# FIELD EXPERIENCE
## What’s it all about?

### Introduction

Your coursework in Clinical Mental Health Counseling will include three field experience courses. The FAQs in this document address common questions from students about field experience.

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Field Experience Basics

What is a field experience course?

*Field experience* courses are those that require students to apply classroom-based learning to counseling practice with real clients in community-based settings. The CMHC program requires students to complete three field experience courses.

What are the 3 field experience courses in the CMHC program?
The field experience courses are: Practicum (CNDV 5392), Internship 1 (CNDV 5394), and Internship 2 (CNDV 5394).

Do the field experience courses have to be taken in a specific order?
Yes. The field experience courses must be taken in this order:

1. Practicum (CNDV 5392)
2. Internship 1 (CNDV 5394)
3. Internship 2 (CNDV 5394)

Co-enrollment in Internships 1 & 2 is the only exception to this order. See the section titled *Internships 1 & 2 (CNDV 5394)* for more information about co-enrollment.

When do I take the field experience courses?

Students should prepare to enroll in the first field experience course, Practicum (CNDV 5392), after the completion of 12-14 courses (i.e., 36-42 credit hours) in the CMHC program. For most students, this means that it is possible to enroll in Practicum after 1.5 - 2 years of coursework.

Are the field experience courses offered every semester?
Yes. Practicum (CNDV 5392), Internship 1 (CNDV 5394), and Internship 2 (CNDV 5394) are offered every fall, spring, and summer semester.

Do field experience courses run for 5 weeks only, or are they semester-long courses?
Field experience courses are semester-long courses. Fall and spring semesters typically last for 15 weeks. Summer semesters last for 10 weeks.
Are there prerequisites for the field experience courses?
The prerequisites for Practicum (CNDV 5392) include successful completion (meaning a grade of B or better) in:

- CNDV 5310 - Counseling Skills
- CNDV 5311 - Individual Counseling Theories & Techniques
- CNDV 5312 - Group Counseling Theories & Techniques

Students also must pass the following courses with a grade of C or better:

- CNDV 5320 - Multicultural Counseling
- CNDV 5322 - Professionalism, Ethics, & Law
- CNDV 5380A - Residency 1
- CNDV 5380B - Residency 2

Internships 1 and 2 (CNDV 5394) require that students have no more than 6 credit hours (i.e., 2 classes) of classroom coursework (i.e., courses other than field experience courses) left to complete before enrolling in them.

How do I register for a field experience course?
Students cannot register themselves for Practicum (CNDV 5392), Internship 1 (CNDV 5394), or Internship 2 (CNDV 5394). Neither will students be automatically enrolled in field experience courses.

The semester before enrollment in a field experience course, the student must submit a field experience application to the Field Experience Coordinator by the designated deadline. If the student’s application is approved, then the Field Experience Coordinator will submit the student’s name for enrollment in the appropriate field experience course for the following semester. If the student’s application is not approved due to deficiencies, then the student will be given an opportunity to correct the deficiencies, and to re-submit the application for a second reviewal. For more information, see the section titled Applying for Field Experience Courses.

Who is the Field Experience Coordinator?
The current Field Experience Coordinator is Dr. Shannon McFarlin.
Applying for Field Experience Courses

How do I apply for a field experience course?
To apply for Practicum (CNDV 5392) or Internship 1 (CNDV 5394), the student must complete a field experience application. The application must be completed and submitted to the Field Experience Coordinator by the designated deadline during the semester before enrollment in the field experience course.

The application and accompanying required documents must be scanned into one PDF file and sent to CMHCFIELDEXP@lamar.edu. Applications that are sent to other email addresses will not be reviewed.

Students who will enroll in Internship 2 (CNDV 5394) do not need to submit a field experience application unless they are changing practice sites. The Field Experience Coordinator will submit the names of students who successfully complete Internship 1 for enrollment in Internship 2 for the following semester.

Where can I find the field experience application?
In the near future, the field experience application will be available on the Department of Counseling’s webpage. Currently, the application is circulated to students via email at the beginning of each semester.

What documents do I have to turn in with my field experience application?
The field experience application comprises these 4 documents:

● Checklist for Field Experience Application
● Practicum/Internship Application
● Practicum/Internship Site Information
● Site Supervisor Information and Agreement

In addition to these documents, students are required to submit:

● The student’s unofficial transcript (obtained via Self-Serv Banner)
● Verification of the proposed site supervisor’s license/certificate to practice
● Copy of the student’s professional liability insurance policy
Applications that are missing any of the documents listed above will not be approved for enrollment. For more information about site supervisor qualifications, see the section titled Field Experience Supervision.

How do I get verification of my proposed site supervisor’s license/certificate to practice?

There are two ways to obtain verification of your proposed site supervisor’s license/certificate:

1. Ask your proposed site supervisor for a photocopy of her/his paper license/certificate; or
2. Search for your proposed site supervisor’s license/certificate information on the credentialing body’s (e.g., State Board) website, and print the website page that contains the information.

What is professional liability insurance, what does it cost, and how do I get it?

Professional liability insurance provides coverage for legal expenses in the event that a party files a lawsuit against the counselor/student-counselor for work-related activities. Students who are enrolled in field experience courses are required to provide proof of a current professional liability insurance policy with a minimum coverage of $1,000,000/$3,000,000 (i.e., the standard coverage amount). Students must obtain a policy prior to working at their field experience sites and must maintain active coverage throughout the duration of their field experience courses.

Students typically purchase professional liability insurance via:

- Membership with the American Counseling Association (ACA)
- Membership with the student’s state counseling association (e.g., Texas Counseling Association; TCA)

Most state counseling associations partner with Healthcare Providers Services Organization (HPSO) to offer reduced policy rates for student members.

ACA offers a free professional liability insurance policy with HPSO to all student members.

What is an affiliation agreement?
An affiliation agreement is a written contract between the university and another organization that outlines which services, spaces, and/or personnel that each organization will provide to the other, but without exchanges of money.

A site has agreed to accept me as a student intern for the upcoming semester. How do I know if the site needs an affiliation agreement?

It is the student's responsibility to ask the site if they need an affiliation agreement.

My site needs an affiliation agreement. Now what do I do?

If a site requires an affiliation agreement, then the student needs to notify Rhonda Marcontell via email at marcontellrf@lamar.edu. In the email to Ms. Marcontell, the student needs to include the following information:

- Name of site
- Site address
- Name/email address/phone# of contact person at the site

Mrs. Marcontell will initiate the process of establishing an affiliation agreement with the site, which typically requires 4-6 weeks for completion.

The student will incur no cost for the affiliation agreement.

What are the deadlines for field experience applications each semester?

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Example: Teri wants to take Practicum during the spring semester of 2020. This means that she must secure a field experience site and submit her field experience application to the Field Experience Coordinator by October 1, 2019 (i.e., the semester before spring 2020). Teri knows that she will need to take Internship 1 immediately after Practicum, which will be during the summer 2020 semester. This means that Teri needs to submit her
application for Internship 1 to the Field Experience Coordinator by March 1, 2020, which is shortly after she begins the Practicum course.

Where do I turn in my field experience application?
Email your field experience application and accompanying documents (in one PDF file) to CMHCFieldExp@lamar.edu. Applications that are sent to other email addresses will not be reviewed.

How will I know if my application has been approved?
The Field Experience Coordinator will send the student an email notification when the student’s field experience application is either approved or denied. If the student’s application is denied, then the Field Experience Coordinator will send the student an email that outlines the application deficiencies, as well as the due date for correction of the deficiencies.

My application has deficiencies. How long will I be given to correct them?
Students whose field experience applications have deficiencies will be given 14 calendar days to correct the deficiencies and resubmit their field experience applications to CMHCFieldExp@lamar.edu. In an email, the Field Experience Coordinator will specify each student’s due date for the corrected application following review of the student's initial application. If a student does not submit her/his corrected application by the appropriate due date, then the student will be prohibited from enrolling in the field experience course for which she/he has applied.
Field Experience Sites

What is a field experience site?
A field experience site is an organization/business/agency in the community that provides counseling services to clients, and that agrees to allow graduate students in counseling to provide services to clients at their location under the supervision of a licensed staff member on site.

When should I start looking for a field experience site?
Some students struggle to find field experience sites, especially when they wait until the semester before they want to enroll in a field experience course to start looking for one.

Students should begin to look for sites early in their programs. Students should look ahead in the course rotation schedule to identify the earliest possible semester that they might be eligible to enroll in Practicum (CNDV 5392). Then, students should begin to contact potential sites at least TWO semesters before the semester that they want to enroll in Practicum.

How do I find a field experience site?
Students are responsible for finding their own sites.

To find a site, students should:

- Identify potential sites in their local communities;
- Visit sites in person to inquire about internship opportunities; and
- At each site, ask to speak to the Clinical Director, and ask the Clinical Director if the site takes graduate student counseling interns.

Telephone inquiries are not recommended, as they don't tend to yield satisfactory results to the degree that do face-to-face inquiries.

Some sites have their own processes for hiring student interns, which might resemble employee hiring processes. Students are encouraged to approach the process of finding a field experience site as they would if searching for paid employment. After all, after completing their field experience courses, many students are hired as paid employees at their field experience sites following graduation and licensure.
What kinds of facilities/businesses can qualify to be sites?

An appropriate site for field experience is one that includes clinical counseling as a treatment provision for clients. Such sites include, but are not limited to:

- Behavioral health inpatient hospitals
- PHP/IOP hospitals (PHP = Partial Hospitalization Program; IOP = Intensive Outpatient Program)
- Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) (a.k.a., MHMRA facilities)
- Residential treatment programs
- Substance abuse treatment programs
- Juvenile Justice facilities
- Prison facilities
- Shelters for women and children
- Non-profit counseling agencies
- Private practice counseling offices
- Schools (but only those that offer mental health services for students through community- or school-based providers)

Can my field experience site be my current place of employment?

If you currently are employed at a facility that provides mental health services for clients, then your place of employment CAN BE your approved field experience site, with one caveat. If your site of employment is your field experience site, then you cannot accrue field experience hours via your typical job functions. In other words, the tasks that you complete to accrue direct and indirect hours for your field experience courses must be qualitatively/experientially different than the tasks that you complete for your employed position.

Example: Tasha is employed as a case worker at a MHMRA facility. Tasha’s paid employment requires that she assess clients’ treatment needs, construct treatment plans for clients, link clients to services, advocate for clients, conduct skills training sessions with individual clients, and monitor clients’ treatment progress. When searching for a field experience site, Tasha seeks permission from her employer to complete her field experience hours at the MHMRA facility where she works. Her employer agrees to accept Tasha as a student intern, and an LPC on staff at the site agrees to be Tasha’s site supervisor for her field experience work. In their first meeting together, Tasha and her site supervisor discuss ways that Tasha can accrue
direct counseling hours with clients at the MHMRA facility. Because Tasha cannot accrue hours performing her normal work tasks, they devise a plan for Tasha to co-lead 8 group counseling sessions with a staff therapist during the semester, and to co-counsel with a staff therapist in individual counseling sessions with clients for 4 hours per week (with permission from clients). In addition, Tasha's site supervisor links her with the facility's coordinator for emergency services, who agrees to allow Tasha to complete emergency suicide assessments with clients after normal work hours in the evenings. None of the tasks that Tasha will complete for her field experience courses are tasks that she performs for her paid employment, which means that they are qualitatively and experientially different from her normal work tasks. Tasha knows that the agreed-upon tasks are in addition to the tasks that she must complete for her paid position, that completing the field experience tasks will require her to work additional hours at the MHMRA facility each week, and that she is responsible for maintaining productivity in her paid position in order to be able to perform the additional tasks for her field experience courses.

**Can my field experience site be a school?**

Your field experience site CAN BE a school campus/district, but only if these conditions are met:

- The school employs/contracts licensed clinicians (e.g., LPC, LMSW, LCSW) whose primary function is to provide clinical mental health counseling services to the students;
- The licensed clinicians on staff are not employed as school counselors and do not perform school counseling tasks (e.g., student scheduling, campus-wide assessments);
- The school has a licensed clinician on staff who agrees to be the student’s site supervisor; and
- The school administrator(s) and site supervisor understand that the student intern is not to perform work tasks that are not related to clinical counseling, and they agree not to assign non-counseling-related duties the student intern.

A certified school counselor can be a site supervisor IF the school counselor also (a) holds a current counseling license (e.g., LPC, LMSW, LCSW), (b) is employed by the school district to provide clinical counseling services to students, and (c) does not work in the capacity of a school counselor (i.e., school counseling activities do not comprise the counselor’s job description).
Can my field experience site be one that solely provides group counseling services?

According to CACREP (2009), the student’s Practicum and Internship experiences are to include “direct service to actual clients that contributes to the development of counseling skills” (p. 15). This means that, yes, students can have field experience sites that provide group counseling as the primary service to clients.
Can I have more than one field experience site?

Yes, students can have more than one field experience site during a given semester. If a student has more than one site, then the student must have an approved Site Supervisor at each site. Along with their field experience applications, students with multiple sites must include a Site Information form and a Site Supervisor Information and Agreement form for each site, as well as proof of each site supervisor’s license. For more information about Site Supervisor qualifications, see the section titled Field Experience Supervision.

I have to go for an interview at a potential site. What questions should I ask during the interview?

Before interviewing at a potential site, the student should do some preliminary research to learn about the services that the site provides and the population that comprises the site’s clientele.

During the interview, the student should demonstrate knowledge of the site’s services and articulate how the experience of working there would align with the student’s long-term professional goals.

Additionally, the student should inquire about the following:

- What counseling modalities/theoretical orientations do your clinicians use?
- What pre-service trainings do you require, if any?
- What tasks would I perform as a student intern?
- Is there a licensed clinician on staff who would agree to be my site supervisor?
- What is the institution's dress code for clinicians?
- What information do you need from me about my university's requirements?
- Does your organization require an affiliation agreement with the university?

This list is not all-inclusive. Students are encouraged to ask any other questions that they might have about the sites where they interview.

How many hours will I be required to work at my site each week while I am enrolled in a field experience course?

Practicum requires the student to accrue 100 practice hours (i.e., 40 direct hours and 60 indirect hours). Internships 1 and 2 require the student to accrue a
minimum of 300 practice hours for each course, which totals 600+ practice hours for the combined Internship experience.

Use the information from the chart below to complete this statement:

“If I am enrolled in (course) in the (semester), which has (weeks in semester) weeks in the semester, then I will need to work at least (minimum hours each week) hours at my field experience site(s) each week.”

Example: “If I am enrolled in Internship 1 in the summer, which has 10 weeks in the semester, then I will need to work at least 30 hours at my field experience site(s) each week.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COURSE</th>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>Weeks in Semester</th>
<th>Minimum Hours Each Week</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practicum (Requires 100 hours)</td>
<td>*Fall</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*Spring</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internship 1 (Requires 300 hours)</td>
<td>*Fall</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>Summer</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Internship 2 (Requires 300 hours)</td>
<td>*Fall</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td>*Spring</td>
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<td>Summer</td>
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<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Co-enrollment: Internships 1 &amp; 2 (Requires 600 hours)</td>
<td>*Fall</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td>*Spring</td>
<td>15</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Length of semester can range in weeks.

Can I earn field experience hours at my site in between semesters?
Students may not counsel clients or count practice hours in between semesters, with no exceptions.
Can I add another site to my application in the middle of a semester in which I’m taking a field experience course?

Yes, the student may add another site to her/his application during a semester in which the student is enrolled in a field experience course. To do this, the student needs to send an email with the following documents to the Field Experience Coordinator:

- **Site Information form** – Include information about the new site
- **Site Supervisor Information and Agreement form** – Include information about the Site Supervisor at the new site, and make sure that the new Site Supervisor completes and signs the agreement
- **Proof of new Site Supervisor’s license**

The Field Experience Coordinator will review the student's documents and notify the student of approval status. The student may not begin to accrue practice hours at the new site until receiving notification of site approval.

Please note that the student must have a Site Supervisor for each field experience site on record for the student. **Example:** Sarah's primary site is an inpatient hospital, and her secondary site is a private practice. Each week, Sarah meets for one hour of supervision with Ms. Bellows, her Site Supervisor at the inpatient hospital. Sarah also meets for one hour of supervision with Mr. Kadik, her Site Supervisor at the private practice, each week.

Can I change sites in the middle of a semester in which I’m taking a field experience course?

If the student needs to change sites during a semester in which she/he is enrolled in a field experience course, then the student may do so.

To do this, the student needs to communicate with her/his professor and the Field Experience Coordinator about the need for the change. The student also needs to coordinate termination of services and employment as an intern with the initial field experience site. When the student secures an intern position with a new site, the student must send an email with the following documents to the Field Experience Coordinator:

- **Site Information form** – Include information about the new site
- **Site Supervisor Information and Agreement form** – Include information about the Site Supervisor at the new site, and make sure that the new Site Supervisor completes and signs the agreement
· Proof of new Site Supervisor’s license

The Field Experience Coordinator will review the student’s documents and notify the student of approval status. The student may not begin to accrue practice hours at the new site until receiving notification of site approval.
Field Experience Supervision

What is supervision?
Supervision is a formal process by which an individual who holds an appropriate degree, credentials, experience, and licensure provides leadership, mentorship, and support for an individual who desires entry into the counseling profession. The relationship between a supervisor and supervisee is contractual in nature.

What are the 2 types of supervision required for field experience courses?
Field experience courses require two types of weekly supervision:

- **Site Supervision** – The student meets with her/his Site Supervisor at the student's field experience site for 1 hour each week.
- **University Supervision** – The student meets with her/his professor and classmates for an average of 1.5 hours each week.

Will I have to pay for supervision while I am enrolled in field experience courses?
The student should not pay for site supervision at the field experience site. If the Site Supervisor informs the student that they must pay for site supervision, then the student can choose either (a) to look for a different site or (b) to encumber the expense. However, it is not common practice in the field to require graduate student interns to pay for site supervision, and students are encouraged to select their sites carefully.

The student's tuition payment is the only expense required for university supervision.

Who will be my University Supervisor?
The University Supervisor will be the student's professor for the field experience course in which she/he is enrolled.

How often do I have to meet for university supervision?
Students are required to meet for 1.5 hours (on average) of university supervision each week throughout the duration of the semester. Students in the online
program meet for university supervision via video conference. Students in the
campus program meet for university supervision in the College of Education.
What happens in university supervision sessions?

In university supervision sessions, the professor will facilitate discussion of the work that the students are doing at their practice sites. Students will have homework assignments to submit for class and will present case conceptualizations to her/his peers and professor.

What happens if I miss a week of university supervision during a semester when I am enrolled in a field experience course?

Failure to attend university supervision in a given week prohibits the student from counting practice hours (both direct and indirect) for that week. Missing more than one university supervision session can result in dismissal from the class or a failing grade.

What happens if my University Supervisor misses a week of university supervision?

If the student’s University Supervisor/Professor must miss a week of university supervision, then the University Supervisor/Professor has the discretion to assign students an alternate assignment to complete in lieu of the university supervision session that week, or to make other arrangements to ensure that students meet the requirement for university supervision that week. Students will not be penalized for the University Supervisor’s/Professor’s absence.

Who will be my Site Supervisor?

The student’s Site Supervisor will be a licensed employee at the student’s field experience site who agrees to assume supervisory responsibilities for the student. The Site Supervisor must have a minimum of a Master degree, a valid license to practice counseling, and a minimum of two years of experience in the field. The Site Supervisor does not need to work in a paid supervisory position at the field experience site (e.g., Clinical Director); she/he may be employed as a staff clinician, or the like.

An individual who holds a temporary/preliminary license (e.g., LPC-Intern, LMFT-Associate) CANNOT qualify to be a Site Supervisor. This is because clinicians who hold temporary licenses receive supervision, themselves, and do not yet have the experience necessary to provide supervision to others.
A full license to practice independently is required for Site Supervisors. A qualifying license may be any of the following (or the equivalent in the student’s state of residence):

- LPC (Licensed Professional Counselor)
- LMFT (Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist)
- LMSW (Licensed Master Social Worker)
- LCSW (Licensed Clinical Social Worker)
- Licensed Psychologist

Psychiatrists are medical doctors, not counselors. Therefore, psychiatrists do not qualify as Site Supervisors for counselor trainees.

A Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselor (LCDC) cannot qualify as a Site Supervisor UNLESS the LCDC also holds a Master-level counseling degree and a qualifying license to practice counseling (e.g., LPC). This is because a LDCD license does not require a Master degree, and Bachelor- or Associate-level clinicians cannot supervise graduate-level trainees.

**Does my Site Supervisor have to be a LPC-S?**

The student’s Site Supervisor DOES NOT have to be a LPC-S or hold Supervisor status with their license. For more information, see the section titled *Graduate Student Internship vs. Licensed Internship*.

**How often do I have to meet for site supervision?**

Students are required to meet for 1 hour of site supervision each week throughout the duration of the semester.

**What happens in site supervision sessions?**

In site supervision sessions, the student meets with her/his supervisor either individually or in a triad (i.e., Site Supervisor and two counseling interns) to discuss client cases, institutional procedures and practices, and the like. No more than two counseling interns can meet with the same Site Supervisor at the same time for site supervision.

**Can I meet with my Site Supervisor virtually for site supervision sessions?**
The student is to meet with her/his Site Supervisor face-to-face (i.e., in person) for site supervision sessions. It is the University Supervisor’s/Professor’s discretion to allow the student to meet virtually for a site supervision session on a rare occasion when the Site Supervisor is away from the student’s field experience site or is unable to meet face-to-face with the student in a given week.

What happens if I miss a week of site supervision during a semester when I am enrolled in a field experience course?

Failure to attend site supervision in a given week prohibits the student from counting practice hours (both direct and indirect) for that week.

What happens if my Site Supervisor is unable to meet with me for site supervision in a given week?

If the student’s Site Supervisor is unable to meet with the student for site supervision in a given week, then the student needs to contact the University Supervisor immediately to discuss the student’s options for site supervision that week.

How should I resolve conflicts with my Site Supervisor?

If the student experiences a conflict with her/his Site Supervisor, then, first, the student should discuss the conflict directly with the Site Supervisor, being mindful to employ facilitative conflict resolution skills (e.g., active listening, patience, positivity, open communication). If direct discussion with the Site Supervisor does not result in a satisfactory outcome for the student, then the student can consult with the University Supervisor about how to proceed from there.

What should I do if my University Supervisor and my Site Supervisor offer me conflicting guidance?

First, the student needs to identify the nature of the conflicting information. Does it relate to ethics? Client care? Field experience requirements?

After identifying the nature of the conflicting information, the student needs to obtain more information. If the nature of the information pertains to ethics or client care, then the student should consult the ACA (2014) Code of Ethics. If the information pertains to field experience requirements, then the student should seek clarification of the requirements by consulting the CACREP (2009) Standards, the course syllabus, and the Field Experience Handbook.
Then, the student should discuss the information gleaned from research with the Supervisors. Open communication generally is the most effective strategy for achieving a consensus among stakeholders. Keeping with professional standards, the student should refrain from triangling Supervisors and from speaking derogatorily about Supervisors to others.

**Will my University Supervisor and Site Supervisor communicate with each other during the semester?**

Yes. The student's University Supervisor will communicate with the student's Site Supervisor at least once every two weeks during each semester that the student is enrolled in field experience courses. The Site Supervisor may contact the University Supervisor at any time throughout the semester when the student is working at her/his site.

**Practicum (CNDV 5392)**

**How is the Practicum course different from the Internship courses?**

Practicum is the first field experience course in the course rotation. Essentially, it is an introduction to real practice with actual clients in the field. Internships 1 & 2 (CNDV 5394) are much more intensive than Practicum and require a greater devotion of time in the field. [For more information about Internships 1 & 2, see the section titled Internships 1 & 2 (CNDV 5394).](#)

**What does the Practicum course require?**

Practicum requires that students document a minimum of 100 clock hours of counseling practice over a minimum academic term of 10 weeks.

- At least 40 practice hours must constitute direct hours of counseling services to actual clients.
- At least 60 practice hours must be indirect hours of counseling-related tasks that the student performs at the field experience site.

Additionally, students enrolled in the Practicum course must:

- Participate in 1 hour of individual or triadic supervision each week with their Site Supervisor throughout the duration of the Practicum semester;
· Participate in 1.5 hours (on average) of university supervision each week with their University Supervisor/Professor throughout the duration of the Practicum semester;
· Arrange for audio/video recordings of client sessions for use in supervision sessions; and
· Complete and submit all course assignments to the University Supervisor/Professor by the appropriate deadlines listed in the syllabus.

During the Practicum semester, the student’s Site Supervisor will evaluate the student’s counseling performance via a Mid-Term Evaluation and a Final Evaluation, which are submitted to the University Supervisor for review.

**What do the Mid-Term and Final Evaluations that the Site Supervisor completes for me during Practicum look like?**

The Site Supervisor will use the same form to complete the Mid-term Evaluation and the Final Evaluation. The form contains a list of 37 items related to the student’s knowledge and understanding of concepts related to (a) counseling practice, (b) counseling skills and practice, and (c) personal and professional behaviors that the Site Supervisor will rate on a scale from 0-3 (with 0 being “does not meet criteria” and 3 being “exceeds criteria”). The form also contains short response questions that the Site Supervisor completes to document the student’s strengths and areas for growth. Both the student and the Site Supervisor must sign and date each evaluation. The student must submit the completed evaluations to the University Supervisor/Professor.

**What if my field experience site doesn’t allow me to audio- or video-record client sessions?**

Sometimes field experience sites do not allow client sessions to be recorded. If the student finds this to be true at her/his site, then the student should consult with the University Supervisor to discuss options for meeting the requirements for assignments that include the stipulation of recorded sessions.

**How much information about clients at my field experience site will I have to share with my University Supervisor and classmates?**

Students do discuss the work that are doing with clients at their field experience sites in university supervision sessions with the University Supervisor and peers. When discussing and/or presenting information about clients to the university
supervision group, students use pseudonyms in place of their clients’ real names to protect their clients’ identities. Students also withhold other identifying information about their clients (e.g., work location, city of residence) that might reveal their clients’ identities.

**If I accrue more than 100 practice hours for Practicum, can I roll over the extra hours to Internship 1?**

No, if the student earns hours in excess of 100 for Practicum, then she/he cannot carry the extra hours forward to Internship 1.

**What happens if I do not achieve the minimum number of required hours by the end of the Practicum semester?**

If the student does not achieve a minimum of 40 direct hours and 60 indirect hours by the end of the semester, then the student will fail the Practicum course.

**What kinds of activities count as direct hours?**

Direct hours are those in which the counselor trainee spends providing direct counseling services to clients. Activities that count for direct hours include, but are not limited to:

- Counseling or co-counseling a client in an individual session;
- Counseling or co-counseling a couple or family in session;
- Leading or co-leading a group counseling session;
- Completing a psychosocial assessment with a client;
- Completing a risk assessment with a client;
- Meeting with a client’s family member(s) to discuss the client’s treatment (e.g., meeting with the parent of a minor client); and
- Reviewing a treatment plan with a client, among others.

**What kinds of activities count as indirect hours?**

Indirect hours are those in which the counselor trainee spends performing counseling-related tasks that support client treatment at the field experience site. Activities that count for indirect hours include, but are not limited to:

- Completing a treatment/progress/case note after a counseling session with a client;
- Constructing a client's treatment plan in the absence of the client;
- Attending a treatment team meeting;
- Participating in counselor training events;
- Participating in site supervision;
- Participating in university supervision; and
- Reading and researching on topics that are related to a client's treatment, among others.

If ever in doubt about whether an activity constitutes direct or indirect time, then the student should consult with the University Supervisor.

Ultimately, the Site Supervisor is responsible for approving all of the student's activities at the site and for ensuring that the student accurately documents direct and indirect hours on the student's time log.
Internships 1 & 2 (CNDV 5394)

How is Internship 1 different from Internship 2?
Internship 2 is an extension of Internship 1. Together, the two courses comprise the total Internship experience.

What does Internship 1 require?
Internship 1 students must work at their field experience sites and accrue a minimum of 300 clock hours of counseling practice over one 10+ week semester.

- At least 120 of the 300 practice hours must constitute direct hours of counseling services to actual clients during the Internship 1 semester.
- At least 180 of the 300 practice hours must be indirect hours of counseling-related tasks that the student performs at the field experience site during the Internship 1 semester.

Students who are co-enrolled in Internships 1 & 2 must complete 600 hours over one 10+-week semester. For more information about co-enrollment, see the question in this section titled Can I Take Internships 1 & 2 at the Same Time?

Additionally, students enrolled in the Internship 1 course must:
- Participate in 1 hour of individual or triadic supervision each week with their Site Supervisor throughout the duration of the Internship semester;
- Participate in 1.5 hours (on average) of university supervision each week with their University Supervisor/Professor throughout the duration of the Internship semester;
- Arrange for audio/video recordings of client sessions for use in supervision sessions; and
- Complete and submit all course assignments to the University Supervisor/Professor by the appropriate deadlines listed in the syllabus.

During the Internship 1 semester, the student’s Site Supervisor will evaluate the student’s counseling performance via a Mid-Term Evaluation and a Final Evaluation.

What happens if I don’t earn at least 300 hours for Internship 1?
Students who fall short of 300 practice hours in Internship 1 can enroll in Internship 2 the following semester. However, during the Internship 2 semester, the student
must make up the hours that they were short for Internship 1. By the end of Internship 2, students must have documented a minimum of 600 total practice hours in order to complete Internship successfully and to graduate. Of the 600 total hours, at least 240 must be direct hours of counseling services to clients, and at least 360 must be indirect hours of counseling-related tasks that are performed at the field experience site(s).

**Example:** Cindy accrues a total of 281 hours of counseling practice during her Internship 1 semester, which is 11 hours short of the 300 hours that are required. Of the 281 hours that she accumulated, 103 were direct hours and 178 were indirect hours. For Internship 2, Cindy must accrue a total of at least 319 hours to satisfy the requirements for her total Internship experience. At minimum, she must accrue 137 direct hours (i.e., 103 + 137 = 240, the required minimum for direct hours over the total Internship experience) and 182 indirect hours (i.e., 178 + 182 = 360, the required minimum for indirect hours over the total Internship experience).

**If I earn more than 300 hours for Internship 1, will the extra hours count toward my Internship 2 hours?**

Yes, the student may apply up to 100 extra hours accrued for Internship 1 to the hours that are required for Internship 2. If the student accrued more than 100 extra hours for Internship 1, then the student should roll over all extra direct hours to Internship 2 before rolling over indirect hours. This is because direct hours tend to be more difficult for students to accumulate.

**Example:** Consuela accrues a total of 407 hours of counseling practice during her Internship 1 semester. Of the 107 extra hours that she accumulated, 42 were direct hours and 65 were indirect hours. When Consuela begins Internship 2, she carries over the 42 extra direct hours, as well as 58 extra indirect hours, from Internship 1 (i.e., 42 + 58 = 100). She is unable to roll over the 7 additional indirect hours from Internship 1, because they are in excess of the 100 roll-over hours that are allowed. Consuela begins Internship 2 with 100 hours on her time log, and she must accrue at least 200 more hours to satisfy the requirements for her total Internship experience.

**Example:** Jamal accrues a total of 319 hours of counseling practice during his Internship 1 semester. Of the 19 extra hours that he accumulated, 2 were direct hours and 17 were indirect hours. When Jamal begins Internship 2, he carries over all 19 extra hours from Internship 1. Jamal begins Internship 2 with 19 hours on his time log, and he must accrue at least 281 more hours to satisfy the requirements for his total Internship experience.
What does Internship 2 require?

Just like they were required to do for Internship 1, Internship 2 students must work at their field experience sites and accrue a minimum of 300 clock hours of counseling practice over one 10+-week semester.

- At least 120 of the 300 practice hours must constitute direct hours of counseling services to actual clients during the Internship 2 semester.
- At least 180 of the 300 practice hours must be indirect hours of counseling-related tasks that the student performs at the field experience site during the Internship 2 semester.

Students who are co-enrolled in Internships 1 & 2 must complete 600 hours over one 10+-week semester. For more information about co-enrollment, see the question in this section: Can I Take Internships 1 & 2 at the Same Time?

Additionally, students enrolled in the Internship 2 course must:

- Participate in 1 hour of individual or triadic supervision each week with their Site Supervisor throughout the duration of the Internship semester;
- Participate in 1.5 hours (on average) of university supervision each week with their University Supervisor/Professor throughout the duration of the Internship semester;
- Arrange for audio/video recordings of client sessions for use in supervision sessions; and
- Complete and submit all course assignments to the University Supervisor/Professor by the appropriate deadlines listed in the syllabus.

During the Internship 2 semester, the student’s Site Supervisor will evaluate the student’s counseling performance via a Mid-Term Evaluation and a Final Evaluation, which are submitted to the University Supervisor for review.

What do the Mid-Term and Final Evaluations that the Site Supervisor completes for me during Internships 1 & 2 look like?
The form that is used for the Mid-term and Final Evaluations during Internships 1 & 2 is the same form that is used for the Mid-term and Final Evaluations during Practicum. For more information, see this question in the section titled Practicum.

What happens if I don’t earn 600 hours by the end of Internship 2?
If the student does not accrue at least 600 practice hours, OR if the student does not accrue the minimum required hours for direct and indirect services to clients (i.e., 240 total direct hours and 360 total indirect hours) by the end of Internship 2, then the student will fail Internship and will be prohibited from graduating.

Can I take Internships 1 and 2 at the same time?
Yes, students can apply for co-enrollment in Internships 1 & 2. Co-enrolled students must accrue at least 600 practice hours (i.e., 240 direct hours and 360 indirect hours, minimum) in one semester. Students are advised to consider the co-enrollment option carefully before choosing it, because failure to accrue all 600 practice hours during the semester dictates a failing grade for both Internship 1 & 2, as well as prohibition from graduation. Students who choose to co-enroll are advised not to take Internships 1 & 2 together during a summer semester, as summer terms last only 10 weeks.

All I have left to take before graduating are Internships 1 & 2. I need to take 6 credit hours during each semester of Internship in order to get financial aid. What do I do?
A student who is enrolled in Internship 1 or 2 can apply for half-time equivalency for financial aid purposes. Half-time equivalency means that the student can take 3 credit hours of Internship, but still can be eligible for financial aid. Students can qualify for half-time equivalency for ONE SEMESTER OF INTERNSHIP ONLY. Students who want to apply need to submit the half-time equivalency form to the Dept. of Counseling at least two weeks prior to the first day of Internship class at this address: cosp@lamar.edu. Students can access the form with this link: Half-Time Equivalency Form.
CPCE Exam

What is the CPCE?
The Counselor Preparation Comprehensive Exam (CPCE) is a formal assessment that is “designed to measure a student’s level of mastery of the requisite knowledge and skills identified by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and other Educational Professions (CACREP) for the preparation of professional counselors” (Pearson VUE, 2018, para. 1). Students in the CMHC program at Lamar University take the CPCE exam for their Master-level comprehensive exam, or “comps”.

When will I take the CPCE?
Students in the CMHC program take the CPCE during the semester that they are enrolled in the Practicum course.

How do I register for the CPCE?
Each Practicum student’s University Supervisor/Professor will instruct students how to register for the CPCE. Students will not receive registration instructions until after the beginning of the Practicum semester.

How much does the CPCE cost?
Students must incur the cost for the CPCE exam, which is $150.

I have a documented disability. Can I receive testing accommodations for the CPCE?
Yes. If you have a documented disability, then, first, you must provide appropriate documentation of it to Lamar’s Disability Resource Center (DRC). Then, the DRC will provide you with a letter that you must submit to this email address: cpce@cce-global.org. Do NOT register with Pearson VUE or pay for your exam until you receive an email from Pearson VUE that verifies your authorization to test.

Students can reach Lamar’s DRC via phone at 409-880-8347 or via email at DRC@lamar.edu.

Where do I take the CPCE?
The student must take the CPCE at a Pearson VUE facility in her/his local area.
How many questions are on the CPCE, and what is the format?
The CPCE contains 160 multiple-choice questions, with 20 questions addressing each of CACREP’s eight content areas.

What are CACREP’s 8 content areas?
The content areas are:
- Assessment and testing
- Human growth and development
- Counseling and helping relationships
- Orientation and ethical practice
- Career development
- Group counseling and group work
- Research and program evaluation
- Social and cultural diversity

How much time will I be allowed to complete the CPCE on the day that I take it?
Test takers will have 4 hours to complete the CPCE.

How can I study for the CPCE?
Students can review their course textbooks to study for the CPCE. In addition to course textbooks, there are multiple study guides that are available for purchase. A common guide that students use is *The Encyclopedia of Counseling* by Howard Rosenthal. However, students can choose the study materials of their preference to prepare for the exam.

What is a passing score for the CPCE?
Students must obtain a score of 70 or higher to pass the CPCE.

What happens if I don’t pass the CPCE?
Students who do not pass the CPCE on their first try will be allowed to retake it during the semester that they are enrolled in Internship 1. Students who do not pass the CPCE on their second try will be required to take and pass a written comprehensive exam during the semester that they are enrolled in Internship 2. Students who do not pass the written exam will not be allowed to graduate.
Where can I get more information about the CPCE?

Students can obtain more information about the CPCE at the Center for Credentialing and Education's website: https://www.cce-global.org/assessmentsandexaminations/cpce
NCE/Licensure Exam(s)

What is the NCE?
“The National Counselor Examination (NCE) is a 200-question, multiple-choice, non-sectioned examination representing each of the original eight CACREP (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) content areas, with question content also emerging from the five work behaviors determined by NBCC’s national job analysis” (NBCC, 2018a, p. 6). Many states require that candidates for state licensure take and pass the NCE prior to obtaining a license to practice counseling.

Do I have to take the NCE?
To know if you have to take the NCE for licensure in your state, check with your State Board. Your state might specifically require candidates for state licensure to take the National Counselor Examination (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE). Some states require both examinations, and some states allow you to choose which exam you will take. Still other states might require a state exam in addition to (or in lieu of) the national exam.

How is the NCMHCE different from the NCE?
The biggest difference between the NCE and the NCMHCE is the format of the questions. Whereas the NCE is a multiple-choice, 200-item assessment that covers CACREP’s 8 core content areas, the NCMHCE comprises 10 clinical mental health counseling cases (each broken into 5-10 sections) that are simulated to assess the test-taker’s “problem-solving abilities [sic.] including conducting empirically supported and professionally indicated assessments and formation of symptom-based DSM diagnoses and clinically aligned treatment plans” (NBCC, 2018b, p. 6).

When am I eligible to take the NCE/NCMHCE?
Most students take the NCE/NCMHCE after graduation from their programs of study. However, students can take their licensure exam(s) as early as the semester that they are enrolled in Internship 2. Students who take their exams during Internship 2 will not receive their score reports until after graduation.

When are the NCE and NCMHCE offered each year?
The NCE/NCMHCE is offered in both April and October for individuals who choose to take it before they graduate. It is offered every month for those who choose to wait until after graduation to take it.
How do I register for the NCE and/or NCMHCE?
Dr. Greenidge, the Chair of the Dept. of Counseling, coordinates testing for students who want to take their licensure exam(s) prior to graduation. Students who opt to take the NCE/NCMHCE after graduation can register for it at this address: http://www.cce-global.org

How much do the NCE and NCMHCE cost?
The fees for the NCE and NCMHCE exams range in price, depending on the purpose of the assessment (e.g., taking the NCE for certification with the National Board for Certified Counselors ([NBCC] vs taking the NCE for state licensure). Students can expect to pay approximately $300 for each test.

What is a passing score on the NCE?
“Passing scores may vary slightly for each version of the examination” (NBCC, 2018a, p. 12). For more information about scoring, see p. 12 of the Candidate Handbook for National Certification with the National Counselor Examination (NCE) (2016-1017): https://www.nbcc.org/assets/exam/handbooks/nce.pdf

What is a passing score on the NCMHCE?
“The exact passing score may vary from one form of the examination to another depending on the scored simulations included” (NBCC, 2018b, p. 11). For more information about scoring, see p. 11 of the Candidate Handbook for State Credentialing for the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Exam (NCMHCE): https://www.nbcc.org/Assets/StateLicensure/NCMHCE.pdf

Do I have to send my NCE/NCMHCE score report to Lamar University?
No. The licensing exams are taken for post-graduation state licensure, not for Lamar University course work. Students must submit their score reports to their State Boards when they apply for state licensure.

What happens if I fail the NCE or NCMHCE?
In Texas, students are allowed 3 attempts to pass the exam(s). Individuals who do not pass after the third attempt must wait 2 years or take 9 graduate hours in counseling courses before retesting.

Students in other states should consult their State Board Rules for information about testing retakes.
Where can I get more information about the NCE and NCMHCE?

Students can obtain more information about the NCE and NCMHCE at the National Board for Counselor Certification's (NBCC) website: https://www.nbcc.org/licensure.
Graduate Student Internship vs. Licensed Internship

How is a graduate student internship different from a licensed internship?

The graduate student internship is part of a counselor trainee’s training program. During the graduate student internship, the student is not a licensed counselor and has not yet completed a Master degree in counseling. The graduate student intern provides counseling services to actual clients at a field experience site under the supervision of both a University Supervisor and a Site Supervisor. Graduate student interns must accrue practice hours at their field experience sites to satisfy course and graduation requirements. Moreover, graduate student interns cannot receive compensation for the work that they do at their field experience sites.

The licensed internship occurs post-graduation from a Master-level program in counseling. After graduating, the student takes and passes the required exam(s) for licensure in her/his state. Then, the student submits an application to the State Board for a temporary/preliminary counseling license (e.g., LPC-Intern license). Upon receipt of the temporary/preliminary license, the new counseling professional begins an internship period that requires the new counselor to participate in supervision sessions with a State Board-approved Supervisor (e.g., LPC-S) for the duration of the internship period. The new counseling professional must complete and log a required number of supervised practice hours (which varies by state) before she/he can apply for a full license with the State Board. In all respects, the new counseling professional is a licensed counseling professional during the licensed internship experience. However, the licensed intern is prohibited from practicing independently (e.g., seeing clients in her/his own private practice) during the licensed internship period. (Exceptions to the independent practice rule may vary by state.) Licensed interns can be (and usually are) paid employees who are hired as counseling professionals at their practice sites.

Can extra practice hours that were earned for the graduate student internship count toward the required practice hours for the licensed internship?

Generally, no, any excess practice hours that the student accrued for the graduate student internship cannot be rolled into the hours that are required for the licensed internship.
internship. Students are encouraged to review their State Board’s rules that relate to this question.
Does my supervisor for the licensed internship have to be an LPC-S?

For the licensed internship, the intern must participate in supervision sessions with a State Board-approved supervisor who holds the same license as the intern.

**Example:** A LPC-Intern must participate in supervision with a LPC-Supervisor. A LPC-Intern cannot participate in supervision with a LMFT-Supervisor.

Will I have to pay for the services of my LPC-S?

Licensed interns typically do have to pay for supervision. Licensed supervisors set their own rates for supervision sessions.

Sometimes, a licensed intern's employment compensation will include the services of a licensed supervisor on staff at no cost to the intern. Licensed interns are encouraged to consider the benefits and risks of accepting supervision from a co-worker or supervisor prior to contracting for supervision services.

How do I find a State Board-approved supervisor?

Most State Boards have rosters of their licensed counseling professionals on their websites.

Where can I get more information about the requirements for the licensed internship in my state?

To obtain more information about your state’s requirements for the licensed internship, visit your State Board's website.
References


