

GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY
College of Education and Human Development
Counseling & Development

Practicum in School Counseling
EDCD 755 – Spring 2013

Instructor: Joseph M. Williams, PhD
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Class Location: Enterprise Hall 77
Class Meeting: Wednesday 4:30P-7:10P

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Office Hours: by appointment
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Course Prerequisite

Completion of the counseling and development program except for EDCC 610 and electives; permission of advisor; overall GPA of 3.000; no grade of C in any skills courses [EDCC 603, 606, 608, and 610]; no more than two grades of C in any other graduate course work required by the Counseling and Development program.

Course Description

The faculty of this program regards the practicum in school counseling as the first opportunity to gain a sense of the day-to-day roles and functions of school counselors. This course is a supervised practicum at either an elementary, middle or high school site. The principal objective of the practicum is to provide an opportunity for integration of knowledge and skills in a school setting. Applying theory and counseling skills under competent supervision enables students to make the necessary transition from graduate school to an actual work setting. When the transition is made with adequate supervision, students gain competence and confidence in the delivery of counseling services. The reality of the practicum setting provides the necessary bridge between training and professional competence.

In addition to preparing students for transition into the world of work, the practicum program is beneficial to the educational setting. Students are expected to bring to the staff an enthusiasm and willingness to learn as well as integrated counseling knowledge and skills. It is expected that Master's students in counseling will have supervised responsibilities appropriate to a novice counselor and cumulating in responsibilities similar to regular staff members, thereby contributing substantially to the functioning of the particular counseling setting.

The basic assumption underlying all practicum arrangements is that the primary focus of each setting is the welfare of its clients. We assume that all practicum activities are to be conducted within the context of responsibility for client welfare and the ACA and ASCA Ethical guidelines for professional school counseling practice.

Counseling and Development Program faculty cooperate in the practicum course with educational institutions in Northern Virginia and the surrounding communities. The faculty is committed to an

ongoing evaluation for improving the practicum/internship experience for counselor-trainees and the participating practicum/internship sites.

Course Objectives/Student Outcomes

At successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the organizational dynamics of both K-12 school system and the school and community in which it is located as a learning/growing environment for children and youth.
2. Demonstrate individual, small group and classroom guidance counseling effectiveness at an elementary and/or secondary school setting and responding appropriately to ethical and legal situations.
3. Select and apply appropriate counseling theories and interventions with a diverse student population.
4. Communicate effectively with counselors and personnel from other professional specialties at the school setting, e.g. school psychologist, school social worker, curriculum planner, and administrator, with respect to student growth and learning.
5. Produce a case conceptualization for a client at an elementary and/or secondary school setting.
6. Demonstrate continued professional development through participation in workshops, professional organizations, and informal support groups.
7. Demonstrate an awareness of his/her characteristic style of initiating and developing counseling and consulting relationships, and infusing multicultural counseling skills and implement strategies to improve counseling effectiveness.

Relationship to C&D Courses, Program Goals, and Professional Organizations

Practicum in School Counseling is a culminating course for master's degree students in the Counseling and Development degree program. The experience is designed to enhance counseling skills and to provide students with site-based school counseling experiences.

EDCD 755 fulfills the requirements of the following professional organizations:

1. Virginia Department of Education requirement for school counseling licensure that candidates understand the knowledge, skills and processes of individual counseling, and log 100 hours of supervised field experience at both the elementary and secondary levels.
2. Council for the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) 2009 Standards that require counselor education programs include the study of helping relationships in a multicultural society; and
 - a. CACREP-Section II. Professional Identity
 - b. CACREP-Section School Counseling.
3. American Counseling Association Code of Ethics requirement that counselors establish counselor education and training programs that integrate academic study and supervised practice.

Course Delivery

This course is taught through a combination of seminar-style class discussions, group supervision, and triadic supervision. Class discussions will include brief didactic presentations on relevant and emerging topics for the practicum students, and will include time for group discussion. Group supervision will focus on providing students an opportunity to present, discuss, and conceptualize, and receive feedback on current cases and issues at their practicum setting. Students will have opportunities to discuss specific site-related issues and to strategize about techniques and interventions. Triadic supervision will occur between instructor/supervisor and two students, with supervisees taking turns sharing a taped counseling interaction with a student/client.

Because of the serious nature of this work, it is essential that students discuss their reactions and feelings. Such discussions, however, cannot take place outside the context of a supervised class or appropriate site circumstance. Students may not discuss cases in other classes, with friends or relatives, or in social situations. It is essential to maintain confidentiality. Violations of this principle in any form will be treated as a serious ethical/legal infraction. Please do not discuss cases in class. That is the primary purpose for meeting. It is also imperative that students discuss cases with their on-site supervisor. If students have questions or concerns that need immediate attention, please contact your university instructor.

Recommended Reading

American School Counselor Association (2012). *The ASCA National Model: A framework for school counseling programs* (3rd ed.). Alexandria, VA: Author.

Dimmitt, C., Carey, J.C., & Hatch, T. (2007). *Evidence-Based school counseling: Making a difference with data-driven practices*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Kaffenberger, C. & Young, A. (2008). *Making DATA work*. Alexandria, VA: American School Counseling Association.

Holcomb-McCoy, C. (2007). *School counseling to close the achievement gap: A social justice framework for success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

***Additional weekly readings will be assigned and posted on Blackboard as indicated on the course schedule, and further articles may be assigned at any time during the semester.**

Required Resources

Supplies: Audio and Video tapes for taping progress during training and for use in supervision sessions.

Access to Computer: Blackboard is available for this class. This website is a private website for students and their faculty supervisors. This site will store forms that will be necessary during your experience. It is also possible that in the event of inclement weather or other circumstances, this site will be used for discussions, as well. If for any reason you have difficulty accessing Blackboard, please contact Dr. Williams.

Course Requirements

1. All C&D students must work at their practicum and internship sites for the **FULL 15 WEEKS OF THE SEMESTER**. Students are subject to school district policies regarding school hours and notifications about illness, emergencies, bad weather, etc. If you are absent, arrive late or leave early you **MUST** notify your site supervisor and your university supervisor, Dr. Joseph Williams by e-mail of the event.
2. Attendance at each class. As a graduate student, you are expected to arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. Missing two classes or not regularly following your site placement schedule will result in failing this course.
3. Active class participation, including providing constructive feedback and suggestions for classmates.
4. Completion of all assignments of acceptable quality, turned in by date due.
5. **Professional Counseling Liability Insurance**. Student Counselors *must* purchase their own professional counseling liability insurance policy. Professional counseling organizations provide such coverage, some with association membership, and offer student rates.
6. Student counselors are responsible for **downloading Practicum/Internship documents and providing copies to site supervisors**. *We encourage you to ask your site supervisor whether they would like an electronic copy or a print copy, and make it your responsibility that they have a copy in their desired format.* The following documents are located on the Community Blackboard site:[<https://gmucommunity.blackboard.com>] Overview of Practicum/Internship; School Counseling Practicum/Internship Contract; Log of Hours; Mid-semester Evaluation; Final Evaluation of Site Experience. Students are expected to give their site supervisors copies of all the documents **before the University supervisor's initial site visit**.
7. **School Counseling Practicum/Internship Contract**. In addition to the contract, students are expected to **submit a one page Personal Goals Statement, developed in collaboration with the site supervisor**, which describes goals particular to your needs and the experiences available at the site. Contracts will be signed at the first Site Supervisor, University Supervisor and student counselor meeting. *Contract and personal goal statement should be included in the portfolio*
8. **Satisfactory mid-semester and final evaluations from On-Site Supervisor**. These evaluations should be completed by the site supervisor, and practicum students should meet with their site supervisors to process these evaluations and receive verbal feedback on strengths and successes as well as areas for growth and goals for second half of the semester. Please give them at least 2 weeks prior to the due date.
9. **Evaluation of Clinical Field Experience**, to be completed by practicum student.
10. **A minimum of 200 hours must be spent at the school placement**. Hours spent on off-site training experiences may be counted only if prior approval from instructor has been obtained. Hours spent in class or at home preparing GMU assignments may not be counted toward the 200 hours. **The minimum number of hours spent on-site at one time is to be no less than a 3-**

hour block of time. A Log of Activities listing and briefly describing all practicum activities and hours is to be maintained, signed by both the student and the on-site supervisor at the completion of the practicum, and submitted on the last day of class. *The Log of Activities should be reviewed during weekly supervision sessions with the site supervisor.* Recommendation for related practicum activities:

- a. 60 hours of Direct Contact (individual, group, and/or family counseling, guidance lessons, etc.)
- b. 140 hours of Indirect Contact (supervision, consultations, staffing, case note preparation, treatment planning, etc.)

Direct contact hours include direct participation in client-related volunteer activities including site programs, client activities such as play therapy, arts/crafts, social opportunities for clients, intakes, interviews, (in person or via phone), individual or group counseling (shadowing does NOT count), and guidance lessons. Co-counseling is considered direct service.

Indirect contact hours include case consultation with supervisors or peers, case notes, case management, paperwork, preparation for sessions, class attendance, supervision, research on topics related to counseling the population with whom interns work, outreach, presentation or attendance at workshops/conferences.

11. The Student will provide required documents to the University Supervisor before any final grade is submitted to the registrar:

- a. Practicum/Internship Contract;
- b. Log of hours;
- c. Mid-Semester Evaluation of Student by On-Site Supervisor;
- d. Final Evaluation of Student by On-Site Supervisor.
- e. Evaluation of Clinical Experience

Assignments

Grading on written work will take into account the following factors: quality of written work, knowledge of content area, APA 6th edition format, and adherence to requirements of assignment. As a graduate student, it is expected that all of your work will be turned in on the assigned dates. If an assignment is accepted at a later date, it is subject to a penalty of 10% of the award for every day it is overdue. Assignments are considered late after 10 minutes of the class session in which they are due. If you are absent, you are responsible for the information missed in class, including but not limited to assignments, change in due dates, content of discussion and/or lecture, and handouts. All assignment should be uploaded via Blackboard, as well as turned into class, at the start of class via hard copy on the day the assignment is due.

Students are expected to be able to use a computer, send and retrieve email, open attachments, access to the internet, participate in online discussions, use Blackboard, and conduct a library search on line. In addition, students should check Blackboard and their GMU email for course updates on a daily basis. All course documents will be available on Blackboard. Email messages sent using Blackboard need to be forwarded to your GMU email.

Class Attendance and Participation (10 points)

As a class that focuses on learning from practical experiences of the students, this class places a heavy emphasis on processing of information through class discussion, small group discussion, and participating in experiential activities. In addition, because the class will be so interactive and experiential, there is no way to “get the information” from a missed class—the class experience cannot be replicated. For these reasons, your class attendance and active participation is vital not only to your learning, but to your classmates learning as well. Several factors will go into your participation grade, including:

- a. **Attendance** (every student is expected to be at every class),
- b. **Punctuality** (every student is expected to be ready to go when class begins, and to stay for the duration of class time),
- c. **Active Participation** in class exercises (key is active, contributing ideas, giving feedback, participating in group discussions). Students are **encouraged, but not required** to keep weekly journals. This allows students to discuss any events from the week including, but not limited to goals and clinical activities. Its purpose is to allow for sharing your weekly experiences with your peers. Students are encouraged to ask questions of their peers and offer general support.
- d. **Substantive Contributions** to class discussions (not quantity of contributions, but contributions that demonstrate thoughtful analysis of information; comments that move discussion forward; comments based on knowledge and experience, not just opinion; and a demonstrated ability to propose new ideas and/or build on others’ ideas in a meaningful way).

Students are expected to attend all schedule classes and will be assessed by their preparedness for class and involvement in class discussions and activities. It is expected that you will have done the readings prior to the class and are prepared to participate in the class discussions. Much of your learning will take place as a result of your interactions and participation in class. As a graduate student, you are expected to attend class, arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. **One unexcused absence will automatically lower the students’ final grade. Two unexcused absences will result in failing the class. Excused absences can only be arranged with instructor on a case by case basis. Finally, lateness to or leaving early from class can count towards someone’s absence and/or participation grade.** If you must miss a class or arrive late, please call and notify the professor before the class meeting. A rubric will be provided on Blackboard.

Contacting the instructor for absences, late arrivals or early dismissals is a courtesy and does not necessarily mean exemption from attendance and participation responsibility; this means points may be deducted as stated in the syllabus. If there is a scheduling conflict that interferes with attendance during any portion of the class; students should see the instructor during the first class to discuss continuing in the class or taking the course during another semester.

Practicum Learning Goals (10 points)

The practicum student will be required to identify and submit learning goals for the course. The student will do this in consultation with his/her on-site supervisor. In particular, students are expected to develop five to six goals with specific objectives for this course. These goals and objectives should be observable and measurable and planned with your site and university supervisors. Goals are due to your university supervisor by **February 6th**. The practicum student will submit a final summary paper (minimum of 5 pages) of his/her practicum experience discussing goals met in practicum, identifying the tasks completed at the practicum site, supervision experiences, critical incidents, other final thoughts

related to the practicum experience, what the student learned about him/herself and evaluation of self-care – due on **May 8th**.

Counseling Tapes (30 points)

Students will be responsible for providing at *least* three current case conceptualizations along with a corresponding audio or video tape in class. These times will be arranged at the beginning of the semester. You are responsible for the arrangement of the Audio or Video tape equipment to play during class and printed copies of the case conceptualization notes for each person present. This processing mode allows for active peer assistance through support and constructive feedback. In addition to hard copies, electronic versions should also be submitted to Blackboard.

Students will be prepared to present at *least* **1** organized and relevant audio/video case to group supervision meetings during their practicum experience and *at least* **2** tapes during triadic supervision during the semester. However, students are encouraged to bring in tapes at other times whenever feedback from peers and the supervisor would be helpful. Practicum students are required to obtain written parent permission prior to taping sessions with a minor. The original of the parent permission form should be kept in the school with the site supervisor, but the student should keep a copy of the form for his or her records.

Peers will provide verbal and written feedback on the case presentations. Students must provide a brief overview of the client's background information with identified concerns and defined goals. Students are required to ask the group for strengths and insight into problem areas for the counselor. Cases will consider relevant ethical issues and standards pertinent to case management. Format provided as follows:

- Identifying information (Age, education, and other demographic info):
- Presenting underlying concerns
- Diagnosis (if one is present)
- Brief overview of background related to concerns (developmental, emotional, behavioral characteristics, important relationship issues, also discuss strengths)
- Treatment history (previous treatment, length and types of treatment, attitude toward treatment, progress)
- Counselor's concerns or questions (impasses, confusing dynamics, new interventions, personal reactions)

Peers will provide verbal and written feedback on the tapes.

- a. Each tape must be at least 15 minutes in length.
- b. The student will select at least three interventions/skills that they would like to change, then discuss with peers a new response that would be more useful/appropriate/skilled.
- c. The student will note his or her own strengths and areas of improvement as described in the evaluation of clinical skills (**on Blackboard**).

The instructor may also adopt other evaluation measures, which would be discussed with students.

Other variables which influence grade:

- a. Student's ability to utilize and integrate feedback from tape reviews.
- b. Student's ability for self-reflection and self-critique in providing alternative interventions/skills (conceptualization).
- c. Student's counseling performance skills (intervention)

- d. Student's cognitive counseling skills regarding the client's situation (conceptualization)
- e. Student's ability for self-reflection and self-critique on personality or personal issues affecting the counseling interaction (self-awareness)

Final Evaluation (30 points)

Evaluation of skills, professional and personal qualities, and the readiness to advance to Internship. Site supervisors will use the ***Final Evaluation of GMU School Counseling Student*** document available on Blackboard to evaluate students. The evaluation will be used by the University Supervisor as 30% of the Student Counselor's final grade for this course. The evaluation will be based on the student's current performance, not on future potential growth.

Accountability Project (20 points)

The site accountability project is the performance-based assessment for this course. In collaboration with your site supervisor, design and implement an evaluation of an existing counseling program at your site. Every effort should be made to select a project that is related to the C & D Mission Statement and the academic mission of the school site. The purpose of this assignment is to develop and apply what you have learned about accountability: to monitor student achievement, to evaluate effectiveness of counseling programs and services, to determine program needs, and make recommendations for new programs or modification of existing programs. You will present your accountability project to your peers and invited guests on the last night of class. You will provide a one page data report for classmates and guests. The final project to be handed in to instructor will include the one-page data report followed by detailed description of each step in the process along with instruments, permission letters, data analysis, etc. [20 points= 17 for project & 3 for class presentation.] A description of this assignment and an accountability project rubric is included in this syllabus and can be found on Blackboard.

For additional clarification and explanation about course requirements and assignments, please make necessary arrangement to speak with me.

Grades

George Mason University policies prohibit instructors from issuing a grade of A+. The following grading scale will be used for this course:

A	97—100
A-	94—96
B+	91—93
B	87—90
B-	84—86
C	80—83
F	0—79

Course Requirements and Evaluation

Assignments	Points	Due Dates
Class Attendance and Participation	10	Evaluation throughout semester
Practicum Learning Goals	-	February 6, 2013
Accountability Project	20	May 1, 2013
Counseling Tapes	30	Evaluation throughout semester
Reflection Papers	-	May 8 th
Final Evaluation	30	May 8 th
Practicum Documents and Forms		May 8 th
Total Points Possible	100	

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

George Mason University Policies and Resources for Students

- Academic integrity (honor code, plagiarism) – Students must adhere to guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code [See <http://oai.gmu.edu/honor-code/>].
- Mason Email – Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, division, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account. Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301ge.html>].
- Counseling and Psychological Services – The George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) staff consists of professional counseling and clinical psychologists, social workers, and counselors who offer a wide range of services (e.g., individual and group counseling, workshops, and outreach programs) to enhance students' personal experience and academic performance [See <http://caps.gmu.edu/>].
- Office of Disability Services – Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor in writing at the beginning of the semester <http://ods.gmu.edu/>.
- Students must follow the university policy stating that all sound emitting devices shall be turned off during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.
- The Writing Center (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Writing Center staff provides a variety of resources and services (e.g., tutoring, workshops, writing guides, handbooks) intended to support students as they work to construct and share knowledge through writing [See <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/>].

- University Libraries (Optional Resource) – The George Mason University Libraries provide numerous services, research tools, and help with using the library resources [See <http://library.gmu.edu/>].
- For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

Professional Dispositions

The American Counseling Association (ACA) code of ethics requires counselors and counselor trainees to maintain standards of professional competence and possess good moral character. The George Mason University Counseling & Development Program has adopted a set of professional performance criteria that is consistent with the ACA code of ethics. Please refer to these dispositions, which may be found at <http://gse.gmu.edu/programs/counseling/resources>.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education & Human Development is committed to the following five values: collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Students are expected to adhere to these principles. <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>

Tasks Stream Requirements

Every student registered for any Counseling and Development course with a required performance-based assessment is required to submit this assessment to TaskStream (regardless of whether a course is an elective, a onetime course or part of an undergraduate minor). **For this course the accountability project is the performance-based assessment to be submitted to TaskStream.** Evaluation of the performance-based assessment by the course instructor will also be completed in TaskStream. Failure to submit the assessment to TaskStream will result in the course instructor reporting the course grade as Incomplete (IN). Unless the IN grade is changed upon completion of the required TaskStream submission, the IN will convert to an F nine weeks into the following semester.

Plagiarism

Rules, policies, and definitions in regards to plagiarism can be found on GMU's website addressing plagiarism. Read them carefully to ensure a thorough understanding of this issue. **NOTE:** Any form of plagiarism could be justification for dismissal from the Counseling & Development program. The full GMU Plagiarism Policy can be found at <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm#plagiarism>

Attendance

Students are expected to attend class, arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. Students with two or more unexcused absence will fail a class. Students with one unexcused absence will result in a reduction of final grade. Excused absences can only be arranged with instructor on a case by case basis. Finally, lateness to class can count towards someone's absence and/or participation grade.

Use of Technology

Cell phones, pagers, and other communicative devices are not allowed in this class. Please keep them stowed away and out of sight. Laptops or tablets (e.g. iPads) may be permitted for the purpose of taking notes only, but you must submit a request in writing and meet with the instructor to do so. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, etc.) will result in a significant reduction in your participation grade.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, Graduate School of Education, please visit our website [See <http://gse.gmu.edu/>].

EDCD 755 – Tentative Class Schedule

Class	Date	Topic(s)	Assignment(s) Due
1	January 23 rd , 2013	Welcome, Orientation to Class, Expectations, Syllabus Review, Group Supervision*	
2	January 30 th , 2013	Review Counseling Skills; Overview of Accountability Project Group Supervision	Professional Liability Insurance Check
3	February 6 th , 2013	Multicultural Counseling Review Group Supervision	Submit Practicum Learning Goals
4	February 13 th , 2013	Triadic Supervision – A, B, C, D	
5	February 20 th , 2013	Group Counseling Review Group Supervision	
6	February 27 th , 2013	<i>Emerging Topics</i> Group Supervision	
7	March 6 th , 2013	<i>Emerging Topics</i> Group Supervision	
	March 13th, 2013	No Class- Spring Break	Site Supervisor Midterm Evaluation
8	March 20th, 2013	No Class – ACA Conference	
9	March 27 th , 2013	Triadic Supervision – A, B, C, D,	
10	April 3 rd , 2013	<i>Emerging Topics</i> Group Supervision	
11	April 10 th , 2013	<i>Emerging Topics</i> Group Supervision	
12	April 17 th , 2013	<i>Emerging Topics</i> Group Supervision	
13	April 24 th , 2013	Triadic Supervision – A, B, C, D	
14	May 1 st , 2013		Accountability Project Write up & Presentation
15	May 8 th , 2013	<i>Emerging Topics: Getting a Job</i> Group Supervision	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practicum Hours Log 2. Site Supervisor Final Evaluations 3. Student Evaluation of

			Clinical Experience 4. Reflection Paper
		FINALS WEEK	

Notes:

Course Agenda is subject to change at the discretion of the professor based on the unique characteristics of the class and course content.