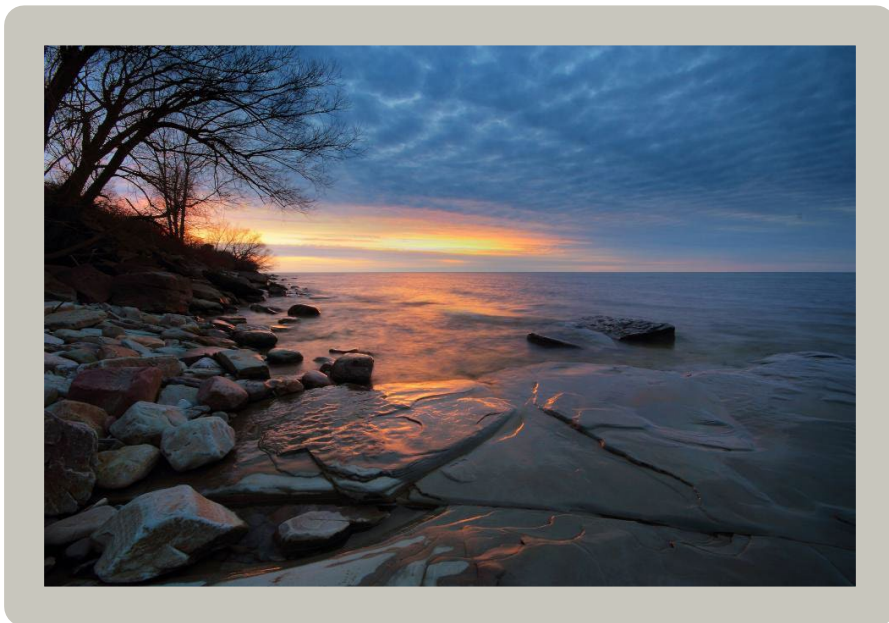




Counseling and Psychological Services Department
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MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING
PRACTICUM HANDBOOK



CPS 512: MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PRACTICUM
CPS 513: SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNSELING PRACTICUM

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Handbook Purpose

This handbook describes the Counseling and Psychological Services department's policies and procedures in the Master of Science degree program in Mental Health Counseling at SUNY Oswego. It is the responsibility of all students, whether full-or part-time, to be knowledgeable of the policies, expectations and requirements contained in this handbook and observe them during their tenure in the graduate program. Students are likewise expected to be familiar with college-wide and program-specific information regarding campus facilities, codes of conduct, disciplinary system, academic information and campus resources outlined in the SUNY Oswego Handbook of the College of Education (http://www.oswego.edu/academics/colleges_and_departments/education/handbook.html).

The intent of this handbook is to provide this information to help prepare the student for clinical placement experiences and satisfactory completion of CPS 515/516, Practicum in Mental Health Counseling.

Our Hopes

It is our hope that this information will be useful in planning and organizing a course of successful academic study and clinical work at SUNY Oswego's Counseling and Psychological Services Mental Health Counseling program.

Program Overview

M.S. in Mental Health Counseling

The following program mission statements were adopted by the Counseling and Psychological Services faculty of the Mental Health Counseling program at SUNY Oswego and endorsed by the Mental Health Program Advisory Committee in Spring 2014.

Counseling and Psychological Services Mission Statement

The Counseling & Psychological Services (CPS) Department at the State University of New York at Oswego is committed to educate and train high quality professionals who will function as skilled and ethical counselors who promote the optimal functioning of individuals, families, and groups in a variety of educational and community settings. The program's philosophy is student-centered and developmentally based. To this end, the CPS department provides the highest quality training in professional counseling within an atmosphere that fosters on-going professional and personal growth.

Mental Health Counseling Program Mission Statement

Mental Health program graduates will demonstrate mastery of major counseling theories and skills and show the ability to utilize them therapeutically in clinical settings, have strong foundational knowledge in human behavior and social systems and value and respect human dignity and diversity in all its forms. Academic and fieldwork experiences are intended to foster an adjustment-oriented approach that emphasizes not only diagnosis and remediation of pathology, but also prevention, wellness, early intervention, and advocacy. Program faculty are committed to fostering a vibrant intellectual community that promotes professional and interpersonal values which support and inform our relations with others, that include self-awareness, compassion, genuineness and a commitment to social justice.

Mental Health Counseling Program

The Mental Health Counseling program educates students to provide therapeutic mental health interventions in the community. This program prepares students to work in community agencies, clinics, hospitals, managed behavioral healthcare organizations, outpatient mental health programs, employee assistance programs, substance abuse treatment programs, colleges, and private clinical mental health practice. Students learn to consider the dimensions of wellness and mental health as well as pathology as they develop and implement effective treatment strategies. The program is designed to prepare human service providers to deal with problems and general concerns of human service agency clients and employees.

In accordance with standards recommended by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP) and New York State requirements for licensure as a mental health counselor, focal program areas include professional identity, social and cultural diversity, human growth and development, helping relationships, career development, group work, assessment, research, program evaluation, and evidence-based intervention skills used in mental health counseling. This Masters of Science degree in Mental Health Counseling provides students the opportunity to learn this knowledge base through a variety of teaching methodologies, including class discussions, role playing, small-group work, case-study analysis, and classroom simulations. Students also have the opportunity to apply this knowledge in supervised clinical settings.

Personal Qualities and Characteristics of Practicum Students

Although academic performance is a crucial factor in evaluating candidate performance, there are other interpersonal and professional skills that are equally important in determining the professional readiness of a particular candidate for the successful practice of counseling. Therefore, in addition to academic performance, students in the MHC program will also be evaluated on the following professional readiness indicators.

Indicators of Professional Readiness (Appendix A): Essential characteristics expected of all candidates matriculated in a degree program in the CPS Department are as follows:

1. Willingness and ability to self-explore and reflect on experiences in order to grow as a professional;
2. Ability to balance multiple life expectations and commitment to wellness;
3. Ability to demonstrate excellent listening and attending skills;
4. Ability to effectively communicate with others;
5. Ability to work respectfully, appropriately, and effectively with authority figures including university professors and site supervisors;
6. Ability to hear and accept critical feedback;
7. Ability to integrate and make changes based on communicated feedback;
8. Ability to act according to the professional expectations of the classroom and school/agency placement sites especially with regard to -
 - Appropriate dress
 - Promptness
 - Respectful attitude and behavior
 - Reliability and follow-through;
8. Ability to work effectively with administrators, staff, students/clients, and parents/families;
9. Ability to engage students/clients in a competent, ethical, and professional manner that respects and enhances their inherent dignity and worth;

10. Demonstrated adherence to the ethical guidelines related to ability to recognize and value client diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social class, etc.;
11. Demonstrated ability to practice in a manner consistent with the ACA ethical guidelines; especially those related to ensuring the welfare of all students/clients and doing no harm to students/clients.

Additional information on personal qualities and how they are assessed is included in the section of the handbook regarding clinical instruction and in an appendix.

Practicum Introduction

This is an advanced course in counseling theory and practice that provides an initial supervised experience in mental health counseling in which counseling theory is applied to practice. Student placement is as a participant-observer in a cooperating agency or counseling setting engaged in mental health or human welfare services or in an institutional setting providing pre-professional experiences of relevance to the mental health counselor-candidate (AUTHENTIC, LEARNING, PRACTICE, COLLABORATION). Experiences include a pre-placement orientation, weekly on-site supervisory visits, and weekly follow-through conferences on campus (AUTHENTIC LEARNING). The focus is on increasing the individual's effectiveness and knowledge of theory through intensive study of practical applications and theoretical bases (KNOWLEDGE). Students, both in individual sessions with the instructor and in small groups, critique and analyze their actual counseling sessions (REFLECTION, LEARNING, PRACTICE).

The program requires completion of a supervised practicum studentship in the student's designated program area of **120 clock hours** [3 credit hours, 40 minimum direct, 80 minimum indirect]. The practicum is intended to reflect the pre-professional experience of a counselor trainee appropriate to the designated program area.

PREREQ:

Prerequisites to Practicum Placement

The Mental Health Counseling Program within the Counseling and Psychological Services Department of SUNY Oswego offers coursework that leads to a Master's degree in Mental Health Counseling and meets the academic requirements for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor within the state of New York. The program is a 60 credit hour program and the practicum, Completion of at least nine credit hours of sequential course work including CPS 503 CPS 510, and instructor permission is required to begin a practicum. Mandated Reporter Training must be completed prior to practicum.

Types of Clinical Settings

The programs that students select for practicum placements include those which serve adults, adolescents and children. They may be part of large behavioral health systems that provide a comprehensive array of services to persons with mental illness and/or addictions or small organizations with a limited treatment focus and target population. Organizations that host students include both not-for-profit and for-profit organizations and many are licensed, funded or certified by a government oversight organization. All settings employ mental health counselors and/or allied behavioral health practitioners such as social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists and nurses.

Selection of Practicum Sites

The Mental Health Counseling Program has designated a faculty member to serve as the Coordinator of Clinical Training. In this role, the faculty member will work in collaboration with students to formalize practicum site placement. The student has the responsibility to find and secure an appropriate practicum site. It is the student's responsibility to **notify** and keep the Coordinator of Clinical Training updated on progress. Once the student and prospective site supervisor have reached an agreement, the student must notify the Coordinator of Clinical Training who will then confirm that the placement is able to provide the student with supervised clinical experiences that meet the learning objectives of the practicum. A key responsibility of the Coordinator of Clinical Training is ensuring that the organization is able to assign site supervisors who meet education and experience requirements that are consistent with the standards of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

Schedule and Hours

The completion of a supervised practicum requires studentship in the student's designated program area of 120 clock hours [3 credit hours, 40 minimum direct, 80 minimum indirect]. The practicum is intended to reflect the pre-professional experience of a counselor trainee appropriate to the designated program area. The definitions of direct and indirect hours are defined as follows:

Student Expectations

1. Students are expected to participate in all aspects of the course. Students are encouraged to discuss personal concerns with the instructor.
2. Students are expected to respect others' experiences, and personal information shared during the course is expected to be maintained as confidential by all present.
3. Students are encouraged to seek personal counseling at any and all times should the content of the course challenge development and growth as a professional-in-training.
4. Students are expected to observe ethical standards at all times. Ethical standards are congruent with the ACA Code of Ethics (2014).
5. Integrate knowledge from previous courses and apply it in the practicum setting.
6. Develop and practice analytic skills sufficient for responsible professional practice.
7. Develop strategies and goals for continuing personal and professional growth and share them with supervisors.
8. Inform the course instructor of any changes in the placement site.
9. Complete required practicum hours in a timely way.
10. Maintain appropriate documentation of activities (i.e., *hours log form* provided in this manual).
11. Students are to inform the practicum and/or practicum field supervisor immediately and the campus practicum/practicum instructor by email and phone within 24 hours

of any mandated child abuse reporting situations. Do not wait until the next class period to report the incident.

Change in Placement

Anytime a student leaves a setting, the counseling faculty and clinical coordinator expects the practicum student to engage in an appropriate termination process with their clients and with on-site personnel prior to leaving the setting. Should a practicum student's placement become problematic, the practicum student may change the placement. A change in placement at the practicum student's desire may be made only after:

Expectations of Clinical Sites

- a. Approximately 1 hour per week of supervision provided on a regular schedule throughout the practicum.
- b. Continual opportunity for the student to become familiar with a variety of professional activities and resources (See Direct and Indirect Service Provision charts, p. 3-4; and Part III Section A, p. 6).
- c. Consistent evaluation of student's counseling performance throughout the practicum, including: a. completed evaluations at the conclusion of the practicum, and b. session recordings for professional evaluative purposes
- d. Consistent mutual feedback provided between student and site regarding professional development, expectations, and reflections of growth.
- e. Consistent contact with supervising faculty member regarding practicum performance, with a minimum of two check ins per semester.
- f. Adherence to "Practicum Programs Under the Fair Labor Standards Act"
<http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/whdfs71.htm>
- g. Termination

It is understood and agreed among all parties involved that the practicum site has the right to terminate the practicum experience of the student whose physical or mental health status is detrimental to the services provided to consumers at the practicum site. Equally, should the practicum site not fulfill its obligation to provide the practicum student the serves agreed upon in contract, then the university supervisor has the right to terminate the practicum experience of the student. In either case, such action should not be taken until the grievance against any practicum/intern student, or site, has been discussed with the practicum/intern student, SUNY Oswego officials, and the site supervisor. Please refer to Protocol for Premature Termination of Practicum in this handbook.

- h. Equal Opportunity
In accordance with the Ethical Codes of the American Counseling Association, it is

mutually agreed that all parties shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, nationality, ethnic origin, language preference, immigration status, sexual preference, age, ability level, gender, or creed.

Practicum Site Supervisor Requirements

An practicum site supervisor must have:

1. Your supervisor must be licensed and registered in New York State to practice Mental Health Counseling, medicine, as a physician assistant, psychology, licensed clinical social work, or as a registered professional nurse or nurse practitioner and competent in the practice of Mental Health Counseling, or must have the equivalent qualifications as determined by the Department for experience completed in another jurisdiction.
2. Knowledge of the program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students.
3. Relevant training in counseling supervision.

As a Site Supervisor, you agree to:

- Conduct or arrange an orientation for students covering the organization's relevant policies, procedures and practices and an introduction to other staff and their roles,
- Provide adequate space and resources necessary for the practicum student to provide counseling services,
- Provide students with the opportunity to observe their (or colleagues') clinical work and/or engage in co-counseling,
- Provide an average of 1 hour/week of individual or triadic supervision to the practicum student,
- Provide the practicum student with a caseload that will allow them to complete their required practicum direct service hours within an agreed upon time-frame,
- Provide the opportunity for the practicum student to become familiar with a variety of professional activities in addition to direct service (e.g., record keeping, supervision, information and referral, in-service and staff meetings).
- Provide written evaluations of the practicum student for each college semester in which the practicum student is at your site (see Appendix),
- Maintain phone and e-mail contact with faculty supervisor throughout the semester to review and discuss the student's performance, minimally two check-ins per semester. Immediately report any problems or concerns such as non-attendance, tardiness or misconduct related to ethical or professional standards.
- Communicate with the practicum student's University supervisor any concerns in a timely way.

It is the responsibility of the Coordinator of Clinical Training to confirm that the site supervisor meets the aforementioned education and experience requirements. A Site Supervisor

Information Sheet is used to collect and document information about the education and experience of the site supervisor.

SUNY Oswego College of Education and the Department of Counseling and Psychological Services would like to thank you for your support of our students. We could not effectively train mental health counselors without your help and expertise. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation

Description of Direct and Indirect Hours

** DIRECT **	
Activity	Defined
Consultation *	Working with a client through a third party
Direct participation in client-related volunteer activities	Site programs, client activities such as play therapy, arts/crafts, social opportunities for clients, and associated activities.
Intakes/Interviews with clients	Completing intakes over the phone and/or in person.
Individual Counseling	Counsel individual clients and work with the on-site supervisor to create treatment plans and facilitate ideas. Shadowing and co-counseling is also included.
Group Counseling**	Counsel multiple clients with a specific goal and/or support in mind.
Testing/Assessment	The practicum student may do suicide risk assessments or various other personality and/or risk assessments.

** INDIRECT **	
Activity	Defined
Case Notes	The practicum student is to keep updated case notes on clients, which includes progresses, diagnoses and obstacles.
Case Management	The practicum student will help in assessing need of services, care planning, implementation of treatment plans and scheduling of clients with the on-site supervisor.
Creating activities for clients	Creating activities that are original and relevant to the client and finding activities from creditable and relevant sources (ex. Workbooks).
Supervision	On site and in class supervision
Other	Other activities may include filing paper work, helping with other clients and other activities that are relevant to the practicum studentship objectives.

* Consultation occurs when a counselor (consultant), in the role of an expert, meets with one or more other professionals (consultees) to improve the consultee's work with clients. It is helping a client through a third party. For example, a counselor may work with a teacher to address a student's in class behavior.

** Students are required to lead or co-lead a group in either their practicum or internship.

Site Supervisor Orientation

Orientation to the Mental Health Counseling program is initiated by the Coordinator of Clinical Training in conversations with organizations and site supervisors. An orientation packet is available that includes information about the mission and goals of the program, the curriculum and course descriptions, mental health counseling as a profession and the requirements for licensure in NYS as a Mental Health Counselor. Additionally, site supervisors are provided a written description of their responsibilities in this handbook prior to the student's practicum. It is the student's responsibility to orient site supervisors to their background and course learning objectives. Once a student is placed, the student's faculty Practicum instructor is responsible for keeping the site supervisor informed of student-specific or program-based information. In the future, there will be an annual orientation and professional development meeting for all site supervisors to share experiences and concerns and offer suggestions for improving clinical instruction. On-line supervision training modules are available on the CPS Departmental website.

Professional Standards and Ethics

All students are obligated to operate under the highest of ethical standards. The Mental Health Counseling Program has adopted the Ethical & Professional Standards of the American Counseling Association (ACA) (<http://www.counseling.org>). Students in the program are expected to adhere to these ethical codes. Additionally, students are expected to adhere to the CPS Department's Professional Readiness Standards (see Appendix A). Failure to adhere to these standards can lead to consequences ranging from faculty reprimand to expulsion from the program.

Protocol for Premature Termination of a Practicum

In accordance with the ethical codes of the American Counseling Association (ACA), it is unethical to prematurely terminate an practicum (except in rare cases where there is a threat of physical harm to the student) without appropriate protocol and consultation. Thus, an practicum or practicum student is not permitted to simply terminate an practicum or practicum experience prematurely without first meeting with the university and site supervisor. In the event that an practicum student has to prematurely terminate the practicum for any reason, the following protocol is to be followed:

1. The practicum/practicum student first will immediately contact the university supervisor via phone, email, or in person of the decision to terminate the practicum or practicum before notifying the site supervisor.
2. The practicum/practicum student will meet personally with the university supervisor to explain and discuss the circumstances for prematurely terminating the practicum or practicum.
3. The practicum/practicum student and the university supervisor will then meet personally with the Mental Health Counseling Program Coordinator, and any other necessary program faculty or university officials, to discuss the circumstances of the termination and the appropriate termination process.

4. The practicum/practicum student and university supervisor will then schedule a personal meeting with the site supervisor, and any other university and/or agency/school officials, to discuss the termination and provision of clients being seen by the practicum or practicum student.
5. The practicum/practicum student and university supervisor will then report to the Mental Health Counseling Program Coordinator in writing that all appropriate measures have been taken.

Any practicum student not following this protocol is in violation of departmental policies as outlined in this handbook, as well as in violation of the ethical codes set forth by the American Counseling Association. Consequently, a recommendation by CPS faculty for expulsion from the Mental Health Counseling Program may be warranted.

Expectations of Professional Practice

The content areas of knowledge and skills are based on CACREP standards and New York State requirements for licensure as a mental health counselor. The Counseling and Psychological Services department places a high value on the following knowledge and skill areas. Professional practice, which includes practicum and practicum studentship, provides for the application of theory and the development of counseling skills under supervision. These experiences will provide opportunities for students to counsel clients who represent the ethnic and demographic diversity of their community.

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

- a. Students are expected to participate in all aspects of the course. Students are encouraged to discuss personal concerns with the instructor.
- b. Students must lead or co-lead a group in practicum or internship.
- c. Students are expected to respect others' experiences, and personal information. Information shared during the course is expected to remain confidential by all present.
- d. Students are encouraged to seek personal counseling at any and all times should the content of the course challenge development and growth as a professional-in-training.
- e. Students are expected to observe ethical standards at all times as defined by the ACA Code of Ethics (2014)
- f. Integrate knowledge from previous courses and apply it in the practicum setting.
- g. Develop and practice analytic skills sufficient for responsible professional practice.
- h. Develop strategies and goals for continuing personal and professional growth and share them with supervisors.
- i. Inform the course instructor of any changes in the placement site.
- j. Complete required practicum hours in a timely way.
- k. Maintain appropriate documentation of activities (*hours log*, form provided in this manual).
- l. Students are to inform the practicum and/or practicum field supervisor immediately and the campus practicum/practicum instructor by email and phone within 24 hours of any mandated child abuse reporting situations. Do not wait until the next class period to report the incident.

MHC Program Advisory Committee

The Mental Health Counseling Program Advisory Committee has representation from our college and community counseling agency supervisors, program alumni, CPS department faculty and student representatives. The Program Advisory Committee convenes semi-annually. It makes recommendations to the MHC program coordinator about issues of common interest related to the profession, reviews proposed program changes and policies.

MHC Program Advisory Committee: Student Representatives

The MHC Program solicits nominations each year for student representatives. Representatives are nominated by classmates and selected by the MHC faculty. The student representatives fulfill a variety of roles. They act as information conduits between the student body and the MHC program. They represent the student body on the MHC Program Advisory Committee at the semi-annual meetings. They share information with new students at the annual New Student Orientation.

Program Faculty

The MHC Program core faculty shown below. Other CPS faculty teach classes taken by MH students and adjunct faculty serve in a part-time capacity as needed. One graduate assistant is assigned to the program during the academic year.

The current faculty is as follows:

Jason Duffy, PhD, LMHC, NCC, ACS
Coordinator, Mental Health Counseling Program
Associate Professor, Counseling & Psychological Services
(315) 312-3472 Email: jason.duffy@oswego.edu

Tiphonie Gonzalez, PhD
Associate Professor, Counseling & Psychological Services
315-312-3402; Email: tiphonie.gonzalez@oswego.edu

Michael LeBlanc, PhD, LMHC
Professor, Counseling & Psychological Services
(315) 312-3282 Email: michael.leblanc@oswego.edu

Daniel Miller, PhD, LMHC, NCC
Assistant Professor, Counseling & Psychological Services
(315) 312-3489 ; Email: daniel.miller@oswego.edu

Jodi Ann Mullen, PhD, LMHC, NCC, RPT-S
Professor, Counseling & Psychological Services
(315) 312-3496 Email: jodi.mullen@oswego.edu

Spiegelhoff, Sarah, PhD, LMHC, NCC
Visiting Assistant Professor, Counseling & Psychological Services
(315)-312-3383 Email: sarah.spiegelhoff@oswego.edu

Professional Associations

We encourage students to participate in professional associations relevant to the work of a mental health counselor. There are a number of helpful national, regional, state-wide, and local organizations which may be of interest. Student membership rates are often quite affordable, and this is a great way to expand your training options in areas of specialization and also to begin networking for future career opportunities.

Students may also want to consider subscribing to another professional journal. It doesn't have to be a dry academic journal, instead it should be relevant and readable. There are a number of interesting and useful professional periodicals out there (e.g., Psychotherapy Networker), so look them over and choose the one that will help you keep current.

Students should keep abreast on the professional and community workshops, trainings, professional meetings and conferences and make it a goal to attend at least several of these. At your practicum site, you probably will see countless brochures announcing upcoming events. Many agencies will provide in-service training programs. NY-ACA provides semi-annual professional development events. Take advantage of these chances to enhance your knowledge and skills. If you discover an event that may appeal to course members, post it on our course website under the professional development tab.

Licensure as a Mental Health Counselor

As of Fall 2009, all 50 states require licensure for the practice of mental health counseling. In New York State, that law took effect on January 1, 2006. The New York State law is both a "title" law and a "scope of practice" law. That is, a person cannot call themselves a mental health counselor (title) unless they are licensed; and they cannot perform the duties (scope of practice) associated with the mental health counselor title unless they are licensed.

If you think you may relocate to another state at some point in the future, it is to your benefit to investigate the licensure requirements in your destination state(s), as requirements vary. At this time, there is no reciprocity between New York State and any other state; so although you may become licensed in New York State, there is no guarantee that you will be licensed in another state unless you meet their specific requirements. The M.S. program in Mental Health Counseling at SUNY Oswego meets the academic requirements for licensure as a Mental Health Counselor within the state of New York.

There are three components to licensure: education, examination, and experience. Completion of the M.S. degree in Mental Health Counseling at SUNY Oswego indicates that you have met New York State's requirements for education. You must also complete a state-required examination

and 3,000 hours of post-master's degree supervised experience. A limited permit is required to begin the 3,000 hours of post-master's practice.

Details of these and all MHC licensure requirements are available at the website of the Office of the Professions of New York State:
<http://www.op.nysed.gov/prof/mhp/mhclhc.htm>

Faculty provide information about licensure in various courses throughout the program; however, it is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the New York State policies and the procedures necessary to become licensed. The program, faculty and SUNY Oswego have no authority over the licensure process. Our role and responsibility is to offer the educational program necessary for licensure as per our approval as a New York State registered program.

Mental Health Counseling Recorded Sessions Policy

All students in the CPS Mental Health Counseling Program will be required to record counseling sessions for the purpose of education and skill improvement. Maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of persons recorded is our utmost priority so all recorded sessions must comply with the following guidelines.

1. All students must obtain written authorization to record sessions with clients during their clinical instruction. Students must comply with all rules, standards, and practice guidelines of their sites regarding recording sessions and proper disposal of recorded materials.
2. Students need to obtain written authorization to record other MHC students or volunteer clients for classroom instructional projects. Permission to Record forms are provided to students in the filing cabinet in the Mental Health Counseling Labs/Fishbowl Room. Students must retain the Permission to Record form until the recording is deleted when the assignment is complete.
3. SUNY-Oswego provides for recording and viewing recorded sessions through a secure server. Students are expected to review recorded sessions in private areas so that session information remains confidential.

Devices

Unless a student's site has required recording equipment, all student recordings must be:

1. Digital (this includes phones, tablets, computers, digital recorders, and flash drives)
2. Password Protected
3. Of good audio and/or video quality (preferably more than 6 mega pixels)

Data Storage and Transfer

The ACA *Code of Ethics* and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) require that all devices with client data be:

1. Password protected
2. Never posted online at any sites or uploaded to cloud sites

3. Properly deleted and disposed of in the appropriate time frame relevant to the nature of the recorded materials

Liability Insurance

All students beginning field work (practicum and practicum) must maintain their own professional liability insurance, commonly known as malpractice insurance. (See section on clinical instruction.) Malpractice insurance is available at very reasonable rates for students through various professional associations. (See section on professional associations.)

Professional Counselor Portfolio

All students are encouraged to develop a professional counselor portfolio throughout their practicum.

Overview

A professional counselor portfolio is a collection of experience-based materials and reflective information that demonstrates various dimensions of the counselor's work, philosophy, abilities, and attitudes. The goal is to demonstrate how diverse activities and insights have contributed to the professional counselor's development.

Introduction

Professional Portfolios are an organized collection of materials from courses and other experiences during your academic coursework and field learning opportunities (Mellot, et al, 1997). The development and presentation of a Professional Portfolio will enhance your ability to demonstrate what you have done or is doing to reach your professional goals.

Professional Portfolio building, according to Martin (1999) means engaging in a process that results in a product. The process involves five major steps. First, you select a personal or professional goal. Second, you think about how your professional experience relates to that goal. Third, you collect actual times/documents that could demonstrate what you have done (or are doing) to reach your goal. Fourth, you decide which items among your collection best illustrate your achievement of our progress toward your goal.

1. Selection of personal and professional goal-professional development portfolios are usually developed to address goals outside of the education or training environment -- such as seeking employment, advancing in a career etc. Careful attention to your goal selection is critical --
2. How do your professional experiences relate to that goal? It is helpful to review the educational experiences you have from the start of your training program up to and including your present work. It is here that you can introduce yourself by resume and description of how you fulfill various counseling roles -- include your philosophic statement about counseling and how it relates to your professional experiences (citing specific coursework or unique experiences is helpful).

3. Items and documents that indicate what you have done. Brainstorm the variety of items that relate specifically to your academic and training experiences -- Example: Academic transcripts, certifications, practicum and practicum supervisors evaluations, classroom projects or presentations, audio and video tape examples of your counseling, in-service experiences, awards, honors, peer evaluation forms, etc.
4. Choosing the items that best illustrate your achievement toward your goal. It is important to remember that items that reflect skill acquisition and development are as important as your academic transcript.
5. How to present the selection of items. Example -- File? Binder? Box? Electronic format? Carefully consider which format best suits the presentation of your materials. Of critical importance is the manner in which you organize your materials. A clear roadmap for the reader is essential. Nothing detracts from your portfolio more than the random placement of items that fail to follow an orderly and consistent sequence.

NYS Education Law: Article 163, Mental Health Practitioners

§8400. Introduction.

This article applies to the professions of mental health counseling, marriage and family therapy, creative arts therapy, and psychoanalysis and provides for the licensing of such practitioners. The general provisions for all professions contained in article one hundred thirty of this title apply to this article.

§8401. Definitions.

For purposes of this article, the following terms shall have the following meanings:

1. "Board" means the state board for mental health practitioners authorized by section eighty-four hundred six of this article.
2. "Psychotherapy" means the treatment of mental, nervous, emotional, behavioral and addictive disorders, and ailments by the use of both verbal and behavioral methods of intervention in interpersonal relationships with the intent of assisting the persons to modify attitudes, thinking, affect, and behavior which are intellectually, socially and emotionally maladaptive.

§8402. Mental Health Counseling.

1. Definition of the practice of mental health counseling. The practice of the profession of mental health counseling is defined as:

- a. the evaluation, assessment, amelioration, treatment, modification, or adjustment to a disability, problem, or disorder of behavior, character, development, emotion, personality or relationships by the use of verbal or behavioral methods with individuals, couples, families or groups in private practice, group, or organized settings; and
- b. the use of assessment instruments and mental health counseling and psychotherapy to identify, evaluate and treat dysfunctions and disorders for purposes of providing appropriate mental health counseling services.

2. Practice of mental health counseling and use of the titles "mental health counselor" and "licensed mental health counselor". Only a person licensed or exempt under this article shall practice mental health counseling or use the title "mental health counselor". Only a person

licensed under this article shall use the title "licensed mental health counselor" or any other designation tending to imply that the person is licensed to practice mental health counseling.

3. Requirements for a professional license. To qualify for a license as a "licensed mental health counselor", an applicant shall fulfill the following requirements:

- a. Application: File an application with the department;
- b. Education: Have received an education, including a master's or higher degree in counseling from a program registered by the department or determined by the department to be the substantial equivalent thereof, in accordance with the commissioner's regulations. The graduate coursework shall include, but not be limited to, the following areas:
 - i. human growth and development;
 - ii. social and cultural foundations of counseling;
 - iii. counseling theory and practice and psychopathology;
 - iv. group dynamics;
 - v. lifestyle and career development;
 - vi. assessment and appraisal of individuals, couples and families and groups;
 - vii. research and program evaluation;
 - viii. professional orientation and ethics;
 - ix. foundations of mental health counseling and consultation;
 - x. clinical instruction; and
 - xi. completion of a minimum one year supervised practicum or practicum in mental health counseling;
- c. Experience: An applicant shall complete a minimum of three thousand hours of post-master's supervised experience relevant to the practice of mental health counseling satisfactory to the board and in accordance with the commissioner's regulations. Satisfactory experience obtained in an entity operating under a waiver issued by the department pursuant to section sixty-five hundred three-a of this title may be accepted by the department, notwithstanding that such experience may have been obtained prior to the effective date of such section sixty-five hundred three-a and/or prior to the entity having obtained a waiver. The department may, for good cause shown, accept satisfactory experience that was obtained in a setting that would have been eligible for a waiver but which has not obtained a waiver from the department or experience that was obtained in good faith by the applicant under the belief that appropriate authorization had been obtained for the experience, provided that such experience meets all other requirements for acceptable experience;
- d. Examination: Pass an examination satisfactory to the board and in accordance with the commissioner's regulations;
- e. Age: Be at least twenty-one years of age;
- f. Character: Be of good moral character as determined by the department; and
- g. Fees: Pay a fee of one hundred seventy-five dollars for an initial license and a fee of one hundred seventy dollars for each triennial registration period.

APPENDICES

- A: Indicators of Professional Readiness**
- B: Student/Site Supervisor Agreement**
- C: Practicum Student Placement Agreement**
- D: Practicum Plan**
- E: Self-Evaluation**
- F: Mental Health Counseling Student Site Evaluation**
- G: Mental Health Counseling Practicum Student Evaluation**
- H: Consent to Record**
- I: Activity Logs**

Indicators of Professional Readiness

Counseling and Psychological Services Department

Mahar Hall

7060 State Route 104

Oswego NY 13126

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PRACTICUM

Indicators of Professional Readiness

Introduction: Although academic performance is a crucial factor in evaluating candidate performance, there are other interpersonal and professional skills that are equally important in determining the professional readiness of a particular candidate to enter their chosen field. Therefore, in addition to academic performance, students in the CPS Department will also be evaluated on the following professional readiness indicators.

Indicators of Professional Readiness: Essential characteristics expected of all candidates matriculated in a degree program in the CPS Department are as follows:

1. Willingness and ability to self-explore and reflect on experiences in order to grow as a professional;
2. Ability to balance multiple life expectations and commitment to wellness;
3. Ability to demonstrate excellent listening and attending skills;
4. Ability to effectively communicate with others;
5. Ability to work respectfully, appropriately, and effectively with authority figures including university professors and site supervisors;
6. Ability to hear and accept critical feedback;
7. Ability to integrate and make changes based on communicated feedback;
8. Ability to act according to the professional expectations of the classroom and school/agency placement sites especially with regard to -
 - o Appropriate dress
 - o Promptness
 - o Respectful attitude and behavior;
 - o Reliability and follow-through
9. Ability to work effectively with administrators, staff, students/clients, and parents;
10. Ability to engage students/clients in a competent, ethical, and professional manner that respects and enhances their inherent dignity and worth;
11. Demonstrated adherence to the ethical guidelines related to Ability to recognize and value client diversity in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, disability, social class, etc.;
12. Demonstrated ability to practice in a manner consistent with the ACA ethical guidelines; especially those related to ensuring the welfare of all students/clients and doing no harm to students/clients.

Student/Site Supervisor Agreement



Counseling and Psychological Services Department

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Oswego NY 13126

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PRACTICUM

Student/Site Supervisor Agreement

Requirements to be an Practicum Site Supervisor

An practicum site supervisor must have:

4. A minimum of a master's degree in counseling or related profession (e.g., marriage and family therapist, social work, psychologist, psychiatrist) with equivalent qualifications, including appropriate certifications and/or licenses;
5. A minimum of two (2) years of pertinent professional experience in the program area in which the student is completing clinical instruction; and
6. Knowledge of the program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students.

As a Site Supervisor, you agree to:

- Provide adequate space and resources necessary for the practicum student to provide counseling services,
- Provide an average of 1 hour/week of individual or triadic supervision to the practicum student,
- Provide the practicum student with a caseload that will allow them to complete their required practicum direct service hours within an agreed upon timeframe,
- Provide the opportunity for the practicum student to become familiar with a variety of professional activities in addition to direct service (e.g., record keeping, supervision, information and referral, in-service and staff meetings).
- Provide 2 written evaluations of the practicum student for each college semester in which the practicum student is at your site (see Appendix),

- Communicate with the practicum student’s University supervisor any concerns in a timely way.

The University Supervisor will,

- Meet with you during the semester to evaluate the practicum student’s progress,
- Provide a minimum of 1 ½ hours/week (average) group supervision of the practicum student

The practicum student will:

- Create a schedule, in collaboration with their site supervisor, of when they will be on site,
- Abide by the Ethical Codes of ACA,
- Purchase ACA student liability insurance,
- Abide by the administrative policies, rules, standards, and practices of the practicum site.,
- Abide by the student dispositions of the CPS Department and the Oswego School of Education,
- Immediately report to their site supervisor any client cases that may require immediate intervention when the client reports incidents of possible harm to self or others,

SUNY Oswego College of Education and the Department of Counseling and Psychological Services would like to thank you for your support of our students. We could not effectively train mental health counselors without your help and expertise. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

We understand and agree to perform the above responsibilities. We understand and agree to practice counseling in accordance with the ACA Code of Ethics. We understand that there is a responsibility to keep SUNY Oswego faculty & site supervisor informed of student on-site activities and provide them with the appropriate material needed for supervision.

Date Signature of Student Counselor

Date Signature of Site Supervisor

Date Signature of University Supervisor

Practicum Student Placement Agreement

Counseling and Psychological Services Department

Mahar Hall
7060 State Route 104
Oswego NY 13126

CPS – 512 Practicum in Mental Health Counseling
CPS – 513 Practicum in Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counseling

Practicum Student’s Name _____

Placement Site _____

Name of Site Supervisor _____

Supervisor’s Credentials _____

Period of Site Placement _____

Complete Site Address

Supervisor Phone _____

Supervisor Email _____

THE FOLLOWING SIGNATURE ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THE PRACTICUM STUDENT HAS REVIEWED THE PRACTICUM SITE MANUAL.

Practicum Student Signature **Date**

THE FOLLOWING SIGNATURE ACKNOWLEDGES THAT THE SITE SUPERVISOR HAS:

- Reviewed the practicum site manual
- Has the relevant experience and credentials to provide clinical supervision to a mental health counseling student in New York state
- Reviewed the orientation & supervision information/training (e.g., readings, videos) in the supervision section of our [website](#)

Site Supervisor Signature **Date**

Practicum Plan



Counseling and Psychological Services Department
Mahar Hall
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Oswego NY 13126

MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PRACTICUM

Practicum Plan

DIRECTIONS: Using these guidelines, prepare three copies of a typewritten personal contract describing the objectives and activities to which you are committing yourself during the practicum. Submit a rough draft to your University Supervisor for review before making your final draft.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

- A. State your overall goal for the Practicum.
- B. Provide specific objectives that you hope to accomplish (e.g., learning to use silence effectively, learning to administer and interpret a given test).

PRACTICUM DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Describe your specific duties and responsibilities and the projected time involved each week in these activities (estimate preparation and contact time).

SUPERVISION:

Specify how supervision will be handled

ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES:

Include additional plans (workshops you plan to attend, extra reading that you plan to do, and other possible experiences related to the Practicum).

Self-Evaluation



Counseling and Psychological Services Department

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MENTAL HEALTH COUNSELING PRACTICUM

Self-Evaluation

Directions: Use this format to complete your paper on your personal and professional growth and learning which is due at the end of the semester.

Make a list of the new skills you have learned this semester:

What skills have you refined or strengthened?

What have you learned about the role of the Mental Health counselor?

What have you learned about yourself as a counselor?

What have you learned about yourself as a person?

Name: _____

Date: _____

*The practicum student needs to complete a self-evaluation at the end of each semester of the Mental Health Counseling Practicum.

Site Evaluation

Administered through TK20

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements according to the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree

My supervisor:

1. Helped me feel at ease in the supervision process, and express my authentic doubts, fears, or successes with clients ____
 2. Provided me with specific help in identified areas to work on in my growth as a counselor ____
 3. Adequately emphasized my strengths and capabilities as a counselor ____
 4. Showed respect toward myself and my clients, including understanding and respect for diversity of culture, thought, experience, and development ____
 5. Appropriately addressed interpersonal dynamics, conflict, or rupture between the two of us ____
 6. Asked for, was open to, and implemented my feedback in the supervision process regarding what was most helpful for me ____
 7. Challenged me to accurately perceive the thoughts, feelings, and goals of my client and myself during counseling ____
 8. Helped me to organize relevant data for identifying goals and planning strategies with my client ____
 9. Occasionally gave me a different, useful perspective on my counseling with a particular client ____
 10. Overall, I found supervision to be helpful to me during my Practicum or Internship ____
- Any other comments regarding your experience with your site supervisor this semester:

Site Supervisor Evaluation of Practicum Student

This evaluation is distributed to site supervisors and faculty supervisors online through TK20. It is no longer administer via paper and pencil.

Mental Health Counseling Practicum Student Evaluation

CPS – 512 Practicum in Mental Health Counseling/CPS – 513 Practicum in Alcohol and Substance Abuse Counseling

Using the following scale, rate the student's performance on the competencies below:

Highly Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Adequate	Satisfactory	Highly Satisfactory
1	2	3	4	5

*** Use N/A (not applicable) if Practicum student has not yet had the opportunity to employ the skill described.*

A. Performance of Basic Practicum Requirements

- a. The practicum student is making progress in meeting the requirements of service hours at the placement site
- b. The practicum student is providing the supervisor with sufficient work samples in a timely way
- c. The practicum student is following the policies and procedures outlined in the Practicum Manual
- d. The practicum student is attending scheduled supervision sessions regularly and in a timely way
- e. The practicum student has identified learning goals and is making progress toward achieving them in supervision and at the placement site
- f. The practicum student is amenable to supervision and demonstrates application of supervisor feedback
- g. The practicum student applied current record-keeping standards related to the site.

B. Counselor Practice, Knowledge, and Skills

Practicum students should be able to demonstrate appropriate professional proficiency in the self-critical, accountable, and knowledge-guided use of counseling skills, to include intervention strategies with systems of varying size and complexity. The emphasis is on direct practice in counseling a population that is diverse, utilizing the previous didactic and experiential training received while in the Mental Health Counseling Program. Competence will be displayed through the student's ability to:

1. Applying core counseling skills of empathy, respect, concreteness, genuineness, and immediacy within the counseling process:

- a. Using empathy to show understanding of how client expresses and experiences.
- b. Communicating respect for the client's humanness, problem-solving capacities, potential for growth and need for hope.
- c. Using concrete language to assist client.
- d. Distinguishing personal feelings and opinions separately from the client's.
- e. Displaying genuineness.

2. Applying advanced counseling skills such as advanced accurate empathy and confrontation within the counseling process:

- a. Using advanced accurate empathy to show understanding of what client is unconsciously expressing and experiencing.
- b. Using responsible confrontation to challenge client discrepancies, evasions, and resistances.
- c. Using immediacy techniques to examine here-and-now relationship issues.

3. Using modes of direct service intervention appropriate to role level, client needs, and site function:

- a. Providing counseling services, including any appropriate services to the family of the client.
- b. Planning and coordinating services for a client.
- c. Co-leading or leading a client group.
- d. Matching client with needed community services.
- e. Making appropriate referrals and follow-up.
- f. Acting as client's advocate.
- g. Using culturally appropriate interventions for diverse clients.

- h. Understands the impact of crises, disasters, and other trauma-causing events on people.

4. Formulating and implementing a plan to deal with a client problem:

- a. Writing and discussing a plan of action and rationale for it.
- b. Carrying out the steps of the plan in collaboration with the client.
- c. Monitoring the plan with the client, exchanging feedback about the process.
- d. Maintaining focus and continuity, revising assessments and contracts based on changing needs, circumstances and perceptions.
- e. Identifying and assessing potential substance abuse disorders.
- f. Planning and addressing substance abuse disorders.
- g. Identifying and assessing potential suicide.
- h. Diagnosing based on DSM5 or other assessment instruments.
- i. Creating treatment plan for substance abuse disorders based on current knowledge in the field.
- j. Dealing with emergency situations according to site expectations and procedures.
- k. Differentiate between diagnosis and normal reactions during crises or other traumatic events.
- l. Uses data to make decisions about treatment.

5. Terminating and evaluating the counseling relationship:

- a. Instituting a series of steps leading to successful termination, including, if appropriate, transfer or referral.
- b. Identifying and assessing the effects of termination on self and client.
- c. Identifying and assessing the client's movement toward agreed on goals and suggesting next steps.

C. Becoming a Professional Counselor

This learning objective is demonstrated in the Practicum student's willingness to be fully responsible for personal thoughts, feelings, and actions and in the practicum student's pro-active stance toward learning. Both are essential for autonomous practice. Competence will be displayed through the student's ability to:

1. Demonstrating a capacity for self-observation and self-awareness:

- a. Identifying and assessing effects of learning style, personal values, biases, and feelings on performance, especially regarding issues of human diversity.
- b. Examining and changing behaviors that interfere with successful work.
- c. Exercising initiative in making counseling interactions and activities observable and subject to feedback.

2. Using Counseling Supervisors for learning:

- a. Identifying initial learning needs and interests.
- b. Actively collaborating in formulating and updating a learning contract.
- c. Asking questions.
- d. Preparing work agendas.
- e. Seeking other available learning resources, including professional staff, print and nonprint media, professional literature and research.
- f. Discussing assignments, challenges, and problems openly with supervisor.
- g. Discussing differential diagnoses to guide interventions.

3. Applying content from counselor program courses in the placement site:

- a. Applying concepts, skills, professional counseling values, and ethics in work with clients and colleagues.
- b. Identifying and discussing ethical dilemmas in professional decision-making.
- c. Discussing conflicting obligations/choices/expectations between self, client, and colleagues.
- d. Generating reports, presentations, process records, and tapes.
- e. Applying knowledge of theory/empirical findings.

4. Managing time and work demands:

- a. Arriving at assigned times at the placement site or for supervision.
- b. Planning and organizing available time to manage the flow of work.
- c. Prioritizing tasks in relation to deadlines, site procedures, and client system needs.

- d. _ Completing assignments on time.
- e. _ Exercising good judgment in completing work priorities.

D. Site and Community Skills

Practicum students should be aware of the reciprocal influences of culture and personality on human and organizational behavior. Practicum students should observe, assess, and be able to discuss the impact of organizational policies and structures on the site's services, clients, and staff. Competence will be displayed through the student's ability to:

1. Identifying and describing the organizational structure of the site, its mandates and services, and the roles and functions of staff members:

- a. _ Prepare a graphic representation of the placement site's organizational lines of authority and structure.
- b. _ Present a simulated 10-minute public service talk about the site.
- c. _ Describe the site, its purpose and its services.
- d. _ Respond to telephone requests for information about the site.

2. Describing and assessing the impact of selected policies, legislation, and organizational structure on site services, clients, staff, and self:

- a. _ Identify how individual problems relate to larger policy issues.
- b. _ Describe ways in which gender, race, social class, age, ability, sexual orientation, and ethnicity impact the organization and use of services.
- c. _ Describe the formal and informal means through which site policies are formulated.
- d. _ Describe the work climate of the site and assess its impact on staff morale.

3. Describing the typical client in relation to the community system, and recognize the ways in which a client's inability to function appropriately or adequately in the community system leads to involvement with the site:

- a. _ Identify and describe the key components within the community which promote or diminish client functioning.
- b. _ Present a simulated expert witness report outlining the negative or non-supportive relationships between the mainstream life of the community and the unmet needs of a specific client or target group.
- c. _ Identify and describe key organizations or institutions in the client's life and the interactions existing between the client and these larger systems.

- d. _ Make effective referrals of clients to other service sites or community resources needed for improving client functioning/coping skills.

4. Contributing to the processes of maintenance and change in the site and the community:

- a. _ Identify and assess personal feelings, attitudes, and degrees of adaptability with respect to changes within the site.
- b. _ Contribute to the ways in which staff members cooperate in various work groups.
- c. _ Demonstrate developing knowledge and skills for conflict resolution in an organizational setting, participating as a member of work groups.

Strengths that the Practicum student has demonstrated include:

Areas in which the Practicum student needs to improve include:

Overall summary of this Practicum student's counseling performance at this time:



Consent to Record
Counseling and Psychological Services Department
 Mahar Hall
 7060 State Route 104
 Oswego NY 13126
 Mental Health Counseling Practicum

To the client:

Your counselor is a mental health counseling trainee enrolled in practicum. Mental health counseling trainees in practicum have successfully completed most minimum training standards required to earn a graduate degree in mental health counseling at SUNY-Oswego. Consistent with these national standards, your counselor is supervised by multiple entities and is required to undergo rigorous evaluations based on counseling performance.

Counseling trainees are required to demonstrate their professional skills in interactions with clients by providing supervisors with work samples in the form of recordings of counseling sessions. These recordings are intended to enhance their professional training and improve the services you receive. Therefore, your counselor is asking your permission to record your counseling session for these evaluative practices.

Your counselor is compliant with the ACA Code of Ethics (2014) and HIPAA. Congruent with the ACA Code of Ethics and HIPAA, all records of counseling services provided, including recordings, are considered confidential professional information. Recordings will be protected by the counseling trainee and the supervisors of the counseling trainee. These recordings will be utilized for the purpose of professional evaluation and training, and will be reviewed by trainees and supervisors in congruence with the ACA Code of Ethics and HIPAA. The only time this confidentiality may be breached is at your request or when required by law.

Consent to Participate in Mental Health Counseling

I, the undersigned, hereby acknowledge that I have read and discussed with my counselor the information presented above. I fully understand the purpose of this request and I agree to a recorded counseling session for my counselor trainee’s evaluation.

(Signature of Client)	(Date)
(Signature of Client’s Parent or Guardian, if applicable)	(Date)
(Signature of counseling trainee)	(Date)

Activity Logs

Counseling and Psychological Services Department

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Phone: 315-312-4051

Revised November 2023