

George Mason University
College of Education and Human Development
Counseling Program

EDCD 750.D02 – Practicum in Mental Health Counseling
3 Credits, Summer 2020

Tuesdays 6:00 – 10:00 PM Synchronous Online
Saturday June 20th 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM Synchronous Online

Faculty

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Prerequisite

30 Counseling program credit hours completed; B or better in EDCC 608 and in all completed Counseling program coursework; permission of advisor.

University Catalog Course Description

Provides supervised practice in a counseling setting similar to the setting in which the student may work with an emphasis on the counseling process. Provides opportunities to practice counseling skills related to ethics, supervision, self-care, decision-making, and professional identity and relationships.

Course Overview

This course provides supervised practice for a minimum of 100 hours in a counseling setting similar to the setting in which the student may work. This is a weekly graduate class or “seminar” with an emphasis on the counseling process.

The Practicum course is an arranged, supervised experience in counseling. The course is designed to serve as an introduction to students’ professional work in counseling. This includes an orientation to the clinical mental health setting; the establishment of appropriate and effective relationships with supervisors, colleagues, and clients; and the application of relevant counseling skills. Also, students will gain skills in working towards social justice, developing multicultural counseling intervention skills, developing skills in leadership and advocacy, and developing ways to improve theoretical conceptualizations of applied interventions. Thus the focus of the course will be on providing professional counseling within the parameters of the George Mason University Counseling Program mission, e.g., multiculturalism, advocacy, leadership, and social justice.

During the semester, students will present, discuss, and conceptualize their counseling work. Students will be required to see at least two (2) clients for a minimum of four (4) sessions each during the semester. Clients should consist of individual, family, and group cases. Class seminars will consist of role-plays, case processing, discussion of professional issues, personal reactions to clients, and program evaluation and development.

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. You may not discuss cases in other classes, with friends or relatives, or in social situations since it is essential to maintain confidentiality. Violations of this principle in any form will be treated as a serious ethical/legal infraction. It is also imperative that you discuss cases with your on-site supervisor. If you have questions or concerns that need immediate attention, please call or email the instructor.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered online (76% or more) using a synchronous format via Blackboard Learning Management system (LMS) housed in the MyMason portal. You will log in to the Blackboard (Bb) course site using your Mason email name (everything before @masonlive.gmu.edu) and email password. The course site will be available on June 1st.

Under no circumstances, may candidates/students participate in online class sessions (either by phone or Internet) while operating motor vehicles. Further, as expected in a face-to-face class meeting, such online participation requires undivided attention to course content and communication.

Technical Requirements

To participate in this course, students will need to satisfy the following technical requirements:

- High-speed Internet access with standard up-to-date browsers. To get a list of Blackboard's supported browsers see:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#supported-browsers

To get a list of supported operation systems on different devices see:

https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support#tested-devices-and-operating-systems

- Students must maintain consistent and reliable access to their GMU email and Blackboard, as these are the official methods of communication for this course.
- Students will need a headset microphone for use with the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing tool. [Delete this sentence if not applicable.]
- Students may be asked to create logins and passwords on supplemental websites and/or to download trial software to their computer or tablet as part of course requirements.
- The following software plug-ins for PCs and Macs, respectively, are available for free download: [Add or delete options, as desire.]
 - Adobe Acrobat Reader: <https://get.adobe.com/reader/>
 - Windows Media Player:
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/14209/get-windows-media-player>
 - Apple Quick Time Player: www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

Expectations

- Course Week: [Include only the sentence below that is appropriate for the course. Delete the sentence that is not applicable.]
Because asynchronous courses do not have a “fixed” meeting day, our week will start on [Day], and finish on [Day].
Our course week will begin on the day that our synchronous meetings take place as indicated on the Schedule of Classes.
- Log-in Frequency:
Students must actively check the course Blackboard site and their GMU email for communications from the instructor, class discussions, and/or access to course materials at least [#] times per week. In addition, students must log-in for all scheduled online synchronous meetings. [Include this sentence only if the course is synchronous. Delete the sentence if the course is asynchronous.]
- Participation:
Students are expected to actively engage in all course activities throughout the semester, which includes viewing all course materials, completing course activities and assignments, and participating in course discussions and group interactions.
- Technical Competence:
Students are expected to demonstrate competence in the use of all course technology. Students who are struggling with technical components of the course are expected to seek assistance from the instructor and/or College or University technical services.
- Technical Issues:
Students should anticipate some technical difficulties during the semester and should, therefore, budget their time accordingly. Late work will not be accepted based on individual technical issues.
- Workload:
Please be aware that this course is **not** self-paced. Students are expected to meet *specific deadlines* and *due dates* listed in the **Class Schedule** section of this syllabus. It is the student’s responsibility to keep track of the weekly course schedule of topics, readings, activities and assignments due.
- Instructor Support:
Students may schedule a one-on-one meeting to discuss course requirements, content or other course-related issues. Those unable to come to a Mason campus can meet with the instructor via telephone or web conference. Students should email the instructor to schedule a one-on-one session, including their preferred meeting method and suggested dates/times.
- Netiquette:
The course environment is a collaborative space. Experience shows that even an innocent remark typed in the online environment can be misconstrued. Students must always re-read their responses carefully before posting them, so as others do not consider them as personal offenses. *Be positive in your approach with others and diplomatic in selecting your words.* Remember that you are not competing with classmates, but sharing information and learning from others. All faculty are similarly expected to be respectful in all communications.
- Accommodations:
Online learners who require effective accommodations to insure accessibility must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services.

Learner Outcomes or Objectives

This course is designed to enable students to do the following:

1. Practice counseling competencies developed throughout the graduate training program.
2. Become familiar with a community agency counseling setting, including organizational structure, protocols, relationships among staff and clients, and working conditions.
3. Begin forming professional identity and understanding of a counselor's role, including relationships with human service and integrated behavioral health care systems, as well as interagency and interorganizational collaboration and consultation (CACREP 2.F.1.b)
4. Understand the nature of the changing role of the counselor that includes advocacy, leadership, multiculturalism, and social justice.
5. Practice utilizing counseling strategies that are effective for individuals, groups, and families from diverse backgrounds.
6. Understand the impact of heritage, attitudes, beliefs, understandings, and acculturative experiences on an individual's views of others (CACREP 2.F.2.d.)
7. Understand multicultural and pluralistic characteristics within and among diverse groups nationally and internationally (CACREP 2.F.2.a.)
8. Internalize high standards of professional ethics of professional counseling organizations and credentialing bodies, and apply ethical decision-making and legal considerations in professional counseling (CACREP 2.F.1.i)
9. Gain self-awareness regarding how counselor characteristics and behaviors influence the counseling process (CACREP 2.F.5.f.)
10. Develop and refine a personal model of counseling (CACREP 2.F.5.n.)
11. Develop personal and professional self-care strategies (CACREP 2.F.1.l)
12. Understand the role of supervision and engage in supervised practice (CACREP 2.F.1.m)

Professional Standards

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP)

Upon completion of this course, students will have met the following professional standards:

<i>CACREP Standard</i>	<i>Course Content and/or Assignment</i>
2.F.1.l self-care strategies appropriate to the counselor role	Assignment: <i>New Professional Wellness Project</i>
2.F.1.m the role of counseling supervision in the profession	Reading: Section III of text <i>Supervision in Practicum and Internship</i>

In addition, the following professional standards are addressed in this course:

- American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics (2014) requirement that counselors establish counselor education and training programs that integrate academic study and supervised practice.

Required Texts

Jungers, C. M. & Scott, J. (2019). *Practicum and internship: Textbook and resource guide for counseling and psychotherapy* (6th ed.). New York, NY: Routledge.

Readings as assigned by instructor.

Course Materials

All Practicum materials are located on Blackboard under the Counseling Program Organization page. Click the Practicum and Internship link located on the left-hand side. You should print out copies of the Information for CMHC On-Site Supervisor, Supervision Agreement, Monthly Log of Hours, Summary Log of Hours, Mid-Term Evaluation and Final Evaluation forms for your site supervisor, and any other relevant materials.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments on time in the manner outlined by the instructor (e.g., Blackboard, Tk20, hard copy).

- **Assignments and/or Examinations**

A minimum of 100 (agency) hours in the field placement. A minimum of 40 hours must be direct (face-to-face) contact with clients. Hours spent in class or at home preparing GMU assignments may not be counted toward the hour requirement. *Achieving the hours required to pass this class is the sole responsibility of the student.*

The Supervision Agreement: signed by you and your on-site supervisor is due by **June 9, 2020**. On-site Supervisors will then be contacted directly by the University Supervisor to initiate the collaborative supervisory relationship and answer any questions about the Supervision Agreement. A site-visit with the On-site Supervisor, University Supervisor, and student will be scheduled around the time of the mid-term evaluation.

Two tapes: transcripts, written narrative, and skills

Part A. Transcripts and Tapes: Students will hand in two video or audio tapes and accompanying transcripts. Note, you must include a signed “permission to tape” form [See CMHC Required Forms in the Practicum and Internship tab on Bb]. It is important to make sure your video or audiotape quality is of good enough quality for review. As with the case presentations, videotape is strongly encouraged. I strongly recommend that you begin taping from Week 1 so that taping is an integral part of your therapy process. By taping regularly, you will have plenty of tapes to choose from for this assignment. Choose a 15-20-minute segment of your tape to transcribe and identify the counseling skills and intent you are utilizing for each of your responses.

The instructor may request additional counseling tapes from students based on overall assessments by the instructor and the Site Supervisor.

Part B. Written Narrative of Session and Skills: Student will submit an analysis of their counseling skills with their tapings. Please provide a brief description of your client and his or her presenting issue. In addition, state the primary focus that you are working on with your client in the segment and the theoretical orientation from which you are working. Note case-relevant ethical and diversity considerations. Lastly, include an evaluation of your counseling skills (e.g., summarization, reflection, confrontation, encouragers, etc.). What skills did you use effectively? Which skills did you neglect? What would you do differently next time? More information will be provided in class.

Professional Wellness Project: You will be required to interview your site supervisor and one other senior clinician in your practicum site regarding their experiences as new professionals. What was their first job in the counseling field? How did they adjust to becoming new professionals? What were their challenges, and successes? What do they wish they had known as new professionals? What advice do they have for you in terms of self-care, to enhance learning and thriving in the counseling profession? You will provide a summary and synthesis of your interviews in a 4-5 page paper. Include a self-care plan of your own for practicum and internship, taking into account what you have learned from these interviews and include personal ways/methods you utilize (or plan to utilize) to stay well, balanced, and strengthened.

Class Participation. Students in Counseling courses are expected to demonstrate a high level of participation consistent with graduate-level education. Students are expected to: be on time and present for the duration of the class; demonstrate engagement (ask questions, share thoughts); be respectful and attentive; and demonstrate preparedness for each class meeting. You will be asked to give feedback and discuss each other's case presentations, discuss the course reading(s), and be active in other class discussion.

Case Presentation. Students will present one client during group supervision to receive feedback and consultation from the group. An outline to follow for the presentation will be provided in class. For the presentation, you are required to provide video or audio recordings of your counseling session. Videotape is strongly recommended due to the importance of learning to observe nonverbal responses of patients to therapeutic interventions. If you choose to use audiotaping, *the recording must be audible and clear*. You will bring in this recording from a session with your client. You are permitted to present the client from your first taping/transcription, if desired. The presentation and discussion will provide you the opportunity to discuss your client's concerns, personal reactions to your client, difficulties with your client, etc. You will have the opportunity to receive feedback and assistance from your peers and instructor for both personal and professional growth. *Presentation dates will be assigned during the first night of class.*

Final Site Supervisor Evaluation. This is a Performance-Based Assessment. Students are required to upload their final supervisor practicum evaluation to TK20 found under the "assessment" link in Blackboard.

Course Expectations

APA Format: Students in Counseling courses are expected to use APA style (6th ed.) for written papers.

Electronic Devices

Turn off and put away all electronic communication devices during class. 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. Engaging in activities not related to the course (e.g. gaming, email, chat, text, etc.) will result in a significant deduction in your participation grade. **Notify the instructor prior to class if you have an emergency situation that requires accommodation.**

Attendance

In accordance with the policies of the Counseling Program, on-time attendance at every class meeting is expected. Late arrival to class will impact class participation grade. **Two or more unexcused absences will result in loss of course credit.** Attendance on the first day of class is required. Excused absences are permitted for illness, religious holidays, or emergency situations only; documentation is required for the absence to be considered excused. Work-related absences are not considered excused.

Course Requirements

Each student is expected to do the following: (1) attend each class, (2) complete all reading assignments before class, (3) arrive on time and stay for the entire class period, (4) participate in discussions and in-class work groups, (5) regularly check GMU email, and (6) submit or access documents via Blackboard as assigned

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a violation of both the George Mason University code of honor and the expected professional dispositions of the Counseling Program. The GMU English Department has developed the following statement regarding plagiarism: “Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinion, or factual information from another person without giving that person credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or end notes; a simple listing of books and articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in an academic setting. Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources, the writer's own insights or findings from their own field research, and what has been termed common knowledge. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious, and what is common knowledge for one audience may be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being reader friendly. In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might want to investigate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers and establishes credibility, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will never be guilty of plagiarism.”

• **Grading** **Course Performance Evaluation Weighting**

Students must achieve a “B” or higher in order to move on to Internship I and then Internship II. Included in the assignments is the requirement that the following must also be met to receive an adequate grade:

- Completion of all assignments of acceptable quality, turned in by date due.
- Attendance at all classes and at practicum site. Absences must be pre-arranged, unless due to an emergency. Please notify instructor and on-site supervisor, as appropriate. Two or more unexcused absences will result in course failure. Late arrival will impact class participation grade.
- Active classroom participation, including providing constructive feedback and suggestions for classmates.

- Completion of required site hours, recorded and signed on log of hours (no less than 85 direct service hours).
- Satisfactory mid-term and final evaluation from on-site supervisor.

Summary of Grading System and Course Requirements

Two tapes: transcripts, written narrative, and skills	20 points (10 each)
Professional Wellness Project	20 points
Class Participation	20 points
Case Presentation	20 points
Final Practicum Site Supervisor Evaluation	20 points

Grading Policies

In accordance with the George Mason University Grading Policy, the following grades may be achieved:

A [100-97]; A- [96-94]; B+ [93-91]; B [90-87]; B- [86-84]; C [83-80]; F [79 and below]

Professional Dispositions

Students must adhere to program professional dispositions:

<https://cehd.gmu.edu/assets/docs/forms/Professional%20Dispositions.pdf>

Class Schedule

Class	Topic	Reading(s) Due	Assignment(s) Due	Objectives
Jun 2 Class 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introductions • Introduction to course • Practicum expectations • Review syllabus and seminar guidelines 	Review Syllabus and Seminar Guidelines	copy of liability insurance internship site information self-care plan	2, 3, 4
Jun 9 Class 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial client meetings • Stages of counseling • Review of microskills 	Text: Chapter 1 & 3 struggles of the novice counselor article	supervision agreement DUE	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9
Jun 16 Class 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical concerns • What are ethical concerns at your site and how are they handled? 	ACA Code of Ethics (2014) Text: Chapter 8 & 9	Transcript/Tape #1 DUE Consent for taping DUE	8
Jun 20 Class 4	Check-in	TBA	*Saturday Class*	

June 23 Class 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing style and integrating theory • What theory do you primarily use? How is it evident in your work with clients? 	Text Chapters 4 & 5		9,10
Jun 30 Class 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilizing supervision • What is your relationship like with your supervisor? • What are strengths, areas for improvement, roles and responsibilities of the relationship 	Text Chapters 6 & 7	Mid-term evaluation DUE	2, 3, 12
Jul 7 Class 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multiculturalism and social justice • What is your experience with diversity and differing worldviews so far in your practicum? 	Reading TBA	Monthly Log 1 DUE Transcript/Tape #2 DUE Consent for taping DUE	4, 5, 6, 7
Jul 14 Class 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Presentations 			1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10
Jul 21 Class 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case Presentations 			1, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10
Jul 28 Class 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-care, wellness, and boundaries • How well have you adhered to your self-care plan? How can it be updated/improved? 	Reading TBA	Professional Wellness Project DUE Monthly Log 2 DUE	11
Aug 4 Class 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wrapping up and transitioning 		Final documentation due	

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

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

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students **solely** through their Mason email account.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin at the time the written letter from Disability Services is received by the instructor (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound emitting devices during class unless otherwise authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursessupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/> .

SEMINAR GUIDELINES

Privacy and Confidentiality: Seminar Discussions

1. It is expected that fellow students are provided the same level of confidence that is afforded counseling clients.
2. What is discussed within the seminar forum remains within the forum and is NOT discussed outside the seminar. Students need to feel that they are able to freely discuss in seminar both the successes and the trials they experience with their clients and with their newly-developing supervisory relationships.
3. It is expected that all students will honor the privacy of their peers as well as that of their clients.

Privacy and Confidentiality: Taping and Discussion of Cases

When tapes are used:

1. Students must provide the seminar leader with a copy of the client's informed consent for audio/videotaping and/or discussion or individual counseling sessions.
2. Students must always use pseudonyms and make sure that no identifying information is exposed during presentations, in write-ups or on audio or videotapes.
3. Presenters are responsible for ensuring that handouts or other information used in presentations are collected after class and destroyed as soon as practicable.
4. Under no circumstances will students bring to class original material or forms from the client's file at the practicum/internship site.
5. Tapes are not to be played in the presence of other students, professors, friends, relatives, etc., as this violates the client's informed consent. When finished, tapes must be erased completely and promptly. Tapes are never to be left in mailboxes or in public places where they could be lost or be reviewed by others.
6. Students in the seminar are expected to maintain confidence about cases that others present as well as about what other students share about their own experiences. Students need to feel that they are able to discuss freely both successes and trials they experience.

Peer Feedback

Each student brings to the seminar, and to her or his clients, a unique personal style informed by theory, by skills classes, and by their own experience. We also bring with us our insecurities about our abilities, as well as a strong desire to help our clients. What we need in the way of feedback from peers is good active listening, **NOT advice**. We all need to develop a sense of confidence in our instincts and our ability to interact therapeutically with our clients. As peers, we can facilitate the development of confidence in each other by drawing out each other's best reflective thoughts about the work we do. A good way to do this is to encourage each other to think more deeply or more creatively about our individual clients, to allow us to draw on our own developing resources to problem solve.

Giving advice, such as "I had a client like yours, you should read this great book on working with depression" or "you need to confront the discrepancies in your client's story" or "maybe you should try x or y" do not draw out the counselor's resources, they tell the counselor that we have the solution to their problem with a client. They are a covert way of imposing our own opinion on another. When we give advice, we mean well, but it isn't the most productive feedback.

In reality, when it comes down to it, the counselor is the one in the room with the client; what better support can we give the counselor than to strengthen her or his confidence in her own abilities. Do offer feedback that challenges the counselor to draw out his best. "You seem discouraged about client x. Has it been that way all along" is a good opener. "When did you first feel as though you were at a stuck point?" "What was that like for you?" are open questions that promote self-discovery and can lead the counselor to understanding more about themselves and their clients.