

Course Number: CED 653G

Course Title: Practicum in Counseling: School Certification

Credits: 3

Prerequisites/Co-requisites: Counseling Major; currently taking CED 648: Counseling in School Settings

For Whom Planned: This course is intended for Masters level students in school counseling, concurrently enrolled in CED 648.

Instructor Information :

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Catalog Information: Skill development and application of theory to practice in counseling, assessment and consultation through supervised work with clients in laboratory setting.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to define, describe, apply, examine, formulate, and appraise the necessary components of an efficient and effective developmentally comprehensive school counseling program. The purpose of this early field placement is to introduce students to the various functions of a professional school counselor and to the school context. Practicum students typically are in their first semester in the master's level counseling program. They are enrolled concurrently in skills training and theory courses. Many students will not have had previous experience in the schools, therefore, the practicum experience provides a learning experience about the role of a school counselor.

Practicum students will be in the school for a minimum of 45 hours during the semester, approximately 4 hours per week. Attached is a list of the type of experiences the student may have while working in the school setting, and several activities that the student is required to complete. Students are encouraged to become involved with responsibilities that fit a beginning skill level. Students are not to be involved in individual or group counseling sessions, except as an observer. Practicum students will meet in groups with a doctoral Graduate Assistant and/or the instructors during the semester to process their experiences and to present a classroom guidance lesson.

Teaching Strategies: Since this course requires students to be on site, learning outcomes will be achieved through experiential opportunities presented in their practicum site and organized through the activities delineated in this syllabus. In addition, students will take part in a group supervision exercise which will enable them to (a) process their experiences on site and (b) prepare and plan for their classroom guidance experiences.

Evaluation Methods and Guidelines for Assignments:

Required Practicum Activities

Required activities are those that must be done in order to complete the practicum. They are:

1. The fulfillment of the 45 hour requirement. This includes minimum of 45 hours of on-site time.
2. A minimum of 3 full days on site. (A full day entails arriving at the time your site host arrives, or before, and leaving when your site host leaves.)
3. Prompt attendance at all practicum meetings.
4. The planning and delivery of at least one classroom guidance lesson in the school setting.

In addition, you will be required to complete the following activities for successful completion of your practicum experience. You should write about these activities and your reactions to them in your log book. The activities are:

5. Assist with a major, ongoing project of the counselor's choice.
6. Review counselor and office filing system and cumulative records.

7. Complete at least three hours of classroom observation over a period of three days of site visits.
8. Interview a student support specialist (see below for examples).
9. Do something involving parents such as an education session or parent newsletter.
10. Follow the school principal or assistant principal for a full day. Interview him/her at the end of this day.
11. Observe at least three individual and/or group counseling sessions.
12. Do something to support and show appreciation for the school staff/faculty (see below for examples).
13. Choose two (2) of the following:
 - Attend an SSST meeting.
 - Attend a county-wide counselors' meeting or training.
 - Attend a school staff meeting.
 - Participate in the coordination of one or more statewide tests.

Suggested Practicum Activities

Suggested activities are additional activities listed as possibilities. They are ideas of what the student can do (if there is extra time) in addition to the required activities above. It is not expected that the student will be involved in all of the activities listed. These activities are:

1. Observe the full range of activities of a professional school counselor, including counseling, consulting, and coordinating. (Note that the practicum student should not provide individual and/or group counseling.)
2. Observe classrooms and interact with students through tutoring and guidance activities. Try to include special populations such as the academically gifted and the learning disabled.
3. Observe and assist with special services such as at-risk programs and in-school suspension.
4. Participate in coordinating/administrating functions such as testing, school-based committees, scheduling, IEP's, and records and files.
5. Learn about planning and evaluating a comprehensive counseling program and individual guidance units.
6. Become familiar with available counseling materials (games, kits, career information, audio visual aids and the like).
7. Participate in activities such as co-teaching classroom guidance or assisting individual students (not counseling).
8. Learn methods of assessing students (e.g. behavioral observation, standardized tests) for the purposes of counseling, consulting with parents and teachers, and placement.
9. Observe or participate in consultations and conferences with parents and teachers.
10. Participate in public relations activities such as newsletter and PTAs.
11. Become familiar with the structure and policies of the school such as the curriculum, extra-curricular activities, discipline procedures, etc.
12. Learn the organizational structure of the school system, and how the pupil services and school counseling fits into the administration and governance of the system.
13. Interview other pupil services professionals such as the school psychologist, school social worker, speech-language clinician, and school nurse. Learn how the professional school counselor works with these other professionals.
14. Become familiar with procedures for contact and referral to agencies outside the school system.

All assignments are graded Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory. Furthermore, you are to keep a journal of your experiences which your instructor will check twice during the semester. The journal is intended to help you process your ideas, beliefs, and observations of a school counselor's role, as well as the nature of the school counseling profession. The journals are to be typed and turned in to your instructor.

Required Texts/Readings/References: There are no required readings for this course.

Topical Outline/Calendar:

Below is a sample of how you may wish to complete these required tasks. You may adjust this schedule as needed but all tasks must be completed.

Day 1: Introductory day – ask the counselor about their major tasks for the fall semester and ask what they would like help with – this must be an ongoing project throughout the semester. It might be organizing files, helping with scheduling, testing, orientation groups for new students, etc. You will assist with this project throughout your practicum experience.

Day 2: Review the counselor's filing system so as to understand the organization used. Also, review the school's cum folder filing system and ways that they maintain the privacy of these records. By the end of the day, you should understand the types of files kept by the school counselor as well as what is included in a cum folder. Also, ask the school counselor for a list of excellent teachers in your school and ask permission from one of them to observe his/her classes over three weeks time.

Day 3: Begin your classroom observations. You should observe at least one hour of class time during each observation. Observe class management strategies, teacher interaction, student reaction to the teacher, motivation level of teacher and student. Also, observe what your counselor does on this day. You are required to observe at least three individual and/or group counseling sessions. You may be able to start this today. Next, schedule your interview for day 5's assignment (see below). Finally, continue working on your ongoing project (from day 1).

Day 4: Continue your classroom observations. Also, continue to work on your project and/or upcoming classroom guidance presentation or observe your site supervisor.

Day 5: Continue your classroom observations. Also, conduct an interview with one of the student support personnel (i.e. school psychologist, school social worker, school resource person for special education). Next, prepare for day 6's activity (see below). Finally, continue to work on your project and/or upcoming classroom guidance presentation or observe your site supervisor.

Day 6: Do something involving parents. This can be a parent education session or parent newsletter. You don't need to do this on your own. Find out what the school counselor is doing related to parents, and find a part of it that you can extensively help with. Also, continue to work on your project and/or upcoming classroom guidance presentation or observe your site supervisor. Finally, schedule your appointment with the school principal or assistant principal (see day 7).

Day 7: Follow the school principal or assistant principal for a day. Sometime toward the end of this day, interview the school principal. Be sure to ask about their view of the role of the school counselor.

Day 8: Finalize your classroom guidance presentation – find out whom you will be presenting to, make sure you have the teacher's permission, and go over the presentation with your site host (see day 9). Also, continue to work on your project and/or upcoming classroom guidance presentation or observe your site supervisor.

Day 9: Present your classroom guidance session to at least one class. If possible, present it to two or more classes so you can understand how different groups react to the same topic. Also, ask your site host to observe this presentation, if possible, so you can receive feedback.

Day 10: Continue to work on your project and/or upcoming classroom guidance presentation or observe your site supervisor. Also, prepare for day 11's activity (see below).

Day 11: Do something to support faculty (e.g. assist with an in-service or staff meeting, place a good news note in teacher/staff mailboxes, design a staff appreciation bulletin board). Check with your counselor for ideas.

Day 12: Termination: say your goodbyes, final wrap-up.

In addition to these, also include two or more of the following activities according to what fits best with your schedule:

- Attend an SSST meeting
- Attend a county-wide counselors' meeting or training session
- Attend a school staff meeting
- Participate in the coordination of one or more statewide tests

Academic Honor Code: Students must adhere to the University Honor Code for any and all assignments related to this course.

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to be present at their sites for all days for which they are responsible. It is the responsibility of the student and the site host to arrive at a set schedule, which will permit the student to achieve their course requirements. Furthermore, students are not permitted to arrive late or be absent to their practicum group supervision sessions. For ethical and professional reasons, supervision must be taken very seriously. Failure to attend one or more group supervision sessions will require a session to be made up by the student. It is the discretion of the group supervisor to determine if and when that meeting will be made up. Please be advised that failure to attend a minimum of 12 group supervision sessions will result in a grade of Unsatisfactory.

Additional Requirements/Information:

Responsibilities of the Field Practicum Student

1. Be prompt and prepared for all practicum activities. Please be ready to start practicum meetings on time by arriving at least 5 minutes early.
2. Behave in a professional and ethical manner at all times. Students will follow the school's policies concerning confidentiality, record-keeping, referrals, dress, etc. Students must arrive on time at the practicum site and dress in a professional manner.
3. Purchase liability insurance. Please have your insurance before going to your practicum site.
4. Plan and deliver a classroom guidance lesson on an appropriate topic. You will deliver the lesson in your practicum group and will then present it to a group of students at your practicum site.
5. Keep a log report of the practicum activities in the format described by the professor. Your logs are to be handed in to your practicum group leader October 28 and December 2. Please note that you are not to finish at your practicum field site before December 4. Your minimum of 45 hours should be evenly spaced throughout the semester, and you should spend at least five full school days at your site. (A full school day entails arriving at the time your site host arrives, or before, and leaving when your site host leaves.) This provides you with the opportunity of participating in a part of the daily and yearly cycles of a school setting.
6. Complete a brief evaluation form at the end of the semester.

Responsibilities of the Field Practicum Host

1. Introduce the student to the variety of services the counselor performs in the school setting.
2. Involve the practicum student in activities that are appropriate for the student's beginning skill level.
3. Introduce the student to the administrative structure of the setting.
4. Provide an opportunity for the student to be involved in the planning and delivery of at least one classroom guidance lesson.
5. Contact the university professor about any questions or concerns about practicum or the student.
6. Complete a brief final evaluation form at the end of the semester.