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San Francisco Bay Area  
American School of Professional Psychology

# ***Practicum Handbook***

Master of Arts in  
Counseling Psychology

2007-2008

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## Handbook Introduction

This handbook has been designed to provide all individuals involved in counseling training detailed and relevant information about the practicum training experiences within the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology (MACP) Program of the American School of Professional Psychology at Argosy University, San Francisco Bay Area. We consider the practicum experiences to be among the most important in our graduate programs.

**To the site supervisors and seminar leaders:** we very much appreciate your willingness to work with our students to provide quality and meaningful placements that will prepare them to be effective counselors. We hope that the experiences that you have with our students are interesting and beneficial for all concerned. We invite you to give us feedback about these experiences by completing and returning to us the **Evaluation of Argosy Practicum** in Appendix 1. Additionally, please feel free to call us if you have any comments, questions or concerns regarding practicum placements.

**To students:** we wish you great success as you begin your profession as a counselor. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have questions or concerns during this practicum experience. If you neglect to contact us, we cannot work collectively to resolve issues and make this the best possible experience.

Successful completion of the practicum experience relies on all individuals involved including: the student, the site supervisor, and the seminar leader. This handbook contains the expectations and responsibilities of each. We strongly suggest that you read all sections so that you understand the complete scope of the practicum experience.

We hope that this document will be helpful in answering some commonly asked questions about the practicum. However, if you have questions after reading this material, please feel free to contact us.

### Practicum Training Office

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## Practicum Overview

The MACP practicum is a 15- to 24-hours per week, nine to twelve-months supervised clinical experience divided into two separate terms – Prac I/II, during which the student must accrue at least 500 hours of clinical experience. Practicum students are expected to carry their own caseload of clients/patients for whom they have the primary responsibility for treatment planning and implementation.

The primary emphasis of the Practicum is acquisition and refinement of basic clinical skills, including initial interviewing, empathic listening, rapport-building, case formulation, treatment planning, establishing and maintaining appropriate conditions for therapy, evaluation of therapeutic process and progress, and beginning recognition and management of transference and counter transference phenomena. Some practicum settings may require students to carry out some diagnostic or screening interviews.

### Evaluation of Students

Each term, students are evaluated by their site supervisors and by their practicum seminar leaders. Students receive official grades of (PR) “progress”, (CR) “credit” or (NC) “no credit” based on successful completion of all programmatic requirements.

### Restrictions

Argosy University cannot provide compensation to the agency for the supervision and/or training of students. Students are discouraged from, but may petition for approval to complete practicum at their job site, IF there are multiple departments within the agency and there is no overlap in client population or supervision. These exception requests are reviewed, and decisions rendered on an individual basis. Students may not earn *practicum* hours working in a private practice setting.

### Start Dates

Students have the opportunity to begin practicum in January, May and September of each year. The process of placement begins approximately 6-9 months prior to the anticipated start of practicum experience. The **Practicum Calendar** and deadline information can be found in *Appendix 2* of the *Practicum Handbook*.

### Supervision Requirements

Trainees receive at least one hour of individual supervision per week. Trainees must receive an AVERAGE of at least one hour of individual supervision OR two hours of group supervision for every 5 hours of client contact. Students must be supervised by a licensed mental health professional with a Master or Doctoral degree (i.e. MFCC/MFT, LCSW, Psychologist, or board-certified Psychiatrist). For more specific information regarding Supervisor requirements, please refer to the **Practicum Supervisor FAQs** in *Appendix 3*. The Director of Counseling Training should be informed immediately of any difficulties encountered at the practicum or of any substantive changes in the practicum experience (e.g., change of supervisor). Finally, primary supervision should be offered at a regular, preset, uninterrupted time each week.

## Practicum Hours Requirement

Following orientation and training at site, each student is expected to document an average of 4-8 direct client contact hours per week. A minimum of 4 of these hours are required to be in individual assessment/counseling for which the student is the identified clinician of record who is responsible for treatment planning and implementation. The remaining direct client contact will vary by site and can be delivered in any supervised therapeutic milieu/modality.

DIRECT SERVICE ..... 33%  
Includes individual and group counseling, family counseling, crisis intervention and intake assessments.  
• *4 hours individual (required)*  
• *4 hours group/family/other*  
• *Approximately 8 hours per week total*

CLINICAL SUPERVISION AND TRAINING ..... 33%  
Individual on-site Supervision - *1 hr per week minimum (required)*  
Other on-site supervision - *1 hr per week individual OR 2 hours group for every 5 hours of direct service (required)*  
Learning Experiences - may include staff meetings, professional consultation and referral, case/treatment planning, professional development, seminars, workshops, etc...

OTHER PRACTICUM RELATED ACTIVITIES ..... 33%  
Tape review, chart review, case/progress notes, program development, etc.

\*\*Students are strongly encouraged to NOT be at the practicum site for more than 25 hours per week (with the exception of orientation and pre approved special training).

## Practicum Prerequisites

1. All students who enter the practicum application process must have done the appropriate academic planning which will allow for practicum prerequisite courses to be completed prior to the beginning of the practicum. A student must also have been a fully matriculating degree-seeking student at the School for a minimum of one year (three semesters) prior to beginning the practicum. **All first year courses as listed below are practicum prerequisite courses, and must be completed prior to beginning the practicum:**

PC 6250 * Clinical Psychopharmacology	PC 6025 Human Development and Learning
PC 6105 * Counseling Skills II	PC 6005 Maladaptive Behavior and Psychopathology
PC 6505 * Group Counseling	PC 7100 Professional Issues: Ethics, Conduct and Law
PC 6330 Child Abuse Assessment and Reporting	PC 6521 Research and Evaluation
PC 6104 Counseling Skills I	PC 6900 Substance Abuse Counseling
PC 6700 Couples and Family Counseling	PC 6230 Theories in Counseling Families & Individuals
PC 6320 Domestic Violence and Spousal Abuse	

\* Applies to MACP Day Program only.

2. **Students must be in good academic standing as indicated by a GPA of 3.0 or above or other requirements as listed in the catalog.** A student on Probation may not apply for practicum. If Probation occurs at any point during the practicum, a student may be required to withdraw from the site.

3. All paperwork assigned by the Director of Counseling Training must be completed and any mandatory meetings must be attended.

4. Prior to applying for practicum, students should consider personal and professional concerns including:

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| - Professional goals | - Client population/concern preferences |
| - Location of site   | - Weekly/hourly time commitment         |

### Professional Obligations

1. Liability Insurance is required (professional liability insurance is provided via policy facilitated by the school. The fee is included in the registration fee associated with practicum seminar courses). Each student on practicum is required to register for practicum seminar each term. To obtain a copy of the insurance policy please see the **Professional Liability Certificate Insurance Request Form** in *Appendix 4*. This insurance is required despite any additional insurance coverage a student may choose to purchase.
2. Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to APA Codes of Ethics and Standards of Practice. They may be accessed at <http://www.apa.org/ethics/code.html>
3. Students are **STRONGLY** encouraged to consider seeking their own personal therapy. Each hour spent in personal therapy, will count three (3) hours towards your 3000 required for licensure. See **Summary of BBS Hours of Experience Rules** in *Appendix 5*.
4. Please note that hours spent in personal therapy may NOT count towards your 500 required for Practicum.

## Expectations and Responsibilities for Students

1. **You are responsible for locating your own practicum site** from the database and listings of approved sites available from the Practicum Training Department. The Department provides assistance to students in choosing and finding sites which meet their interests and abilities. The Director of Counseling Training is responsible for approving all sites. If you have suggestions or requests for potential new sites, you should submit request in writing (including site name and contact person- if available) 3-6 months prior to the beginning of the placement.
2. You are responsible **for reading and knowing the information** posted on the campus website, sent to you by mail or email, or posted around campus regarding mandatory practicum meetings, the practicum application deadline and other applicable information.
3. To apply for practicum placement, each student **must** complete the **Practicum Application/Advisement Form** in *Appendix 6*.
4. **Each student is responsible for obtaining appropriate signatures on all evaluations and practicum documentation.** --- i.e. Practicum Contracts, Responsibility Statements, Weekly Hours of Experience, and Site Supervisor evaluations will not be accepted unless signed by all parties.
5. For the benefit of your clients, it is imperative that you continue to receive education and training in counseling psychology throughout your practicum experience. Therefore, once you have accepted and begun your practicum placement, it is mandatory that you simultaneously enroll and complete ALL required second year course work. **If you fall out of sequence by dropping a course while enrolled in Practicum, without approval of the Program Chair, you will be required to drop Practicum and forfeit your practicum placement.**

Additionally, all students:

1. Must possess fundamental counseling skills and demonstrate a willingness to learn and acquire new knowledge about human development and diversity.
2. Must be prepared to accept supervision and feedback. Must maintain a positive attitude re: self-examination and cultivate new learning opportunities
3. Must participate in self-evaluations, including developing goals for the practicum and periodically assessing progress toward those goals. Must complete site evaluations as required.
4. Must audio/video tape client/student sessions as required for supervision and consultation (*see Appendix 8 for sample consent forms*). You are responsible for notifying the training department if your site does not allow audio/video taping of client/student sessions.
5. Must establish and maintain confidentiality
6. Must maintain accurate record of practicum hours



7. Must be familiar with Argosy University policies, APA ethical guidelines, and site policies and procedures
8. Must conduct themselves in reliable, ethical and appropriately professional manner - including timeliness, notification of absences, permission for vacation, and other professional responsibilities
9. Must integrate themselves into training sites and develop good working relationships with staff and clients
10. Must immediately advise assigned Seminar Instructor and/or Director of Counseling Training of any difficulties encountered at the practicum site. Students are expected to seek advisement and consultation when any concern exists.

### **Mandatory Meetings**

Students must attend four (4) meetings throughout their practicum application process. These include the Practicum Orientation, Practicum Application Advisement Meeting, Interviewing Meeting and Post Acceptance Meeting. The meeting dates will be posted and you will be notified by e-mail. Any student who fails to attend this meeting may be prohibited from continuing placement process for the applicable term.

### **Approved Sites**

All sites are reviewed and approved by the Director of Counseling Training. It was confirmed at the time of affiliation that each site approved as a practicum training site had the appropriate resources to support the training endeavor (if there are changes that occur please contact the Director of Practicum Training immediately):

1. Each agency has adequate clinical staff members available for supervision and training of the student(s).
2. The agency will provide a minimum of one hour per week of individual supervision at a predetermined scheduled time.
3. The site demonstrates a commitment to training and offers students adequate hours and clients to complete their practicum in 9-12 months.
4. The agency has a sufficient number and variety of clients to assure students will have some breadth as well as depth of experience in counseling. The nature of clients and services offered must be appropriate for students whose primary goal is developing counseling skills. Because peer interaction is paramount for professional development, sites with multiple interns are given priority.
6. With few exceptions, all approved sites allow audio or videotaping of some of the student's clinical experiences for the purpose of consultation in the Practicum Seminar.
7. Detailed **Criteria for Evaluating Potential Practicum Sites** is found in *Appendix 9*.
8. The **Practicum Site Application for Approval** is found in *Appendix 10*.

## The Practicum Placement Process

During the Fall and Spring Semesters, all students applying for practica, will attend a series of **Mandatory Meetings** conducted by the Counseling Training Office. The purpose of these meetings is to describe the practicum application process, advise students regarding practicum selection, answer students' questions, and distribute informational material.

The practicum placement process is outlined in the **Practicum Calendar** as found in *Appendix 2* which specifies meeting dates and deadlines throughout the practicum application year. Successful students will give diligent attention to the calendar and to e-mail updates as these dates may sometimes change to better accommodate student schedules. Each step of the process is discussed more thoroughly below.

- I. The first step in the placement process is to attending the Practicum Orientation Meeting. At this meeting students will be provided critical information, resources and direction for securing a practicum placement.
  
- II. The second step includes Practicum Application and Advisement. This involves each of the following tasks:
  1. **Researching Practicum Sites:** Students planning to apply for a practicum for the following academic year should review the practicum information, including the provided resource materials, which are located in the practicum database online at <http://argosysf.tripod.com/index.html>. Additional material about sites can be found in the Student Lounge and the Practicum Training Office. These materials contain site names, locations, supervisors' names, descriptions of the specific training experiences available at practicum sites, and site brochures if available. **Fellow students are excellent practicum information resources, and new students are urged to contact students engaged in practica at sites in which they are interested.**
  
  2. **Preparing Curriculum Vitæ:** Students must prepare a current Curriculum Vitæ (CV), which includes a list of graduate-level courses that will have been completed by the time the student plans to begin Practicum. CVs are a special type of professional resume that is used when applying for counseling training opportunities. Sample CVs are contained in the Practicum Resource Materials which will be distributed at the Practicum Orientation.
  
  3. **Completing and Submitting the Practicum Application/Advisement Form:** Students must thoroughly and thoughtfully complete the Practicum Application/Advisement Form (*Appendix 6*) by the due date. The advisement form requires that students list 4 sites of interest. Advisement forms must be submitted to the Counseling Training Office along with the draft CV and a current unofficial transcript which can be printed from Student Link. Once the advisement form has been received, each student's academic file is audited to confirm that all students are progressing adequately in sequence.

4. **Creating a Cover Letter:** Students should prepare a sample cover letter to be sent as part of the practicum application. Samples are provided in the Practicum Resource Materials which will be distributed at the Practicum Orientation.
  5. **Requesting Letters of Recommendation:** Students should request letters of recommendation from faculty, supervisors, and others at least 2 months before sending out practicum applications. Letters should be from persons who can speak to your current skills and potential as a counselor. At least one letter must be from an Argosy University instructor. See Appendix 7 for guidelines on requesting letters of recommendation.
  6. **Advisement Meeting:** The final task in this step is to schedule an Advisement meeting with the Director of Counseling Training or the Assistant Director of Counseling Training. Students may make appointments by phone or by email. In these meetings, students are assisted in selecting sites which meet their needs and finalizing the CV and cover letters. Goodness of fit between student and practicum site is a training priority, and the preferred site listing submitted by each student may be revised and edited following this meeting if necessary.
- III. The third step of the practicum placement process is to apply to and interview at prospective practicum sites.
1. **Mailing Applications:** Students should mail application packets including a cover letter, CV, and letters of recommendation to prospective practicum agencies. Some agencies may require additional application materials.
  2. **Arranging Interviews:** Each student is responsible for arranging personal interviews with approved practicum sites. It is usually best for students to wait 1-2 weeks after sending their written application before contacting sites by telephone to schedule an interview.
  3. **Interviewing Meeting:** Students are required to attend this meeting to receive and practice skills for successful interviews and learn from the experience of previous student who have been through the interviewing process.
- IV. The fourth and final step of the practicum placement process occurs after the student been offered and has accepted the placement site.
1. Once you have accepted placement please **notify the Counseling Training Office by phone or email as soon as possible.**
  2. Once a student has verbally accepted a practicum site, a **Practicum Contract** is to be completed in collaboration with the practicum site supervisor (see *Appendix 11*). Contract completion is the student's responsibility. This agreement will identify the student, site, supervisor, days and times of attendance, learning activities and amount of supervision. The total number of hours and length of commitment must be included in the contract. Specific numbers of hours must be listed under direct service, indirect service, supervision, training, and other. Blank Practicum Contracts are available on the website [www.ausfba.com](http://www.ausfba.com), or from the Practicum Training Office.

3. The School copy of the Practicum Contract must be received in the Department at a designated date prior to beginning practicum. **Without a completed, signed *Practicum Contract* submitted to the Department, students may not begin Practicum**, progress will not be evaluated, nor will credit for the training be awarded.
4. **Post-Acceptance Meeting: There will be a mandatory meeting to finalize your paperwork and receive practicum packets.** If you cannot attend this meeting, you must contact the Director of Counseling Training prior to the meeting, to make alternative arrangements.
5. For the benefit of your clients, it is imperative that you continue to receive education and training in counseling psychology throughout your practicum experience. Therefore, once you have accepted and begun your practicum placement, it is mandatory that you simultaneously register, enroll and complete ALL required second year course work. **If you drop any course while enrolled in Practicum I, II, or III, without approval of the Program Chair, you will be required to drop Practicum and forfeit your practicum placement.**

**A. INITIAL CONTACT/PREPARATION FOR INTERVIEWS**

**Interviewing for Practicum**

1. Create practicum materials including a *cover letter*, *Vitae*, and letters of recommendation to be mailed to prospective practicum agencies. Each student is responsible for arranging personal interviews with approved practicum sites. It is usually best for students to wait 1-2 weeks after sending their written application before contacting sites by telephone to schedule an interview.
2. Students may be called by the sites to schedule interviews. Students are encouraged to have a professional message on their answering service and to answer their phone in a professional manner when they think sites may be calling to schedule an interview.
3. Most interviews take 1 hour plus travel time. Students should have their calendar readily available so an appropriate time for the interview can be established during the phone call. Use map software to get directions to the site. Plan additional time for heavy traffic and finding parking.
4. Before the interview, re-read the Practicum Guidelines, the Interviewing Guidelines, and the Site Description Sheet (updates and revisions may be processed between pre-interview meeting and interview). You will want to gather as much information as you can about the site both before and during the interview including, but not limited to the following:
  - a) Type of work you may be involved in (i.e., intake, assessment, individual/group counseling)
  - b) Type of client population you will be working with
  - c) Convenience of transportation to the site
  - d) What and how many hours you will be working
  - e) Who will be supervising you and how much supervision you will be receiving
  - f) Additional activities the agency may require of students and possible in-service training opportunities
  - g) Ability to tape your counseling sessions for purposes of supervision;
  - h) Whether you will be able to lead/co-lead therapeutic groups.
5. Students are encouraged to practice talking about their clinical and learning experience in advance of the interview. Students are encouraged to discuss the site with Argosy students who have trained at the site. Time spent in preparation for interviews will dramatically improve the quality of a student's performance and increase the likelihood of getting an offer.
6. Inquire about any additional application procedures specific to the site, and complete as necessary.

## **B. INTERVIEWS**

1. Students are required to dress professionally for the interview. Students are encouraged to take an extra copy of their CV and cover letter with them.
2. You must interview at a minimum of two sites before accepting or declining an offer. Please discuss any exceptions with the Director or Practicum Training.
3. During the interview, review the site information with the interviewer. For example, ask if any supervisors have changed, and ask about required/preferred days/times to be on site. If anything has changed from the sheet please make a note and submit to the Training Director for revision of site description.

## **C. AFTER THE INTERVIEWS**

1. Students may send a short but professional thank you letter to follow-up interviews. The focus of the letter should be to identify aspects of the training program that were especially interesting and attractive to you. You are encouraged to have the Practicum Training staff review these letters.
2. Sites will call to offer training positions. If you are interested in a site that makes you an offer, you are free to accept the offer (as long as it is already a school approved site).
3. If your second choice agency makes you an offer first, you may ask them for a couple of days to consider the offer. At this point, you should call your first choice immediately and ask them about your status. It is imperative to respond to the offering agency as expeditiously as possible, delaying acceptance may result in agency offering placement to another student which could result in your being required to postpone practicum start if no other opportunities are available.
4. Once a student accepts a site's offer verbally, **they are committed to that site.** Acceptance of a practicum site is a professional and ethical commitment to a site and its clients. If the student is unsure which training program would be most beneficial to them, they are encouraged to discuss the options with faculty members and the Director of Practicum Training.
5. Once you have accepted an offer it is vital that you inform all agencies of your decision, by telephone and in a letter. You should call all agencies the same day that you accept an offer.

## **D. OFFICIALLY BEGINNING PRACTICUM**

6. Once you have accepted placement please **notify the Practicum Training Office by phone or email as soon as possible.**

7. Once a student has verbally accepted a practicum site, a **Practicum Contract** is to be completed in collaboration with the practicum's site supervisor. Contract completion is the student's responsibility. This agreement will identify the student, site, supervisor, days and times of attendance, learning activities and amount of supervision (see *Appendix 11*). The total number of hours and length of commitment must be included in the contract. Specific numbers of hours must be listed under direct service, indirect service, supervision, training, and other. Blank *Practicum Contracts* are available on the website [www.ausfba.com](http://www.ausfba.com), or from the Practicum Training Office.
8. The School copy of the Practicum Contract must be received in the Department at a designated date prior to beginning practicum. **Without a completed, signed *Practicum Contract* submitted to the Department, students may not begin Practicum Seminar,** progress will not be evaluated, nor will credit for the training be awarded.
9. **There will be a mandatory meeting to finalize your paperwork and receive practicum packets.** If you cannot attend this meeting, you must contact the Director of Counseling Training, prior to the meeting, to make alternative arrangements.
10. For the benefit of your clients, it is imperative that you continue to receive education and training in counseling psychology throughout your practicum experience. Therefore, once you have accepted and begun your practicum placement, it is mandatory that you simultaneously enroll and complete ALL required second year course work. **If you drop any course while enrolled in Practicum I, II, or III, without approval of the Program Chair, you will be required to drop Practicum and forfeit your practicum placement.**

1. At the mandatory Meeting, students will receive a packet with the required practicum documentation. You may also obtain forms on the web site. This packet will include:
  - a. **Practicum Contract** (*must be completed with site supervisor and returned to the Director of Counseling Training three (3) weeks before the beginning of the term in which they start practicum*)
  - b. **Responsibility Statement for Supervisors** (*must be completed by primary supervisor and returned to the Director of Counseling Training three (3) weeks before the beginning of the term in which they start practicum*) See Appendix 12.
  - c. **Weekly Summary of Hours of Experience** (*Students may download this form from [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov) website, and make copies. Please see Appendix 13. IF YOU MAKE A MISTAKE, DO NOT USE WHITE OUT! Simply make a single strike through the error and correct.*)
  - d. **Supervisor Evaluation of Counseling Psychology Student** (*should be completed by both the site supervisor and the seminar leader at the end of each term. Students are responsible for ensuring that evaluation forms are submitted to the Director of Counseling Training. See Appendix 14.*)
  - e. **Student Evaluation of Supervisor Form** (*should be completed by the student at the conclusion of the practicum and submitted to the Practicum Training staff). See Appendix 15.*)
  - f. **Student Evaluation of Placement Form** (*Must be completed and returned to the Director of Counseling Training at the conclusion of the practicum*) Appendix 16.
  - g. **Consent for Audio/Videotaping Form** (*Sites may have their own form, a sample form is included as Appendix 8.*)
  - h. **Professional Liability Insurance Certificate Request Form** (*This is in case the site needs a copy of the liability insurance policy). The student or the site fills this out and sends it directly to the insurance company Appendix IV.*)
2. A minimum of 500 hours are required to complete the Counseling Psychology Practicum requirement. Thus the minimum number of cumulative hours to complete per term is as follows:
  - a. Practicum I (15 week term) 150 total hours/ 50 direct hours
  - b. Practicum II (15 week term) 325 total hours/ 100 direct hours
  - c. Practicum III (15 week term) 500 total hours/ 150 direct hours
3. Grades in Practicum are based on three criteria:
  1. Number hours earned per term.
  2. Participation in Practicum Seminar.
  3. Evaluation by Practicum Site Supervisor.

The portion of the student's grade based on completion of the hours will be determined by comparison to the chart below.



<b>Practicum</b>	<b>Grade of Credit</b>	<b>Grade of Progressing</b>	<b>Grade of No Credit</b>
Practicum I	150 total hours/ 50 direct hours	105-149 total hours/ <50 direct hours	Less than 105 total hours/ <50 direct hours
Practicum II	325 total hours/ 100 direct hours	275-324 total hours/ <100 direct hours	Less than 275 total hours/ <100 direct hours
Practicum III	500 total hours/ 150 direct hours	Less than 500 total hours/ 150 direct hours	

### Registration

1. Students are responsible for registering for practicum and practicum seminar at the beginning of each term.
2. Students who do not register in a timely fashion will be charged a late registration fee.

### Evaluation of Student Progress

- Students are evaluated by both their Site Supervisor, their Seminar Leader, and by the Director of Counseling Training. Students may also complete a Self-Evaluation each term. See *Appendix 19*.
- Additional Argosy guidelines for evaluation of student progress in Practicum are detailed in *Appendix 18, Evaluation of Student Progress*.

## Site Considerations

1. Although you will make valuable contributions to the agency, please remember that you are a guest of the agency having been invited to utilize the sites resources (clients, experience and knowledge of supervisors etc...).
2. The site organization may require more of you than Argosy requires. You should be clear regarding organizational expectations. Having chosen a site, a contract has been established between you and the site. You are responsible for fulfilling those expectations. Any problem with site requirements should be discussed with your site supervisor and the Director of Counseling Training.
3. In addition to training requirements, you will want to become familiar with the general policies and procedures of the agency. Such information may include but is not limited to:
  - General operational procedure, required paperwork, dress code
  - Procedures for handling emergency situations with clients (i.e., suicide risk, psychotic episode, etc.)
  - The availability of on-call consultation/back-up
  - Procedures for referrals outside of your agency and those resources typically utilized
  - Required or recommended immunizations or medical tests
4. When in doubt....**ASK!!!** Remember, you are a student and new to the organization and are not expected to know everything. Utilize on-site conflicts and problems as learning experiences. Keep in mind that you are there with the permission of the organization.

### Consent/ Confidentiality

Sample consent forms for audio/videotaping are provided by Argosy. However, the agency may choose to provide (or require) agency specific forms. Students are required to adequately disguise/remove identifying client information when turning in written reports to practicum seminar leaders or when discussing cases with practicum seminar groups.

### **Confidentiality**

1. One of the most important aspects of therapy is confidentiality. It is also essential in building trust with your clients. There are several aspects of confidentiality of which you need to be especially aware.
  - a) You should know your agency's regulations regarding confidentiality of case notes, files, and taping
  - b) Since taping is an important aspect of your practicum seminar and MACPCE, it is your responsibility to secure the permission from your clients in writing (see Appendix 8 for a sample). You must also explain the limits of confidentiality to

- clients. You must let clients know who else will be hearing the tape (i.e., supervisor/class) and for what purpose
- c) As a professional, **any information shared in class is to be kept confidential by all class members.**
  - d) The client's full name should not be used on tape nor should you label tapes with identifying information
  - e) When tapes are used for review, they should be handled by you and not by another student or counselor nor should they be left unattended.

## 2. **THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFIDENTIALITY CANNOT BE OVER STATED!**

You should be extremely careful with your documents and tapes and safeguard against loss.

<b>Ethical and Professional guidelines</b>
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Each student is responsible for understanding and abiding by the Ethical Standards for the **American Psychological Association**. (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code.html>).

**\*\*\*If a student is asked to leave a practicum site for professional or ethical misconduct, he or she will receive a grade of “NC” (no credit) for the corresponding term and any practicum hours spent at the site during the term will not be applied toward the total practicum hours required in order to complete the program. Students dismissed from a site may have to repeat the entire Practicum sequence. In addition, the student will be referred to the Student Progress & Evaluation Committee, which will then evaluate the case and render decisions regarding remediation and/or academic consequences. Please refer to campus handbook regarding evaluation committee policies and procedures.**

## Clinical Issues

### **Critical Clinical Issues**

Your understanding of your ethical responsibilities in these potentially life-threatening situations is vital. Discuss these issues with your supervisor before situations arise.

1. Suicide information, risk assessment, and suicide contracting
2. Information regarding threat to others and guidelines for handling such clients
3. Child abuse and neglect information - definition, recognition, and reporting.

### **Tips for the new professional**

1. The transition to your role as a therapist can be both exciting and anxiety provoking. Your practicum experience offers you the opportunity to begin applying the knowledge gained through readings and coursework. It is natural for beginning therapists to experience insecurities related to their skill level and potential clients. Remember you are in training and make use of the suggestions and guidance that your supervisor can provide.
2. When you accept a practicum position, ask if there are any beneficial books or suggested articles for you to read and be familiar with before arriving at the site.
3. A list of recommended readings is included (see below) to help with the practicum experience. Your practicum seminar textbook is a good resource to normalize and explore the process of learning in practicum.

### **Taping**

1. The use of audio taping (as well as videotaping and live supervision when available) provides a rich source of feedback and opportunity to reflect on issues and dynamics arising during a counseling session.
2. Audio or video recordings of therapy sessions are **required** in both seminar class and MACPCE. See Program Director regarding any exceptions to this requirement.
3. In order to maximize the quality of supervision, clear and audible tapes are essential.

## Suggested Readings

(This is only a brief list. Please consult your site supervisor and seminar leader for more detailed suggestions related to you specific population and interests).

Beck, A. & Emery, G. (1985). *Anxiety disorders & phobias: a cognitive perspective*. Basic Books.

Gil, E. (1991). *The healing power of play: working with abused children*. New York: Guilford Press.

Gil, E. (1994). *Play in family therapy*. New York: Guilford Press.

Gilligan, C. (1982). *In a different voice: psychological theory and women's development*. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press.

Hoffman, M.A. (1996). *Counseling clients with HIV disease*. New York: Guilford Press.

Johnson, S.L. (2004). *Therapist's guide to clinical interventions* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Diego: Academic Press.

Keith-Spiegel, P. (1998). *Ethics in psychology: professional standards and cases*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kottler, J.A. (2000). *Nuts and bolts of helping*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Mash, E. & Barkley, R. (1998). *Treatment of childhood disorders*. New York: Guilford Press.

Morrison, J. (1995). *DSM-IV made easy: The clinician's guide to diagnosis*. New York: Guilford Press.

Morrison, J. (1995). *The first interview*. Guilford Press: New York.

Semrud-Clikeman, M. (1995). *Child and adolescent therapy*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

VandeCreek, L. & Knapp, S. (1993). *Tarasoff and beyond: legal and clinical considerations in the treatment of life-endangering patients*. Professional Resource Press: Florida.

Webb, N. (19 ). *Play therapy with children in crisis: A case book for practitioners*. New York: Guilford Press.

Zaro, J. (1987). *A guide for beginning psychotherapists*. Cambridge University Press.

Zuckerman, E.L. (2000). *Clinician's thesaurus*. (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) New York: Guilford Press

## **After Practicum**

### **Petition to Graduate**

Each student is responsible for filing a Petition to Graduate Form with the Student Services Department at the beginning of the semester during which the student is expecting to complete their practicum experience, all required coursework, and the MACPCE. This form can also be accessed via the website ([www.ausfba.com](http://www.ausfba.com)).

### **State Licensure**

1. State laws dictate requirements to be eligible for a license to provide therapy services. These requirements are determined by each individual state.
2. You should contact the state licensing board in the state for which you are interested to obtain information.

Contact information for the California board is as follows:

Board of Behavioral Sciences  
1625 N Market Blvd., Suite S-200  
Sacramento, CA 95834  
Tel: (916) 574-7830; Website: [www.bbs.ca.gov](http://www.bbs.ca.gov)

### **Marriage and Family Therapist Experience Verification Form**

This form is available on the BBS website. It should be filled out by the student's primary supervisor at the completion of the students' contract. Students **MUST SUBMIT THIS FORM** when applying for licensure in order to for hours earned in practicum to count towards licensure.

### **Marriage and Family Therapist Intern Registration Application Packet**

This packet is available on the BBS website and includes all the necessary forms for registration as an MFT Intern. Registration is required in order to earn hours towards the 3000 hours required for licensure in California as an MFT. Student may not register until they have graduated. If you register within 90 days of graduation, all hours accrued post-graduation and pre-registration will count towards licensure.

### **Program Certification Form**

This form is provided in your Registration packet from the State. It should be filled out by the Registrar at Argosy University/ SFBA Campus. Neither your seminar leader nor your site supervisor should complete this form. Students should send written request for form completion directly to the Registrar.

## Expectations and Responsibilities for Site Supervisors

1. Meet the minimum criteria as summarized below: (For detailed criteria, see Appendix 3 and Appendix 12.)
  - Have at least a Master's degree in a counseling related field
  - Hold appropriate licensure (i.e. MFT, LCSW, PSY, etc.)
  - Have a minimum of two years post-license therapy experience
  - Have taken a supervision course in the past 2 years.
2. Clear expectations of student participation should be communicated to students at the beginning of the practicum.
3. Provide orientation and on-going training specific to the site.
4. Schedule and provide regular, preset, uninterrupted supervision time (at least 1.0 hour per week) with clearly articulated expectations for use of supervision (tapes, process notes, etc.)
5. Provide adequate clinical opportunities to meet student's training needs. Attention should be paid to clock hour requirements and direct service requirements with a variety of clients in both individual and group settings.
6. Involve the student in professional interactions with other professionals, such as staff meetings and consultations with appropriate individuals and agencies.
7. Communicate clear feedback to students regarding clinical competence and progress throughout the training year.
8. At the end of each term complete and discuss with the student the Supervisor Evaluation of Counseling Psychology Student (MACP) (*See Appendix 14*). *Both the student and the supervisor* are responsible for submission of this form to the Director of Counseling Training.
9. Provide opportunities for periodic assessments, including student's self-evaluations.
10. Inform the Director of Counseling Training of any difficulties encountered at the practicum as early as possible and notify of any substantive changes in the practicum experience - - e.g., new supervisor, etc.

## **SUPERVISION**

### **Evaluation of Students**

Evaluation of student progress in clinical field training focuses on three areas: theoretical knowledge, clinical skills and professionalism. Each term, students are evaluated by their site supervisors, their practicum seminar leaders, and the Director of Practicum Training. Seminar leaders complete the evaluation for each student in the seminar. The Director of Counseling Training will review the students' evaluations and assign an overall grade of progress (PR), credit (CR) or no credit (NC) for the practicum itself.

### **Purpose of Supervision**

1. The practicum/internship experience is central to the education of professionals in Counseling Psychology. The supervision process is an integral part of this experience as it provides the opportunity to hone skills, explore new possibilities, receive feedback, and build one's repertoire and confidence as a therapist.
2. Each student should be prepared to effectively use supervision time on-site, and to discuss their practicum experience in the seminar.
3. Each counseling session and tape should be thoroughly previewed by the student with appropriate notes reflecting important content and identified segments of the tape for presentation during supervision.
4. Any problems/concerns should be discussed with the student and reflected in evaluations. If the student's performance, in the opinion of the practicum supervisor, is below what is expected a remediation plan should be developed and implemented.
5. If the student's performance is significantly below the expected level, the Director of Counseling Training should be notified immediately. A meeting between the site staff, the student, and Director of Counseling Training will be scheduled to discuss concerns, remediation, or withdrawal.
6. Any student who is asked to withdraw from the site will be required to present their case to the Student Professional Development Committee (SPDC) (See program handbook for details).
7. Dual relationships should be avoided, according to the APA Ethics Code in order to maintain an effective supervisory relationship.



### **Process of Supervision**

1. Individual supervision is a one-to-one relationship between the practicum student and his or her supervisor. The typical format is regular, weekly meetings for a minimum of one hour.
2. Group supervision, an additional component to individual supervision at some sites, typically involves two hours of case presentation and discussion of relevant professional issues with the supervisor and not more than eight students.
3. More information about the supervisor-supervisee relationship and various approaches to supervision can be found in the student required text.

### **The Evaluation Process**

- At the conclusion of each term, supervisors will receive from the Practicum Training Office a copy of the *Supervisor Evaluation of Counseling Psychology Student* form, with a deadline for return. The supervisor will complete the form, giving feedback to the student, and sign it.
- The supervisor should make a copy of the form for his/her records then either mail the form back to Argosy, or give the form to the student for distribution to seminar leader and Director of Counseling Training.
- Students are responsible for ensuring that Evaluation forms are returned to the Practicum Training Office by the established deadline.

## **Expectations and Responsibilities for Seminar Leaders**

General Guidelines for all seminar leaders:

1. Seminar leaders are not supervisors. The primary supervisor is the identified professional at the practicum site. The seminar leader works as a consultant. A seminar leader will assist students with case conceptualization, ethical, developmental, and diversity issues, as well as providing guidance in theoretical understanding.
2. Each seminar leader must develop a syllabus for the course. The minimum requirements will be provided by the Director of Counseling Training. Seminar leaders should forward a copy of the syllabus for each specific seminar class to the Director of Counseling Training.
3. Conduct a monthly three and a half (3 1/2) hour seminar, or a one hour weekly seminar.
4. Each seminar leader should be utilizing the textbook and other materials, as a guide to the seminar discussion topics.
5. Provide consultation for the students enrolled in the seminar.
6. Provide instruction and feedback on case conceptualization, developmental, ethical, diversity, and other professional issues.
7. Listen to audio tapes and provide feedback on technique, listening skills, and theoretical orientation.
8. If there are concerns with the student or the site, the seminar leader should contact the Director of Counseling Training, as soon as possible.
9. Coach students in preparing for the MA Counseling Psychology Competency Examination (MACPCE), throughout the entire practicum. Seminar leaders may also participate as Faculty Evaluators for the MACPCE.

### Attendance/Participation

**Every student must be registered for an approved practicum seminar course each term.**

Due to the participatory nature of this seminar, students are not allowed to miss seminar sessions except when arranged prior to the class and for appropriately determined reasons. A student may fail the practicum based on numerous absences, not attending the seminar, chronic tardiness and/or not participating. Each student should attend seminar ready to discuss cases and other relevant topics.

**It is assumed that students will be responsible and professional about being prompt. It is each seminar leader's discretion to require additional assignments for tardiness or missed classes.**

## MA Counseling Psychology Competency Exam – “MACPCE” Guidelines

It is one function of the Counseling Psychology Practicum Seminar to prepare students for the Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology Competency Examination (MACPCE).

### Summary Guidelines for MACPCE Presentation

The MACPCE is completed during the student’s last term of practicum. The purpose of the MACPCE is to assess the student's growth and development of clinical competency in accordance with the school's standards, and to insure student acquisition of appropriate skill levels for subsequent supervised clinical practice at the Master's level. The MACPCE assesses competency in assessment, case formulation, and psychotherapy planning and implementation. This requirement is accomplished through a presentation of 10 minutes of a therapy hour and an accompanying written presentation of the assessment, case formulation, course of therapy, and a critique of the therapy case chosen for the MACPCE. Students must choose a session for which they did not receive specific supervision. That is, the specific content and interventions should not have been critiqued by a supervisor and the student should not receive any supervision about organizing or presenting this case.

The MACPCE consists of two (2) parts, the written report and the tape/transcript and the oral defense.

- a. A typed case presentation report which must include: identifying data, presenting problems, relevant history, presenting issues, historical data, case formulation specific to an identified theoretical orientation, ethical considerations, cultural/diversity considerations, DSM-IV diagnosis, and treatment plan. Additionally, the written report must include a transcript of 10 minutes of the session from which the taped segment is played.
- b. Ten to fifteen minutes of a taped session--must demonstrate counselor skills, identify client responses to counselor’s interventions, and be presented within the context of the session, as well as a self-critique of the session. The session cannot be one previously presented to the seminar group.
- c. Evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to:
  - well organized and presented
  - key points of history given
  - taped segments audible and clear
  - taped segments display counselor’s clinical skills
  - taped segments appropriately highlighted the case
  - appropriate diagnosis chosen
  - diagnosis well defended
  - therapeutic interventions demonstrated competency
  - therapeutic interventions were appropriately matched to client.
  - consistent application of theoretical orientation to case
  - non-defensive responses to questions

**\*\*Students must successfully complete the MACPCE to graduate from the program. Failure to earn a passing grade on the MACPCE will result in student being offered the opportunity to revise their presentation. Students who fail to pass this second opportunity will be referred to the Student Professional Development Committee (SPDC) for review to determine if remediation is possible and for consideration of appropriate remediation plan. Remediation may include readings, additional courses or practicum, additional documentation or revision of written materials, presentation of another case, or other specified training experiences. Failure to pass MACPCE on subsequent attempt(s) may be considered evidence of a student's inability to perform professional counseling responsibilities at a level consistent with minimum programmatic standards and may result in student being dismissed from program.**

### MACPCE Schedule And Related Events

All questions should be directed to the Department; specific dates for tasks or events will be announced.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TASK OR EVENT</u>	<u>PERTINENT NOTES</u>
Early Fall	Guidelines for MACPCE relayed to students	Discussed & Distributed in Practicum Seminars.
Early Spring	Students petition to take the MACPCE.	Due date announced by Program.
Late Spring Or Summer	MACPCE's submitted to Faculty Evaluators	Due date announced by Program.
Fall	Master's Counseling students beginning Practica in January submit MACPCEs to Faculty Evaluators.	Due date announced by Program.

**For details regarding MACPCE please refer to the MACPCE Handbook.**