SC871 Supervised Practicum in School Counseling
Descriptive Summary

Course Focus and Structure
- The practicum experience is organized to meet requirements of the university, counselor preparation program standards of the Kansas State Department of Education, and national accreditation standards that include CACREP (Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs). Due to its intensive tutorial nature, CACREP standards limit each supervisor to six students for individual/triadic.
- This is an experiential course involving intensive supervised training in the skills, methods, conceptual thinking, and treatment planning required for the clinical facets of counseling. The counselor-in-training will apply and master the skills and processes involved in individual counseling and small group counseling with a small caseload of clients and gain experience in consultation with parents and school personnel through a school setting placement. (Note: Delivery of school counseling core curriculum lessons and program leadership tasks are not included as a part of the practicum experience.)
- **Structure for Clinical Supervision.** The counselor-in-training (CIT) participates in 2.5 hours of clinical supervision each week with university faculty, divided into 2 parts scheduled on the same day:
  o group supervision of 1.5 hours/week (all together) focused on content/theoretical review, discussion, and examples of how to adapt clinical therapeutic counseling skills, methods, and procedures to the school setting;
  o individual/triadic of 1 hour/week (one or two counselors-in-training meet together with the supervisor) for tutorial instruction focused on developing mastery in applying clinical skills and thinking, professional judgment, and treatment planning. This is accomplished through review recordings, give and receive feedback, discuss clients and plans, review and approval of case notes, and periodic formal performance evaluation.

Role of On-Site Licensed School Counselor
- Serve as a mentor to the counselor-in-training.
- Help the counselor-in-training to identify a caseload of student-clients to work with on a consistent basis throughout the semester, and facilitate the process through introductions, explanations, parent approvals, etc.
- Trouble shoot and help the counselor-in-training negotiate through the building’s procedures for working with students, arrange for appropriate, quiet, and uninterrupted space, client opportunities for small group and individual, etc.
- Be the person “on-call” should the counselor-in-training run into a crisis situation or need help.
- Although not required, the school counselor often co-leads a counseling group with the practicum student.

Course Requirements and Procedures
Procedural requirements for students differ from those employed as a licensed school counselor. As an unlicensed counselor-in-training the profession identifies program accreditation standards, ethical codes, and common practice requiring specific procedures be in place to protect clients as well as the Practicum student during this learning process.
- **Supervision.** Practicum students must be under university supervision to counsel with clients; the permissible timeframe is limited to the official university first day of the semester through the last day of the semester.
- **Supervision Contract.** Practicum student and university faculty supervisor sign a contract identifying major requirements and student responsibilities. The supervisor has ethical responsibilities to the practicum student to guide, monitor, and correct actions or inactions while working with student-clients.
- **Liability Insurance.** Provide printed proof of liability insurance coverage for the semester covering actions as counselor-in-training (note: Insurance coverage is provided free to student members of the American School Counselor Association and the American Counseling Association). The proof must identify the student by name and address, be provided before the start of the semester, and remain on file with ESU.
- **Prior Written Informed Consent Required.** A key ethical principal in counseling is informed consent. We must ensure the client/parent’s right to know the details and conditions of their participation before participation and the right to choose to opt-in or to decline. Receipt of the ESU signed informed consent form from parent (or the eligible student if age 18) is required before working with anyone as a client. For the non-licensed counselor-in-training this may also limit some legal risk inherent in the process.
- **100 Clock Hour Experience:**
  o **Documentation:** Maintain a detailed daily log and weekly summary log (electronic document provided)
  o **40 Hours Direct Student-Client Contact (Individual and Small Group Counseling):** Practicum students frequently underestimate the effect of the realities that exist within the school setting. These realities include the difficulty of identifying and arranging for enough students to work with during available times, obtaining the required written permission from parents prior to working with the student, arranging times to meet
SC871 Supervised Practicum in School Counseling

Descriptive Summary

when the CIT is available and around classes or teachers who may not want to release the student, students being absent at inopportune times, special school events, or days when school is not in session, days out for one’s own sickness, etc. Asking questions at the placement site is essential and proactive planning is needed to limit the number of unexpected complications that inevitably will occur.

- **Caseload**: With assistance as needed from the on-site licensed school counselor, the counselor-in-training should have a caseload (meaning those with signed informed consent) of roughly 5-7 students consistently throughout the semester to counsel, and must facilitate or co-facilitate a minimum of one group of 5 or more students for 6-8 sessions for group counseling. Time cannot be counted for a contact where signed informed consent was not already received. Dual relationships are ethically to be limited and avoided where possible because they complicate the counselor professional role/responsibility, create boundary issues that can limit the ability to be objective, can create client confusion, impede client progress, increase risk of harm to the counseling relationship, or the client. As a result, in following the letter and spirit of both ACA Code of Ethics and ASCA Ethical Standards for School Counselors, during this semester the CIT avoids working with students as clients with whom an additional role relationship exists (teacher, coach, support specialist, administrator, relative, friend, friend of parent, etc.).

- **Session Recordings**. Each week a recording of a current counseling session with a student-client will be shared with the supervisor and triadic partner for review, feedback, and ideas. Audio recording is the minimum, video is preferred when possible to provide enriched feedback. Determine the process and devices that will be used making certain they are tested and working properly for each recording. The recording must be able to be heard without straining to be useable. The recording should be reviewed prior to writing case notes, brought to triadic, and unless directed otherwise by the supervisor, should be deleted/erased following supervisor review.

- **Clinical Case Notes**. Immediately following every counseling session, clinical notes are written (a brief clinical note format will be used), signed, and submitted during the next supervision.

- **Small Group Counseling**. Students will also develop and apply group counseling skills and must have at least one 1 (preferably more) small group counseling experience involving 5-9 student-clients for 6-8 sessions sometime during the practicum. It is important to clarify that this does not refer to delivering a school counseling core curriculum lesson to a small group of students. While both are goal focused and learning driven approaches used by professional school counselors, the two approaches make use of different processes to reach the goals.
  - **Process**. In small group counseling the CIT leads and facilitates the dynamics inside the group to help the members of the group help each other to develop and learn from each other. Each counseling group should be data informed, meaning it is designed to meet specific needs as identified by data of some subgroup of students that are not fully being met otherwise. As the group experience evolves, members learn more about themselves and others, improve skills, knowledge, and dispositions, through interactive discussions and supportive activities among the members of the group on specific topic areas. Discussions are member to member focused and the leader functions as a facilitator of group dynamics and director of the process. The goals are focused on outcomes such as improvement, decrease/reduction in problem behaviors, etc. Some typical representative samples for group focus might be such things as transition issues at school or home, grief and loss experiences, school motivation and success issues, peer relationships, stress, developing assertiveness, dealing with the effects of bullying, intimidation, or sexual harassment, school attendance, potential for not completing high school and other issues that fall within the scope of the role of a professional school counselor.
  - **Ethical standards** (ACA, A.9, B.4; ASCA, A.6) identify that counselors (and therefore the CIT in collaboration with the school counselor) must work through a process for the creation and use of small groups including such aspects as identifying and screening participants who could potentially benefit from a small group experience, establishing clear expectations, document proceedings, and obtaining informed consent. Since counseling is voluntary and it is not something done with a captive audience who either must participate or could be subjected to pressure to participate, using pre-existing groups in which a specific set of students were already organized for a different purpose or process must be avoided (like a teacher-advisory group, a classroom group, a club, etc.). Likewise it cannot be simply a random group of students that are available. Instead, the ethical standards require a conscious decision making process to be followed. During the practicum experience a student-client can not participate in a group session without a signed informed consent form from the parent (or eligible student if 18).

- **60 hours Indirect Services to Caseload Clients**. Time involved in the following activities are included:
  - **Consult/Collaborate** Receiving information from, or providing suggestions/recommendations to the client’s parents, counselor, teachers, or other specialists who serve the student; attending an IEP, staffing, or similar collaborative meeting regarding a specific client on the caseload.
SC871 Supervised Practicum in School Counseling

Descriptive Summary

- Gather Information on Caseload Clients. Observing the client in or out of class, reviewing school records, reports, or other information gathering processes regarding the student.
- Case Preparation. Reviewing recordings of sessions, writing clinical case notes, completing time logs, writing case conceptualization reports.
- Session Preparation. Researching methods, approaches, techniques, and resources for client sessions.
- Weekly Supervision. Triadic and Group (class).

- Participate in Individual /Triadic Clinical Supervision (Procedure)
  - Share a Current Recording for Weekly Review.
  - Share Improvement Feedback with Peer Counselor-in-Training.
  - Submit Clinical Case Notes for Supervisor Review. Submit case notes for all client sessions occurring the previous week for review of structure and content. After review and discussion the notes are returned for rewriting or, approved as is for use in planning next contacts.
  - Identify One Client for Focus and Case Study. Recordings of counseling sessions conducted with this client are submitted on four occasions across the semester for a formal performance evaluation/grade (specific dates will be indicated on the syllabus) demonstrating skills, ability and effectiveness in moving the client through the stages of the counseling process.
  - Case Conceptualization. Write and submit a comprehensive multipage report for formal evaluation the student of focus. This is a metacognitive activity that focuses on analysis, synthesis, and evaluation levels of professional functioning. Conceptualizations involve use of a consistent written format that focuses on developing a more complete understanding of the unique needs of the client, self-evaluation of one’s performance as a counselor, identification of appropriate intervention methods, and creation of treatment plans that will move the counseling process forward.

- Participate in Group Clinical Supervision (1.5 hours/week). (Procedure)
  Focus involves course content review, discussion, and examples. Some topics will include relationship development, stages, assessment, theories, techniques and interventions, crisis assessments, referrals, self-care, professional associations and professionalism, issues involved in professional counseling, issues clients may likely present, and how to adapt clinical therapeutic counseling skills, methods, and procedures to the school setting.
  - Assignments
    - Assessments/Evaluations. May include quizzes, midterm, and final evaluations.
    - Referral List. Submit a categorized list of professional resources for potential referral.
    - Personal Position Paper. Submission of a multipage a formal paper defining oneself clinically as a professional: identifying how one’s personal counseling theory, style, strengths, current limitations, and skills are integrated to approach counseling in a consistent and congruent manner, how techniques and strategies are selected to facilitate client movement toward problem resolution and development, and a plan for coping with stress and so as to prevent professional impairment and burnout.

- Attendance. Absences from individual/triadic or group supervision (class) will impact final course grade.

- Professionalism. As an identified program disposition, a course unit objective, and codified in Ethical codes of the profession, counselors-in training are expected to maintain membership and involvement in applicable national and state professional associations.

Specifics of Supervision Structure. Basic time parameters and options will be set by the supervisor with specific times and partners negotiated among supervisees in that section of class. Depending upon the section size, meetings/class may begin as early as 4:00 pm or could finish as late as 9:00 pm. There will be times when the student will be waiting. To facilitate peer learning and varied feedback, students will periodically rotate to a different triadic partner requiring that everyone be flexible. An example of the options follows.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Supervision Triad</th>
<th>Customary</th>
<th>Option 2</th>
<th>Option 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supervision Triad 1</td>
<td>4:30 - 5:30</td>
<td>4:15 - 5:15</td>
<td>4:00 - 5:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision Triad 2</td>
<td>5:30 - 6:30</td>
<td>5:15 - 6:15</td>
<td>5:00 - 6:00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Supervision (class)</td>
<td>6:30 - 8:00</td>
<td>6:15 - 7:45</td>
<td>6:00 - 7:30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervision Triad 3</td>
<td>8:00 - 9:00</td>
<td>7:45 - 8:45</td>
<td>7:30 - 8:30</td>
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</tbody>
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Another option: adjusting the order of the class (i.e., having class first). However that would generally increase the time some students would be committed.