

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
Counseling Programs
COUN 687 –Internship in Counseling

Internship Information for Student Interns and Site Supervisors

COUN 687 - Internship is a required, capstone experience in school and clinical mental health counseling. Interns are placed in school or mental health settings and serve as counselors to selected clientele of the school or agency under the direct supervision of a qualified counselor at the site (i.e., site supervisor). Interns are expected to perform all duties typically performed by counselors employed in the school or agency. The internship experience provides for the acquisition and application of skills necessary for the translation of content knowledge into the art and science of effective practice in counseling. Supervision by on-site and university supervisors encourages the development of analytical and evaluative skills in integrating content knowledge and clinical practice in the refinement and enhancement of professional and personal competence. It is during the internship that efforts culminate for the intern to integrate the counseling curriculum into the work of the counselor in a professional setting.

Internships are performed on-site and interns have opportunities to work with clients representing diverse populations. They apply the concepts developed in the cross-cultural foci of courses and experiences throughout the curriculum while adapting their counseling styles and strategies to meet the needs of diverse individuals, and are evaluated on the effectiveness of their efforts.

Recording of all client interviews is expected and are played only for supervision, strict confidentiality being maintained in the setting. Professional expectations regarding the rights of clients (e.g., privacy) are strictly maintained utilizing school or agency procedures and the ethical guidelines of the American Counseling Association. Depending on agency or school procedures, parental consent for recording of counseling sessions with minors may or may not be required. Supervision is provided by a university supervisor and the site supervisor. Interns are expected to inform their supervisors of current developments in all cases.

The intern, site supervisor, and university supervisor jointly agree to an internship contract describing the internship responsibilities/duties which will enable the intern to achieve required competencies.

Internship Roles and Responsibilities of the University Supervisor:

The Counseling program faculty will conduct site visits at the opening and closing of one-semester contract periods and provide three hours of weekly group supervision of internship students. The faculty supervisor will monitor completion of contract tasks, review students' counseling recordings, case presentations, weekly logs, final logs, and will provide written and oral formative and summative feedback on student performance

and skill development. After conferring with the student's site supervisor, the faculty supervisor will assign a final grade of satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U).

Internship Roles and Responsibilities of the Site Supervisor:

The site supervisor must meet the qualifications of holding a master's degree in counseling or closely related field (e.g., psychology, social work), and a minimum of two years' post-graduate practice. The site supervisor must obtain and document supervisor training, such as holding supervision licensure or certification (e.g., LPC-S, CCS), graduate level coursework in supervision, attending the WCU counseling program's supervision symposium, workshop or conference training on supervision, review of supervision materials provided online by the WCU counseling program, one-on-one training with WCU faculty, or other forms of supervision training not listed. The site supervisor will provide an orientation to work-site duties, hours and expectations, monitor and assist contract tasks, provide one-hour of weekly supervision to the counselor-in-training, provide formative and summative feedback, serve as liaison between the site and the university for the purpose of counselor training and to pose concerns and/or questions about supervision procedures or the counselor-in-training's performance. The focus of supervision is on development of the intern's overall competence as a professional counselor and is not limited to those skills involved in direct services to clients.

Internship Roles and Responsibilities of the Student Intern:

Student interns are required to meet all internship contract requirements. Before the start of internship, students must complete (and keep updated yearly) the university approved criminal background check, and obtain and provide documentation of professional liability insurance to both faculty and site supervisors. Students also must abide by all site policies and procedures, including maintaining confidentiality, maintaining regular and prompt attendance on site and in supervision, and serving as liaison between the University and site. Students must obtain and document a minimum of 600 hours, and must provide a minimum of 2 satisfactory recordings/case presentations of direct services to clients for the purpose of supervision. Interns must complete assignments and submit work to the appropriate supervisor within time-specified guidelines; as such, students are expected to come to supervision sessions prepared with materials.

Competencies

The intern will demonstrate:

1. knowledge and understanding of the organizational philosophy, goals, and policies of the internship work setting.
2. appropriate applications of prior learning in undertaking assigned duties and responsibilities.

3. the ability to accept supervision feedback from supervisors and peers in a non-defensive manner, and make appropriate use of constructive feedback.
4. supervised experience in the use of a variety of professional resources such as assessment instruments, computers, print and nonprint media, professional literature, research, and information and referral to appropriate providers.
5. knowledge, understanding and application of ethical standards relevant for professional practice in settings typified by the internship setting.
6. competence in the preparation and presentation of client case studies.
7. competence in peer consultation by reviewing a minimum of two tapescripts and providing verbal and written feedback.

Internship Requirements

The intern will:

1. participate in weekly individual and group supervision during the term of internship.
2. secure 600 contact hours during the term of internship, of which 240 hours must consist of direct services to clients. Individual and group supervision may be counted toward the total of 600 hours. Complete the requirements of the internship contract.
3. maintain a daily activities log which documents total time spent on internship and specifies time spent in direct services to clients. Summarize daily logs on a weekly basis and submit the summaries to the university supervisor.
4. provide the individual supervisor a minimum of five opportunities for observation of direct services to clients (these may be live and/or audio/video recordings).
5. be prepared to submit counseling cases for discussion during each group supervision session. These will be presented orally and may be supplemented by audio and/or video recording of the counseling sessions. Participate in discussion and critique of case presentations by other interns.
6. prepare and maintain brief case notes on all individual supervision as required in the setting.
7. prepare and present a minimum of two case presentations with verbatim tapescripts covering 10-15 consecutive minutes of two individual counseling

sessions along with the complete recordings of the sessions. Tapescripts will be critiqued by the supervisee prior to submission to the university supervisor.

8. analyze and prepare verbal and written feedback of minimum of two cases for peer consultation in group supervision.

Grading Criteria

Internship is graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis. Evaluations by both site and university supervisors are considered in the assignment or grades by university supervisors. The grade of S (Satisfactory) represents the expected level of performance and reflects professional behavior on the part of the counselor-in-training as documented through the completion of the internship contract and supervisor evaluation. The grade of U (Unsatisfactory) represents ineffectiveness or even harmful effects on clients and reflects unwillingness to the part of the Counseling faculty to endorse the individual for work as a counselor.

Ethical Statement

It is the intern's ethical obligation to safeguard the welfare of his/her clients. It is the purpose of supervision to provide a learning opportunity for the student while at the same time recognizing the limitations of the student. The dilemma of how to provide freedom for the student to experiment with his/her own behavior while protecting the client is resolved in supervision by asking the student to monitor his/her ethical obligation in the following ways:

1. to request consultation concerning anything about which she/he is unsure.
2. to regularly inform university and site supervisors of the current status of all cases and of the procedures she/he is using.
3. to express feelings concerning anything pertinent to the client's or her/his own welfare.
4. to notify university and site supervisors immediately of any situation concerning which she/he has some question of her/his competency to handle.

The counselor-in-training's university supervisor may be contacted at 828.654.6550, WCU Counseling Program, 28 Schenck Parkway, Office 102, Asheville, NC 28803.