

Handbook for  
Supervised Counseling Practicum  
For School and Community Agency Options Only

HDAL 5570

3 Credit hours

Fall/Spring

Master's in Counseling

Department of Human Development  
and Learning

East Tennessee State University

Revised Spring 2004

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## HDAL 5570 Supervised Counseling Practicum 3 Credit hours - Fall/Spring

### Introduction

As a culminating experience to the master's program in counseling at East Tennessee State University each student is required to complete a practicum and an internship where counseling skills are applied in a variety of settings and with a variety of clients. The purpose of this manual is to provide students with a comprehensive source for the guidelines for successful completion of practicum. Students should refer to this manual for general information concerning practicum as well as hour requirements, assignments, clinic procedures, evaluation forms, procedures, etc.

### Catalog Description

This is an experiential course in which the student will apply individual and group counseling skills. Field experiences will be required. It will involve a semester of counseling experience under the direct supervision of an East Tennessee State University faculty member.

### Course Objectives

The purpose of this course is to apply the skills, competencies, ethics, etc. of counseling to a diverse population of clients in both individual and group counseling in a real-life situation while under the supervision of counseling faculty.

### Prerequisites

Admission to the program, permission of instructor, HDAL 5100, 5430, 5550 (or 5420), and 5562 (or 5421). Students in the Community Agency and School Counseling options must have a grade of B or better in HDAL 5550 and HDAL 5562 before entering practicum. Students in the Marriage and Family option must have a grade of B or better in HDAL 5420 and HDAL 5421 before entering practicum. In addition, all students are to have secured malpractice insurance through the American Counseling Association (ACA) prior to counseling with their first client. **Therefore, students are expected to complete their insurance applications within the first week of practicum and provide their supervisor with evidence of insurance before the end of the second week of practicum.** Student will not be allowed to see their clients until insurance is secured.

### Registration Procedures

Because of large enrollments and accreditation faculty-student ratios, students must inform their advisor one semester prior to taking their practicum of their intentions to take practicum. Students must sign up for practicum with the supervisor they select at the first of the semester prior to practicum. Admission into practicum will be offered on a first come, first served basis. Practicum scheduling will be addressed in Counseling Techniques (HDAL 5562) which is a prerequisite course to practicum.

### Courses activities and requirements -- General

Students are required to complete practica in which they must demonstrate counseling skills through direct counseling and role playing. The ability to counsel using appropriate communication skills is demonstrated through face-to-face interaction with clients. Students will be directly observed during practicum. Students will audio and video tape individual counseling sessions for review and analysis of the tape through feedback provided by the practicum supervisor. In addition, students may be required to co-counsel with other students. This has proven to be an excellent learning experience as well as a means by which student can support each other and gain additional client contact time. Further, individual supervisors may require various other exercises and assignments unique to their teaching style in order to maximize the learning experience. These assignments may include observing a required number of counseling sessions, analysis of transcripts of their sessions, etc. Refer to your supervisor's syllabus for these assignments. Because practicum is highly individualized depending on each student's needs, various assignments will also be given which reflect areas of needed development for each student independently and to aid students in understanding how they are responding as counselor and therapist. These assignments may include book reviews, paper and pencil tests, outside readings, etc.

### Courses activities and requirements -- Community Agency and School Counseling

All community agency and school counseling students must complete one, three credit hour counseling practicum. Each student will acquire a minimum of 100 practicum hours of which 40 hours will be direct client contact hours. Client contact hours are acquired through both individual and group counseling. Along with client contact hours, each student will participate in at least one hour of individual supervision and 1.5 hours of group supervision per week. In order to achieve the necessary client contact, observation, and supervision hours, students should plan to set aside the greater part of the day of the week that their practicum is offered.

### Evaluation Procedures

Students will be continuously provided feedback about their performance throughout the semester. Formal evaluations will occur about midway and at the end of the semester. In addition, a student may ask for feedback about his or her performance at any time during the semester. Grades will be determined by the student's supervisor(s) and are based on the degree to which the student displays the skills, professional behaviors, and ethics appropriate for a master's counseling student in preparation for placement at an internship site.

### Professional and Ethical Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner and to follow the ethical codes of the American Counseling Association (ACA) or the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists (AAMFT) throughout practicum. Issues of professional conduct or concerns regarding ethical violations should be brought to the attention of your supervisor immediately.

## **General Procedural Information for Practicum and Use of the Clinic**

The counseling department's clinic at ETSU is used by at least four professors and 10-20 students each semester. In order to maximize your practicum learning experience and maintain a smooth clinic operation, we have learned that the guidelines below work best.

1. You are to have at least two video cassettes available for recording sessions. Please put your name in large black letters on the cassette and on the cover. It is the student's responsibility to provide the supervisor with a video before each counseling session. Video cassettes are to be rewound by the student before each session if you want the recording to start at the beginning. If tapes are not rewound, it will be assumed that the student wants recording to begin at the current position on the tape. The video equipment in the clinic is used extensively and is valuable to the successful operation of the clinic. As such, we make every effort to minimize procedures which may increase wear and tear on equipment. Therefore, students should come to practicum with their video tapes prepared and not use video players for rewinding purposes.
2. Students are to have several audio cassettes for recording individual sessions. Be sure to be early for your sessions and to have the audio equipment ready and working before your client arrives. All video and audio tapes are to be erased at the conclusion of practicum. Be open about explaining recording, mirror and supervision to clients. Have two contracts ready for the first session, one for you to read and use for explanations and one for the client.
3. If you have a cancellation of which you have been informed, tell your supervisor of the change in scheduling immediately. You can leave a voice mail message if your supervisor is not available. If you write a note or communicate through a department secretary, do not use client names, simply refer to the time.
4. Please provide clients with department (439-7688) phone number and have all client messages handled through the department and your supervisor. Your supervisor may give permission for his/her office number (which has voice mail) to be provided to clients, also. Do not provide clients with your home or personal phone numbers or place of work, unless it is first approved by your supervisor (which will be extremely rare). Also, do not provide clients with the home phone number of your supervising professor.
5. Students are to maintain a supply of case note forms which are available in room 323A. Case notes are to be written for every session and filed in the folder labeled with your name (also in room 323A). Case notes are to be completed prior to your next session with clients. A sample of the case note form can be found in this handbook and you may photocopy it for use if necessary. This is confidential information. **DO NOT** leave completed case notes in any other place.

6. Students are to discuss cases only after you are behind closed doors. Do not discuss cases in the halls or other open spaces. Talk about clients only if you are consulting about your intervention. Do not discuss clients (individual or group) with individuals who are not part of your practicum group.

7. If for some reason your supervisor is not present when your client arrives, do your session anyway. Make sure to audio record and video if possible.

8. If your client shows up early, as some do, please ask them to be seated in the waiting area and tell them you will be with them in a minute. Find your supervisor and you may be able to start early. If you begin early, keep the session to 50 minutes unless there are unusual circumstances.

9. Be sure to leave the doors to the counseling rooms open when not in use. In this way others will know that there are no sessions taking place. If the door is closed, assume a session is taking place which can be checked through viewing from room 323A.

## Emergency Services and Contacts

The counseling clinic does not offer emergency services for clients on nights and weekends and clients should be informed of this if it appears that they may be in need of crisis services. Clients should be instructed to go to a local hospital or campus emergency room if a crisis arises which warrants immediate attention. In addition, the "help" lines listed below might be provided if it is judged the client might need them.

Child Abuse .....	929-0171
CONTACT Ministries .....	926-0144
Drug and Alcohol Center .....	928-HELP(4357)
Hotline Family Violence/Victim Assistance .....	926-8910
Narcotics Anonymous .....	800-838-3733
National Center for Missing or Exploited Children .....	800-843-5678
Watauga Area Mental Health Center .....	232-2600
Woodridge Mental Hospital .....	928-7111

If circumstances arise where a student needs to contact a professor/supervisor and for some reason no one is available on campus, we can be reached at the following numbers.

**Student are not to provide clients with professor's home phone numbers.**

Dr. Graham Disque .....	439-7691 work 232-7281 home
Dr. Brent Morrow .....	439-4187 work 928-2180 home
Dr. Clifton Mitchell .....	439-4197 work 854-9211 home
Dr. Pat Robertson .....	439-7693 work 915-1188 home
Dr. Harold "Doc" Whitmore .....	439-4191 work 282-9089 home
Dr. Jim Bitter.....	439-4194 work 434-9251 home
Clinic Phone .....	439-7679

## Contacting Clients and No-Shows

Contacting clients can be a bit tricky. If you are permitted to leave an answering machine message (indicated on the form completed by the client) simply tell them that you are calling about the services they signed up for and that you will return their call at a given time. If your supervising professor approves, you can give them your professor's office phone number and they can call us to schedule. Do not provide clients with your or your professor's home phone number (unless specifically told to do otherwise). Some clients have caller I.D. which can be used to obtain your home phone number. To prevent clients from obtaining your home phone number from caller I.D., dial \*67 before you call them.

If you are not permitted to leave an answering machine message and reach anyone other than the client, do not tell them what you are calling about, regardless of their inquiries or insistence. Sometimes parents or partners are inquisitive about their child's or partner's personal affairs and we must be careful to maintain confidentiality. You might ask when your client is expected in and tell whom ever you are talking with that you will call back. If they persist in wanting to know what you are calling about, you can simply reply that you will call back later and hang up. If you get cornered, you might tell them that you are calling wanting to know some information about a class at school. This is close enough to the truth and usually gets you off the hook.

Once you have reached your client, tell them who you are, set up the appointment time, tell them the building name, the waiting room number (room 327), the program phone number (439-7688), and close out the conversation. While you should openly answer any inquiries about the procedures, do not get into a counseling session over the phone. In addition, be sure to tell them that you will be giving them a reminder call the night before the session and be sure to give the reminder call! We have found that this helps with no-shows. Also, if the client can not make the session they might tell you in advance and you can adjust your plans and reschedule. Notify your supervisor immediately if there are changes in schedules.

When you talk to your prospective client, do not talk as if this is an optional appointment. In other words don't say comments like, "I hope to see you on Tuesday," or "If you don't show up I will call again." These type of statements subtly convey that this is not a meaningful appointment. Instead say, "I look forward to talking with you on Tuesday, and will be calling to remind you of our appointment Monday night."

While our show rates are improving, no-shows are frequent. If your client does not show, do not take it personally, this is just part of the business. It appears that counseling services are one of the first things that clients eliminate from their schedule when in a time crunch. Have the client's name and number with you at the clinic so that you can call immediately if they do not show. Sometimes the client lives in the residence hall and has simply forgotten the appointment and you can still arrange to see them the same day. If not, you can arrange another appointment immediately.

## COUNSELING PRACTICUM

### Contractual Agreement Between Practicum Student and East Tennessee State University

- (A) I hereby attest that I have read and understand the Ethical Standards of the American Counseling Association and that I will practice my counseling in accordance with these standards. I further understand that a breach of this code or any unethical behavior on my part may result in my receiving a failing grade and/or suspension or expulsion from the Counseling Program and notification of such behavior will be placed in my permanent record.
- (B) I understand that it is my responsibility to keep a written log and to keep my practicum supervisor(s) informed regarding my practicum experiences.
- (C) I understand that I will not be issued a passing grade until I have demonstrated a specified minimal level of counseling knowledge, skills, and attitudes.
- (D) I understand that I will not be allowed to counsel with individuals or groups until I am a member of a Professional Liability Plan that is designed to provide coverage for acts of malpractice and errors of omission in the performance of counseling practicum responsibilities. By signing the statement below I acknowledge that I am now a member of a professional counseling/psychology liability insurance program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### Counseling Consent Form

You are participating in counseling sessions with graduate students in training in the counseling program at East Tennessee State University. Each counseling session may be observed, videotaped and/or audio taped in order to help your counselor work more effectively with you. The taped sessions will be reviewed by the counselor-in-training I to help her/him work more effectively with the client. The student's supervisor will review the sessions. All tapes will be erased before or at the end of the semester.

The information shared in the counseling session is confidential and will not be released to any other person or agency without the client's written consent. There are a few exceptions to this commitment of confidentiality. The counselor and supervisor are required by law to release information to appropriate persons in the following instances:

- If the counselor has knowledge of threats of bodily harm or death to another person.
- If there is a threat of harm to self, such as suicide.
- If there are clear suspicions of child abuse, abuse of people with disabilities or elder abuse.
- If records are mandated by a court.

If you want to talk with a supervisor about your sessions, please feel free to call one of the counseling faculty:

Dr. Clifton Mitchell, Dr. Patricia Robertson, Dr. Harold Whitmore,  
Dr. Graham Disque, Dr. Jim Bitter, or Dr. Brent Morrow.

They can be reached through the Human Development and Learning Department at East Tennessee State University (423-439-7688).

I have been informed of my rights to confidentiality and my rights to express a grievance and I understand the above conditions of counseling.

Client Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Counselor Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Analysis of Counseling Session/Case Notes**

Practicum Counselor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Session No. \_\_\_\_ Date

Client's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_ Sex

Supervisor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Approximate Length of Session

Content of counseling session (continue on back of page, if necessary):

Comments about client's dynamic's, behavior, etc.:

Comments about counselor's (your) experience/behavior/strategies/techniques, etc.:

Overview: What did you do that was most helpful? What would you change about this session?  
Future plans. Second thoughts:

### **Practicum Evaluation**

Evaluation ratings are based on the level of performance expected of a beginning practicum student and not the level of performance expected of experienced practicing professionals.

Responsibility: present, on time, prepared, dressed appropriately, professional approach, assignments completed on time, tapes reviewed, appropriately planned for clients, assumes responsibility for own learning, etc.      1    2    3    4    5

Willingness to learn: openly accepts feedback, displays a deliberate attempt to respond to feedback provided by supervisor, works well as a team member with colleagues, etc.      1    2    3    4    5

General counseling skills: establishes rapport; responds with level 3 and 4 empathic statements; appropriate use of silence, questions, body language, summarizing, respect, conceptualization skills, openings, closings, etc.      1    2    3    4    5

Techniques: uses techniques appropriately, use of visual aids, immediacy, empty chair, assignments, establishes clients goals/needs, etc.      1    2    3    4    5

Counselors-client interactions: avoids inappropriate advice giving, avoids judgmental approach to clients, awareness of and openly discusses countertransference issues, cultural diversity awareness and practice, etc.      1    2    3    4    5

Ethical & professional behavior: knows and follows ethical codes, professional behavior, maintains professional boundaries, etc.      1    2    3    4    5

Group skills: appropriate interactions, empathizes, recognizes group dynamics and responds appropriately, appropriate exercises, attends to group's agenda, openings, closings, etc.      1    2    3    4    5

Overall rating of practicum performance:      1    2    3    4    5

Comments:

### Practicum Time Log

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Semester Completed \_\_\_\_\_ 19

Site(s)

week from - to	client contact hours	individual supervision	group supervision	other hours	week's total
<b>TOTALS</b>					

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**Authorization for Release of Information**

Counseling Graduate Program Clinic  
 Box 70548  
 Room 327, Warf-Pickel Hall  
 East Tennessee State University  
 Johnson City, TN 37614-0548

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby authorize \_\_\_\_\_ to release to and from

\_\_\_\_\_ the following information: Yes No

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. School records for \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Medical records for \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Psychological test reports.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Psychiatric evaluation reports.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Periodic reports of current mental health counseling.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Social history data including family, education, employment, arrest, drug and alcohol information.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Summary of previous mental health treatments.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Specify: \_\_\_\_\_

The purpose of the disclosure of the above information is:

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand no information may be re-disclosed by either agency to any other individual or agency unless by my written consent. This consent is given freely, willingly, and without coercion. This authorization may be revoked at any time by my written statement, and it is automatically revoked at the end of 90 days or under the following specific condition(s):

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Client                      Date                      Signature of Therapist                      Date                      Signature of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Responsible Party for Minor                      Date

This information has been disclosed to you from records that are confidential. This confidentiality is protected by federal law. Federal Regulation (42 CFR, Part 2) prohibits you from making any further disclosure of it without the specific written consent of the person to whom it pertains, or as otherwise permitted by such regulations. A general authorization for the release of medical or other information is NOT sufficient for this purpose.

