

CNPS 598 (6.0) FIELD EXPERIENCES

(COUNSELLING PRACTICUM)

Course Outline

(Fall, 2014)

Description of Field Practicum

Our Counselling Psychology Master's Program is currently accredited by the C.A.C.E.P., the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association's Council on Accreditation of Counsellor Education Programs. The course requirements and standards comply with, and exceed, those set forth by the C.A.C.E.P. standards.

The field experience is designed to provide opportunities for students to work with clients from diverse personal, social, and cultural backgrounds, in schools, higher education settings, and community agencies. As part of their learning goals, students are expected to receive guidance and supervision in clinical competency areas such as: case conceptualization, intervention skills and strategies, professionalism, ethical conduct, and sensitivity to diversity.

Students are encouraged to secure placements in settings most congruent with their interests and competencies. The practicum experience provides an opportunity for the student to perform under supervision, a variety of activities that a regularly employed staff member working in a similar role in the setting would be expected to perform. The choice of practicum is a joint decision between the student, field practicum supervisor, and the CNPS 598 seminar instructor. The CNPS Director of Clinics and Practica maintains overall administrative responsibility for all practicum placements, while the practicum instructor serves as the primary liaison between the student and the practicum site/supervisor. Students are required to regularly attend seminars (i.e., CNPS 598 classes) and engage in learning and supervisory activities, as well as receiving continuous supervision from their field supervisors for the duration of their practicum.

Students who are officially enrolled in CNPS 598 are covered for 5 million dollars per occurrence by the UBC's professional liability insurance. Some sponsoring agencies and educational institutions may have their own liability coverage and related policies and regulations. It is optional but not required for students to obtain additional liability insurance through organizations such as the Canadian Counselling Association and the B.C. Association of Clinical Counsellors.

For placement details and required forms to be completed by students wishing to enroll in this course, please see the latest version of the *Practicum Placement Guide* which can be found on-line at: ps.educ.ubc.ca/cnps/cnps-forms-and-resources#c. Registration for all sections of CNPS 598 can only be done by contacting the ECPS administrative staff member responsible for the CNPS graduate programs (Karen Yan). A student wishing to register for practicum in the spring or fall must contact Karen Yan and submit a practicum readiness form, signed by his or her program advisor. Only after the signed readiness form has been received, will a student be enrolled in a section of the practicum seminar.

Pre-requisites:

- (1) All students must have completed and passed the basic course work in counselling psychology, as specified in their *Program of Studies*. Students must arrange to have the *Practicum Readiness Form* signed by their program advisor or research supervisor, and submit this form to Karen Yan before being allowed to register in a section of the CNPS 598 practicum.
- (2) Some agencies require students to undertake a successful Criminal Record Check as a requirement for placement.
- (3) In *exceptional circumstances* and only with the support of their program advisor/supervisor, a student may begin their practicum with **a maximum of 9 outstanding course credits which can**

only be from the following list:

- CNPS 532 (Psychological Assessment in Counselling)
- EPSE 528 (Basic Principles of Measurement)
- CNPS 584 (Program Development)
- CNPS 579 (Research in Counselling Psychology).

In such *exceptional cases*, these remaining courses will be regarded as *co-requisites*. A plan to complete the remaining course work *concurrently with the practicum* must be approved and monitored by the student's program advisor. (*Pre-requisite policy revision for CNPS 598 approved in April, 2004*). Any other exceptional arrangements will require a formal written request, the approval of the student's advisor, a written request to the Director of Clinics and Practica, and the unanimous approval of the CNPS faculty.

- (4) Outstanding course work must be clearly noted in the student's practicum placement contract and approved by the practicum field supervisor(s).
- (5) Students ***MUST NOT*** see clients or collect direct client contact hours until **the first day of the term** in which they are registered for CNPS 598, and until they have **a practicum contract in place** that has been approved by the CNPS 598 course instructor or the Director of Clinics and Practica, and signed by the practicum instructor, the student, and the student's field supervisor.

Objectives:

As a result of this course, the student should be able:

1. To identify and describe different settings in which counsellors work.
2. To define the counsellor's role and its variations from setting to setting.
3. To define the role of the counsellor with respect to ethical issues, legislation, professional involvement, professional development, and in relation to other professional roles. This knowledge will be demonstrated by the ability to identify and describe the following:
 - a. Professional roles and functions including similarities and differences with other types of professionals
 - b. Professional organizations, primarily the CCPA (Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association) and its divisions, branches, and affiliates, including membership benefits, activities, services to members, and current emphasis
 - c. Ethical standards of the CCPA and related entities, ethical and legal issues, and their applications to various professional activities (e.g., appraisal, group work)
 - d. Professional preparation standards - their evolution, and current applications
 - e. Professional credentialing including certification, licensures, and accreditation practices and standards, and the effects of public policy on these issues
 - f. Public policy processes including the role of the professional counselor in advocating on behalf of the profession and its' clientele
4. To demonstrate competence in clinical, coordinating, and consulting skills through successfully completing a supervised field practicum in individual and group counselling, and as applicable, professional consultation.
5. To demonstrate awareness of, and sensitivity to, clients' diverse social and cultural backgrounds and worldviews, and to incorporate such sensitivity and awareness into effective case conceptualization and the development of a positive helping relationship and an appropriate helping approach for each client.
6. To share professional experiences within a group of peers in order to broaden the student's perspective and provide the student with a model for constructive professional peer relationships.

7. To develop the ability to understand and conceptualize client issues and engage in intentional counselling practice, taking into consideration life span development, culture, gender, developmental and relevant contextual issues.

Content Areas

1. **The Placement.** The student must secure an appropriate placement(s) with a qualified field supervisor(s), and work in that setting from either:
 - Sept. to April (e.g., 25 weeks at 20 hours/week; 3 days per week) or
 - April through August (e.g., 21 weeks at 24 hours/week; 4 days per week) or
 - A portion of the spring-summer-fall period, for a ***combined total of a minimum of 500 documented hours*** of practicum work at one or more sites. Activities associated with the documented hours other than direct client contact hours described below include the seminar classes as well as all other activities required to support the student's work with their clients and as a member of the practicum site team (e.g. writing notes; attending meetings, case conferences and professional workshops; client preparation; topical readings; etc.).

Breakdown of Required 500 Hours:

At least 210 of the 500 required hour must be in direct service to clients (i.e., individual, couple or family counselling sessions). Students may accumulate more than the minimally required hours, and must keep detailed logs of their client contact (e.g., basic demographics, type of session, presenting issues, session duration). These logs must be signed off by the site supervisor either weekly or monthly, and at the end of the placement.

The 210 hours of direct client contact is broken down into two parts:

- **Direct Counselling:** minimum of 160 hours must involve individual, couple or family counselling. Co-counselling hours can also be counted towards the 160 hours.
- **Group Counselling:** minimum of 50 hours must be in facilitating counselling and/or psycho-educational groups. Of the required group hours:
 - (a) 25 hours may involve working as a junior co-facilitator with a senior and more experienced group leader who can provide supervision, training and feedback.
 - (b) 25 hours of group counselling must be as a solo-facilitator or a primary co-facilitator (i.e., being a primary co-facilitator or an equally responsible co-facilitator vs. being in a "junior" role).

For each group in which the student participates, the supervisor must sign the one page group summary sheet, with the number of facilitation hours and specific focus of the group work being clearly recorded on the sheet.

2. **Supervision.** The supervision of the student is a shared responsibility between: (a) the identified field supervisor or the sponsoring agency or educational institution, and (b) the Counselling Psychology program in the Department of Educational and Counselling Psychology and Special Education in the Faculty of Education at U.B.C.

- (1) The field supervisor must complete the *Supervisor Qualification Summary Form* (see the Practicum Placement Guide) attesting to the fact that he or she meets the following specific criteria:
 - (a) a master's or doctoral degree in counselling psychology or a related mental health field from an accredited university or an acceptable degree granting educational institution
 - (b) a minimum of 4 years of full time pertinent professional work experience
 - (c) competence in counselling practice in areas pertinent to the practicum student's learning objectives
 - (d) commitment to abiding by a code of ethical conduct of their agency/institution or a pertinent professional association such as the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy

Association

(e) not be currently under investigation for professional malpractice or the breach of ethical codes of conduct.

- (2) Each student must receive a minimum of 1 hour of direct one-on-one supervision per week from the field supervisor. On average students should receive 1 to 2 hours of face to face, formal supervision for every 10 hours of direct client contact.
 - (3) Each student and his/her field supervisor will be visited at his/her primary practicum site by the UBC 598 instructor at least once during the practicum, typically as a summative evaluation at the end of the placement or earlier in the placement if deemed necessary or appropriate.
3. **Class Attendance.** Participation in regularly scheduled practicum seminars (3 hours per class) on campus and *continuous registration in a regular or phantom section of CNPS 598* are required while students are engaged in a field practicum. Seminar attendance is **mandatory at the outset of practicum**, unless students have permission from the Director of Clinics and Practica for temporary phantom registration. Missing classes will have serious consequences on a student's successful completion of this course. The seminars are designed to support students while in their placements and to address professional issues. Topics that may be addressed during the seminar include case conceptualization, review of tapes or transcripts, exploration and evaluation of counselling theories and intervention strategies, lifespan development and diversity issues, ethical issues, pertinent legislation, the counselling role, and professional involvement.
4. **Written Contract.** Upon finding a suitable placement, the student, in collaboration with the sponsoring agency or institution, will draw up a contract detailing the nature of the experience he or she hopes to have in that setting. A draft of the contract must first be approved by the CNPS 598 seminar instructor (or the Director of Clinics and Practica), prior to the student securing the signature of the proposed practicum site supervisor. Students ***MUST NOT*** begin working with clients until this contract has been approved and signed by all parties. An example of the required contract sections can be found on-line in the Practicum Placement Guide. Specifically, the contract should include:
- a) Details of the site, and full supervisory contact information.
 - b) Duration of the contract (start and end dates) and time to be spent in the setting each week (number of hours, number of days).
 - c) Rationale for selecting this placement setting.
 - d) Nature of activities you will be involved in, specifying responsibilities.
 - e) Nature of the supervisory relationship. In as much detail as possible specify how much time will be spent in supervision (i.e., number of hours per week, day, time) as well as the specific activities or methods of preparation, feedback and evaluation that will be used (e.g., face-to-face discussion, observation, and audio and/or video recording playback). If there are possible ethical concerns (e.g., dual relationship, conflict of interest) in the supervisor-student relationship, clearly address those issues and indicate how they have been resolved.
 - e) Expected outcomes. State what you expect to gain from the placement experience as practicum learning objectives in specific terms.

After being approved by the course instructor, 3 copies of the final contract must be signed by the student, his/her field supervisor, and the CNPS 598 seminar instructor (or the Director of Clinics and Practica if the seminar instructor is not available), with a copy being retained by each person.

5. **Maintaining a Log Book.** On a weekly basis, students will keep a log book in which they maintain a record of their direct and indirect hours and activities. These logs must be signed by the site supervisor and submitted to the course instructor at the conclusion of the practicum. The signed logs will be placed in each student's practicum file.

Recommended Readings

McEvoy, M., & Justice Institute of British Columbia (2013). *Balancing conflicting interests: A counsellors' guide to the legal process (3rd ed)*. B.C.: Government of British Columbia.

Each practicum setting may require particular readings and reference books that are determined by the on-site practicum supervisor. In addition, specific readings may be required by the seminar instructor.

Assignments:

1. **Supervisor's Evaluation:** At the conclusion of the placement, the field supervisor will submit a written evaluation of the student's work, commenting candidly on how the student handled various aspects of the placement and the extent to which the student met his or her learning objectives. They may use the CNPS 598 Practicum Evaluation Form (see the Practicum Placement Guide), or write their evaluation in a letter of recommendation "To Whom It May Concern." The written evaluation must be sent to the CNPS598 seminar instructor. Normally the site visit will take place near the end of the placement, during which time the student, the field supervisor, and the UBC seminar instructor will meet to review and discuss the final evaluation and the student's progress and significant learning during the placement.

The *Field Supervisor* offers supportive and constructive feedback and appropriate guidance throughout the placement, conducts periodic performance reviews of the student, and offers interim evaluative feedback and the final written evaluation. The *Counselling Psychology Practicum Course Instructor has the ultimate responsibility for arriving at a final grade (Pass/Fail) to be assigned to the student.*

When working in an agency or an educational institution, the student is expected to comply with the conditions governing the types of cases handled and working relationships with other staff as outlined by the agency supervisor.

2. **Student's Placement Evaluation:** At the conclusion of the placement, each student will submit a one page evaluation documenting the nature of the placement and their assessment of the placement and the supervision they received during their practicum.
3. **Counselling Case Presentation, Written Case Report, and Use of Recorded Materials:** Students will be expected to make at least one individual case study presentation to the seminar class before the completion of this course, using concrete examples to reflect their work with the client. Although not a requirement, should students elect to use video or audio recorded session segments and/or transcripts of such portions for the purpose of a case presentation, professional and ethical issues must be adhered to (approval of using audiovisual material must be obtained from the client and the field supervisor). To ensure client confidentiality, copies of a clinical case outline may be circulated to the class during a case presentation, but must be collected from other students in attendance, and be disposed of by the presenter at the end of the presentation. A formal case study must be submitted to the course instructor within a week of the student's case presentation. The 5 – 8 page case report should be type-written and double-spaced, conforming to the case report outline specified by the instructor.
4. **Group Counselling Analysis:** Each student will present one group case report during the seminar class before the completion of this course. A group summary sheet, signed by the student and group supervisor, must also be submitted for each group the student runs during the practicum (see the *Practicum Placement Guide*). Additionally, students *may be* asked to submit a critical analysis (5 to 8 double-spaced pages) of: (a) his/her performance as a group facilitator, and (b) a critical analysis of the group process and design – for one of the groups the student facilitated during the practicum. The instructor may provide alternative methods of analyzing group leadership and process/design.

5. **Final Self Evaluation:** At the end of the practicum, students will submit a written evaluation of their significant learnings, strengths, and areas of continued growth since the start of their practicum. This self-evaluation is meant to be a reflective synthesis of the student's experiences and significant learnings, based on the learning objectives outlined in the student's practicum contract (up to 5 pages, typewritten, double-spaced).

NOTE: Dates for the submission of all written work will be determined by the seminar instructor.

Grades:

The course is graded on a *Pass/Fail basis*. Before a grade can be assigned, all signed logs, written work, and the supervisor's evaluation must be received by the course instructor. Each student must pass the course to graduate.