of the cases with which you are working.

At this stage of your professional development, each of you should be personally and professionally able to share and receive information, suggestions, and other constructive comments with your professional colleagues. It is my expectation that each of you will share in the consultation and instruction of each other throughout the semester.

The success of practicum class depends mostly on our ability to create a safe environment in which we can try out new skills. These are new skills, so the expectation is not that you are expert in them. Willingness to try out new skills in front of the group is what is needed, as well as the willingness and ability to give constructive and sensitive feedback. If you are struggling with any of this we will have regular discussions about it.

**Evaluation**

The previously noted course objectives provide the framework for evaluative judgments concerning students' clinical performance in the course. Clearly, judgments concerning performance relative to these objectives involve an element of subjective/clinical judgment on the part of instructors--this is inherent in any clinical course. In order to try to control for possible misperceptions, early and ongoing evaluation is important; and we will do our best to provide you with this.

Although it is our intent to be supportive and encouraging, evaluative feedback may not always be positive. That is, some of the feedback that you receive will require (or at least encourage) you to accommodate and change. Although you are probably doing much that is clinically correct, our expectation is that you will develop through your experiences in this course--not that you will stay the same.

In the end, the largest part of your final evaluation will reflect where you are in your professional development by considering the course objectives in two ways:

1. How much and what kinds of progress has the student made?
2. Where is the student at the end of the course?

In addition, however, you are expected to:

1. attend each class session--coming prepared to discuss readings, cases, etc.
2. carry an average client load of 4 clients per week
3. tape record each session with every client (if allowable at your site)
4. do research appropriate to the clients/issues with which you are dealing
5. attend weekly supervision sessions with your on-site supervisor
6. attend weekly consultation sessions with me or your doctoral student consultant
7. keep a log of all practicum-related activities
8. provide constructive feedback to peers, receive feedback from peers, supervisor, consultant, and instructor non-defensively
9. behave and dress professionally, and adhere to the practice and ethical standards of the profession at all times
10. present the cases and content presentations described earlier in the syllabus.

Course requirements will be weighted as follows:
   60% Individual counseling, on-site activities, and supervision/consultation
   20% Case Presentations
   20% Class participation (discussions, feedback, presentations, & role plays)

You must make satisfactory effort toward all course requirements in order to pass the course.
Goals and Objectives of KU’s Counseling Psychology Doctoral Program

GOAL I: THE PROGRAM PRODUCES GRADUATES WHO ARE COMPETENT SCIENTIST-PRACTITIONER GENERALISTS.
Objective #1. Graduates are capable of synthesizing and integrating psychological theory, research, and practice.
Objective #2. Graduates are knowledgeable about and capable of generating original research and scholarship.
Objective #3. Graduates are knowledgeable about and clinically competent in the areas of assessment, diagnosis, treatment, and supervision and consultation.
Objective #4. Graduates understand and embrace the importance of cultural and individual diversity in their clinical and scholarly work.
Objective #5. Graduates are capable of identifying and responding appropriately to legal and ethical issues that may arise in their roles as counseling psychologists.

GOAL II: THE PROGRAM PRODUCES GRADUATES WHO HAVE FOUND A PARTICULAR PATH WITHIN THE SPECIALTY OF COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY, ABOUT WHICH THEY ARE BOTH COMPETENT AND PASSIONATE.
Objective #6. Graduates have a clear sense of professional identity as counseling psychologists.
Objective #7. Graduates have begun to develop an identifiable area of professional interest and expertise within counseling psychology.

GOAL III: THE PROGRAM PROVIDES A POSITIVE PROFESSIONAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT CHARACTERIZED BY COOPERATION AND RESPECT, WITH AN EMPHASIS ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDIVIDUAL STRENGTHS AND ON PROFESSIONAL COLLABORATION.
Objective #8: The program provides a supportive environment that respects and encourages individual student strengths, goals, and life balance.
Objective #9: Students display professionalism in their relationships with faculty, staff, and peers that will enable them to flourish in multiple career settings.

Categories from the end-of-semester evaluation

I. RELATIONSHIP WITH CLIENT
II. COUNSELING TREATMENT AND TECHNIQUES
III. CONCEPTUALIZATION
IV. CULTURAL AND INDIVIDUAL DIVERSITY
IV. RELATIONSHIP WITH SUPERVISOR
V. ETHICS AND PROFESSIONALISM
VI. CASE MANAGEMENT