



Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling
Practicum Manual, Guidelines, and Contract

REHB 6360 Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling
Practicum

Practicum Coordinator

Sharon Shallow M.Ed., LPC, CRC-MAC, LMFT, CTA, CSI

Counseling Practicum Faculty Supervisors

Shari Sias Ph.D., LPC

Lloyd Goodwin Ph.D., LPC-S, LCAS, CRC-MAC,
CCS, ACS

College of Allied Health Sciences
East Carolina University
Department of Rehabilitation Studies
4425 Health Sciences Drive
Greenville, North Carolina 27858

www.ecu.edu/rehb

252-744-6300

Introduction

The guidelines for the Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling (SACC) Practicum experience are somewhat flexible, recognizing that each situation will vary, depending upon the unique nature of the student, the field-site supervisor, the caseload, and the program where the field experience is taking place.

The primary objective of the SACC Practicum experience is to provide students with an opportunity to further develop clinical counseling skills, case recording skills, case management skills, and to see the practical application of treatment policy, client services, and counseling philosophy in a human service program. The SACC Practicum is followed by a 600-hour Internship in Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling experience where the student assumes all of the functions of a beginning counselor.

The Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling Practicum Experience

The purpose of the SACC Practicum experience is different from the Prepracticum in SACC and the Internship in SACC experience. The SACC Practicum is preceded by the Prepracticum in SACC course which is a foundational counselor skill-training course taught on campus utilizing the Department's counseling lab. The SACC Practicum is a field-based experience in a community-based counseling program with actual clients. The SACC Practicum is designed to provide opportunities for students to focus on the application of counseling techniques that they have been developing in on-campus laboratory situations (e.g. Prepracticum in Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling; Group Counseling for Addictive Behaviors; and Family Treatment in Substance Abuse Rehabilitation).

The Internship in SACC follows the SACC Practicum and includes 600-hours of clinical field experience (15-weeks of full-time work experience) in a substance abuse or mental health program. The Intern is expected to participate in the same activities that an employed substance abuse or clinical counselor would be involved in (see *Internship Manual* for guidelines).

Practicum seminar

The SACC Practicum course builds on the basic counseling skills learned in the Prepracticum in SACC course and includes more advanced on-campus counselor skill-training and supervision for three hours each week throughout the 15-week semester. The practicum supervision includes reviewing and providing feedback to students' taped counseling sessions with clients. In order to effectively meet the students' needs, group supervision does not exceed 12 students per group.

This opportunity to try out, under close supervision, various clinical methods for working with clients and their families is an important component in learning to be an effective substance abuse and clinical counselor.

Counseling Practicum Preparation

Students will have the following required courses before they graduate:

- Introduction to Substance Abuse
- Treatment of Drug and Behavioral Addictions
- Group Counseling for Addictive Behaviors
- Family Treatment in Substance Abuse Rehabilitation
- Substance Abuse Counseling
- Introduction to Counseling and Rehabilitation
- Occupational Analysis and Career Counseling
- Psychiatric Rehabilitation (DSM-IV-TR & Psychopathology)
- Rehabilitation Counseling and Human Development Theories
- Prepracticum in Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling
- Multicultural Counseling in Rehabilitation
- Rehabilitation Evaluation (i.e. Assessment)
- Ethical and Legal Aspects in Substance Abuse and Rehabilitation Counseling (beginning fall 2011)
- Rehabilitation Research
- Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling Practicum (100-hours of supervised clinical field experience)
- Internship in Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling (600-hours of supervised clinical field experience)
- One Elective (e.g., Military and Trauma Counseling; Prevention of Drug and Behavioral Addictions; Employee Assistance Programs; Contemporary Issues for Addictions; Medical and Psychosocial Aspects of Disability; and Research Project).

Practicum students have many of the required courses before or during the practicum experience. It is hoped that students can apply as much academic training as possible during their SACC Practicum and subsequent Internship in SACC experience, but the focus is on counselor skill development.

For more information concerning the SACC program visit the department website at <http://www.ecu.edu/rehb>. Additionally, there are two journal articles posted at the end of the SACC program description that describe the program and characteristics of students.

Field-Site Directory

The department maintains a Field-Site Directory of practicum and internship sites that former students have used. There are also sites listed that have expressed a willingness to accept students from the Department. The directory is available for viewing in the Rehabilitation Studies Department. Ask the departmental secretary for access to the directory.

Field-Site Approval

Each student should arrange the SACC Practicum field-site in a human service program that offers counseling services after first gaining approval by the Practicum Coordinator. The field-site **must be secured two months** before the semester begins.

Field-Site Contract

There needs to be a contract in place between the field-site and East Carolina University **before students can begin** their Practicum. Check with the Departmental secretary to see if there is a current contract in place. If there isn't, students need to ask the Departmental secretary to initiate the process to secure one.

Supervision

The goal of supervision, and of the entire SACC Practicum experience, is helping students develop the skills necessary to become an effective clinical counselor. Clinical supervision is basically a clinical teaching situation. In this relationship the faculty and field-site supervisor share with the supervisee the clinical knowledge and skill they have gained through years of practical experience in the field. The supervisors need to be aware of the capacity and potentialities of supervisees in order that they may be able to help supervisees develop their assessment, diagnostic, and counseling skills.

Field-Site Supervisor

The field-site supervisor contributes to the preparation of new counseling professionals entering the field as well as providing a gatekeeper function for screening out unqualified or impaired counseling students from entering the counseling profession.

- **Field-site supervisor qualifications:** Qualified field-site supervisors **must** meet the following standards:

- hold a **graduate degree** in a mental health discipline (e.g. counseling, psychology, social work);
 - have a **minimum of 2 years** of relevant clinical counseling experience;
 - hold a **license** (e.g. LPC, LCAS) or **certification** (e.g. CSAC) in their professional discipline;
 - have knowledge of the SACC **program's expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures** for students; and
 - have **relevant training in counseling supervision** (faculty will provide regularly scheduled continuing education to field-site supervisors that include: orientation, assistance, consultation, and professional development opportunities).
- **Field-site supervision activities:** Field-site supervisors arrange for students to see clients in their program and tape individual counseling sessions. Field-site supervisors may also volunteer to provide individual or triadic (i.e. supervisor and two students) supervision to students including reviewing counseling tapes and case recordings, as well as teach counseling skills. If the field-site supervisor assumes this optional primary counseling supervision responsibility, they will work in bi-weekly consultation with the practicum faculty supervisor.

It is important that students have the opportunity to conduct or obtain assessments and provide individual and group counseling services. Allowing students to co-counsel family therapy sessions is encouraged but not required. Ideally, student counselors will work with a small number of clients for several contacts over a period of time. Faculty (or doctoral student supervisors under the supervision of faculty) will review selected student audio/video tapes of counseling sessions with students.

- **Focus of counseling practicum is counseling experience:** In order to reach desirable goals in the SACC Practicum experience, it is essential that both the field-site program staff and student fully understand the responsibilities of each in relation to practicum activity. The student is neither expected nor required to perform the same counseling responsibilities as full-time qualified staff members. Although there is a certain amount of quid pro quo expectation where students assist field-site supervisors with some of their non-counseling related activities such as DUI assessments and psychoeducational classes, *the focus of the SACC Practicum is on students' counselor skill development.*
- **Supervisor's evaluation of counseling student:** Field-site supervisors evaluate students' performance on an evaluation form provided by the Practicum faculty (*Evaluation of Student Performance by Field-Site*

Supervisor Form). This evaluation may be reviewed with the student and then given to the faculty supervisor **at mid-point** and **upon completion of** the SACC Practicum experience.

- **Faculty supervision:** Faculty and doctoral student supervisors have primary responsibility for supervision of practicum students and for counselor skill training. Doctoral counseling students may supervise practicum students under qualified faculty supervision. Faculty and/or doctoral student supervisors will maintain contact with the field-site supervisor throughout the SACC Practicum to coordinate student counselors' development.
- **Counseling practicum seminar and group supervision:** Students receive an **average of 1 ½ hours a week of group supervision** by faculty supervisor. Students are responsible for bringing a client case file and *taped counseling session* each week to present a case to the SACC Practicum class for review and feedback.
- **Individual or triadic supervision:** Students receive an average of-hour a week of individual or triadic of supervision by either:
 - the faculty supervisor,
 - the doctoral student supervised by faculty, or
 - the field-site supervisor working in bi-weekly consultation with the faculty-supervisor/doctoral student.

Student Responsibilities

- **Present self as a professional:** When students enter a community human service program as a practicum student they are entering as a professional counselor-in-training. Thus, students should act and dress as other professionals do in that setting. Also, students must assume responsibilities such as regularity of attendance, conformity to the program's rules, regulations, standards, ethics, and complete assignments that are given by the field-site supervisor. Both the field-site supervisor and the student must understand that the practicum field experience is designed to contribute to the professional preparation of the counselor-in-training.
- **Limited caseload over time:** Practicum students should see a few clients over time versus many clients for just a few sessions. It is desirable for the student to gain experience seeing a few clients throughout the counseling process from the initial interview, through the development of the therapeutic alliance, identification of client goals, and treatment planning, to helping clients achieve their personal goals. Practicum students should have a limited caseload and be supervised by a qualified field-site supervisor as well as the faculty supervisor.

- **Time requirements:**
 - **Total required hours at field site (100 hours):** Practicum students spend 8-hours per week, for 15-weeks in the community based human service program for a minimum of 100 hours. Most students spend one day a week and some students spend two 4-hour two days a week. Variations of this may be approved by the field-site supervisor. All of this time does not have to be spent conducting counseling sessions. Some of this time is spent conducting intakes, assessments, attending team staffings, staff meetings, case recording, and consulting with staff and supervisors.
 - **Direct service hours (40 hours):** A minimum of 40 clock hours of direct service with actual clients that contributes to the development of counseling skills must be provided by the student. Students keep a record of their completed hours which is signed and initialed by their field-site supervisor.
 - **Seminar hours (45 hours):** Students attend a practicum seminar led by the course instructor. Students learn additional counseling knowledge and skills as well as receive group supervision throughout the 15-week semester.
- **Audio- or video-taped counseling sessions:** Students will provide program-appropriate audio/video recordings for use in supervision or live supervision of the student's interactions with clients. All recording are destroyed at the completion of the practicum, with two exceptions, (a) if students are involved with a corrective action plan which includes skill improvement or (b) if they are contesting their SACC Practicum grade. In these cases the recording are stored in a locked cabinet in the Department until the corrective action plan or grade dispute is resolved.
- **Written release-of-information forms:** Students will have a release-of-information form signed by each client giving permission to share the tapes and written case information with supervisors and other counselors-in-training in the SACC Practicum course.
- **Ethical standards:** Students are expected to adhere to the field-site program's policies regarding confidentiality as well as ethical standards specified in the code of ethics from the American Counseling Association (ACA: same as NC-LPC Board) and North Carolina Substance Abuse Professional Practice Board (NCSAPPB).

Description of Practicum Activities

It is expected that each student beginning a counseling practicum experience is knowledgeable about counseling services, procedures, and the treatment/counseling process. When the student begins a field-based practicum experience the student should be prepared to participate in the following activities:

- Assessment
 - Procedures involved in diagnostic work-up (required)
 - Assessment summaries (required)
 - Case or team staffings/conferences (optional)
 - Medical and psychiatric consultations (optional)

- Clinical Counseling Experiences
 - Individual counseling sessions (audio- or video-taped sessions required)
 - Group counseling (co-lead with experienced group counselor)
 - Family counseling: co-counselor (optional)

- Provision of Other Counseling Services
 - Case recordings and case management (required - see details below)
 - Counseling and treatment plans (required)
 - Termination/discharge summaries (required)
 - Psychoeducational groups: co-lead or lead (optional)
 - Attend staff meetings (optional)

Case Recording

A separate case file for each client the student works with will include for faculty supervision and review:

- all client identifying information (e.g., name, address, phone, SS#, etc.) are removed from files used for faculty supervision. Use client initials or code letters;
- consent for release of information forms (kept in the field-site file);
- case/progress notes;
- client feedback and student self-review forms completed after each counseling session;
- assessment summary;
- treatment plan (if seen more than 2X);
- discharge summary/termination report (if seen more than 2X);
- psychological and/or medical evaluations (if available);

- psychological tests/inventories (if used);
- copies of bibliotherapy handouts/pamphlets given to clients; and
- Copy of *Multimodal Life History Questionnaire* or another comprehensive assessment inventory oriented for clinical counseling completed on at least one client, if appropriate for site (optional - at discretion of instructor);
- Copy of the *Cognitive Self-Assessment Inventory* completed on at least one client (optional – at discretion of instructor).

Evaluation

- **Evaluation of students:** One of the most effective evaluation methods of students' practicum experiences for the field-site supervisor and the practicum faculty is through reviewing student counseling tapes and case recordings. Therefore, it is essential that students keep counseling tapes and case files on clients. As part of grade determinations, case records and a minimum of four counseling tapes will be examined by the practicum faculty or doctoral student supervisor under the supervision of faculty.

In addition, case records and counseling tapes will be reviewed periodically throughout the field experience by the field-site or doctoral supervisors. There is a **mid-point** and **final** written evaluation conducted by the field-site supervisor and faculty or doctoral student supervisor. Thus, it will be possible for both the faculty and field-site supervisors to evaluate how well student counselors are meeting the objectives of the counseling SACC Practicum course throughout and at the end of the SACC Practicum experience.

- **Evaluation by student:** A final typed summary report of the classroom (seminar) component, field experience component, and clinical supervision component of the practicum is required from the student at the completion of the course. Copies of this summary should be presented to the field-site, doctoral, and faculty supervisors. The report should include personal impressions, reactions, and examples of meaningful experiences, suggestions for improving the field experience, supervision, and other comments the student feels appropriate. The report should present and reflect a concise picture of the total experience including both on-campus seminar and supervision, and the field-site experience.
- **Final grade:** The assignment of the final grade is the responsibility of the faculty supervisor, with input from the field-site supervisor and doctoral student supervisor.

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Signature below indicates the counseling practicum student, field-site supervisor, and faculty or Ph.D. student supervisor have been informed about the M.S. degree program in SACC at East Carolina University, as well as the SACC Practicum expectations and agree to follow the standards described in this *Substance Abuse and Clinical Counseling Practicum Manual*:

Counseling Practicum Student Signature	Print Name	Date
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Field-Site Supervisor Signature	Print Name	Date
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Faculty or Doctoral Student Supervisor	Print Name	Date
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