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**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TO:** \_\_\_\_\_

**FROM:** Counselor Education Program

**SUBJECT:** Field Site Placement Guidelines

We want to thank you for your willingness to supervise\_\_\_\_\_.  
Through your efforts and help, we are confident our student will gain a better understanding of the counselor role and will enhance his/her counseling skills.

The following information should help you understand our expectations and requirements for field experience students.

**Definition of Field Placement:** Field placements (practica) consist of supervised experiences designed to enhance the professional skills of graduate students in counseling programs. The minimum requirements are set forth in the standards of CACREP, 1994 (Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs) and state standards, competencies, and requirements. The principal goal of a field placement is generally to provide the student with a broad set of experiences as a practicing professional within a school system, organization, or agency under competent supervision. The student acts as a practicing professional performing a broad range of professional and technical activities typically performed by regularly employed counselors in that setting. The expectation of a placement is that the student will be able to develop his/her knowledge and experiential base, as well as enhance his/her counseling skills.

**Finding and Selecting a Placement:** The model upon which the Counselor Education program at CSU Stanislaus is based is integrative, dealing with emotional, cognitive and behavioral elements, and one in which self-exploration, as well as knowledge and skill development are emphasized. Students are encouraged to arrange their own placement within the community. However, the department provides a list of approved agency and school sites ranging from schools, colleges and clinical agencies. Other sites may be approved if the appropriate experience and supervision are available. There must also be a current Memorandum of Understanding in place between the site and CSU Stanislaus for the student to complete their field experience hours and supervision.

Regardless of the student's site choice, the field placement must allow the student to become familiar with a variety of professional activities other than direct observation or service. Students are encouraged to obtain supervised experience in the use of appraisal procedures, computers, media, research, advocacy, organizational and system ability, classroom guidance, and group and individual counseling.

**Responsibilities of the Students:** Students are expected to maintain high standards, professional ethics and confidentiality. In addition, for students obtaining a PPS credential, in accordance with Title-5 regulations in the State of California, a student is obligated to complete a minimum of 600 clock hours of field experience under the supervision of an experienced counselor who holds a Pupil Personnel Services credential. Professional Clinical Counselor (PCC) students must have 280 clock hours of field experience under the supervision of licensed professionals, as specified by the California Board of Behavioral Sciences. Masters in Counseling (MA Only) students must obtain 200 clock hours of field experience under the supervision of experienced counselors/professionals who have appropriate credentials. Likewise, students are expected to:

- Act in accordance with school regulations, state, and CACREP standards, the American Counseling Association and/or American School Counselor Association codes for agency or school counseling interns, and ethical standards.
- Obtain and become familiar with policies and procedures, requirements for field placements, sites and supervisors, various sample forms, checklists, and evaluation forms.
- Obtain Professional Liability insurance.
- Attain client consent, send information to parents, maintain a daily log, write case summaries and analyses, attend meetings that the supervisor normally attends, and attend supervision seminars.

It is the hope of program faculty that field experience students will be able to work with a variety of clients and experiences. Students should be able to encounter persons with varied needs and concerns. Accordingly, it would be advisable for the field experience student to work with short-term, as well as long-term, clients, both voluntary and involuntary referrals, male and female clients, as well as individuals who are racially and/or culturally different from the field experience student.

**Confidentiality:** Counselor trainees are well informed about the law regulating students' rights to confidentiality. They will keep all information in strict confidence except in cases where (a) child abuse has occurred, (b) there is possible harm to self or others, (c) there has been a violation of law, (d) the trainee is required to testify in a court of law, (e) consultation with another counselor or psychologist is necessary, or (f) the client requests a release of information.

**Responsibilities for the Site Supervisors:** The focus of supervision is viewed as ranging from the teaching of basic skills and procedures to more complex relationship issues of the nature and relationship between supervisor and supervisee. We ask that supervisors meet with students for a minimum of one hour per week to examine the student's progress. Beyond this, the field experience supervisor certainly has an important orientating function. Many of the policies, procedures, and unique characteristics of the placement setting can only be transmitted in the field by the supervisor. The field experience supervisor may feel that his or her ultimate responsibility is for the clients with whom the counselor trainee is working; therefore, the student may require some monitoring of his or her activity. The extent to which the field supervisor goes beyond this monitoring to supervise and assist the student should be a function of the supervisor's

comfort in doing so and the availability of time.

Whatever decision the field supervisor makes, one can assume that the student, through on-campus supervision and seminar, will have access to instructional and supportive resources. We hope the supervisor will demonstrate trust and confidence in the student's ability.

Among the expectations delineated in the field placement packet are the following:

- Providing the orientation, instruction, and transmission of policies, procedures, the narration of the unique characteristics of the field placement setting, and the attainment of desired competencies during the placement.
- Establishing the frequency and timing of supervisory sessions. CACREP has set a standard of "a minimum of one hour per week of individual supervision by a program faculty member supervisor, or a student supervisor working under the supervision of a program faculty member" (CACREP, 1994, p. 28).
- Monitoring of student activity.
- Developing the content of supervisory sessions (e.g., will they consist of case reviews via notes, observation, etc.; didactic instruction in topic areas; informal personal exchange; or some combination of skills and techniques).
- Sharing the theoretical orientation of techniques that the student is expected to learn and how specifically this learning will be demonstrated and assessed.
- Defining the extent to which personal issues of the student or supervisor will be addressed as part of supervision.

Ordinarily, the content of the supervision involves a combination of activities including instruction, case discussion, role plays, direct observation of sessions, joint counseling, and opportunities to observe the supervisor in counseling. Students should be encouraged to take an active role in discussing what kinds of learning experiences would be most beneficial to them in supervision. The supervisor has the final say as to what happens during supervision, but the student is encouraged to be involved in the process and make his/her needs and interests known.

**Responsibilities of Faculty:** In addition to the work experience component, most school and agency counseling graduate programs also require the student's involvement in a related seminar class to discuss the field placement experience. During early class sessions at CSU Stanislaus, students are made aware of the goals, expectations, requirements, state and national school and agency counseling standards, ethical issues, and available field placement settings. Students are also informed of the alliance between the educational institution and the community placement. This alliance, a triangular connection in nature, is formed and maintained between the academic instructor, the on-site field supervisor, and the student. Each individual within this triangle fulfills a different function. The academic instructor monitors the student's progress and interfaces with those employed by the field placement site. The on-site field supervisor directly monitors and oversees the student's work at the field placement, while the student keeps the instructor and the supervisor closely informed of all his/her activities, difficulties, and concerns in regard to the placement.

During successive class sessions, students discuss their experiences with other classmates and ascertain the progress being made toward previously established objectives. These sessions generally enable the students to discuss similarities and differences in their field placements. Students also provide each other with encouragement, support, and suggestions in areas of concern. These seminar sessions provide a valuable vehicle for the integration of the academic component and the field placement experiences.

The academic instructor will adhere to the above procedures. If the instructor is an adjunct faculty, he/she will undergo an intensive orientation at the beginning of each semester with the program coordinator. The training will include, but will not be limited to, the following: liability insurance, grading policies, driving restrictions, ethical and confidential issues, CACREP, BBS, and CCTC standards, competencies, and requirements. The academic instructor assigns the grades for the course.

**Evaluation:** Because the field experience is a part of a counselor's educational process, evaluation of learning and progress are essential components to the students' advancement towards becoming a professional. Evaluations are learning tools that should be viewed as ongoing progress reports, rather than a "final score." Evaluation should focus on the students' professional work, and not personal issues.

Consistent with the above philosophy, the responsibility for evaluating a student's performance should fall to both the student and the supervisor. Both individuals must be committed to a complete, honest, accurate, critical, and constructive examination of the student's strengths and weaknesses. As such, supervisors as well as students complete evaluation forms of the student independently, then get together and compare their impressions and responses. This information must be shared with the academic instructor.

As part of the evaluation process, student performances address multiple situations, and the evaluation is based on numerous observations and data sources. Hence, a single event or observation must not shape the entire foundation of an evaluation, and forms or sources of information are highly encouraged. Multiple sources might include, but are not limited to, written material, direct observation, and impressions of other professionals in the field placement.

The student evaluation system should address the following domains: (a) individual counseling; (b) group counseling; (c) career counseling; (d) psychoeducational counseling; (e) academic counseling; (f) testing; (g) consultation; (h) crisis intervention; (i) conferences (e.g., Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)); (j) presentations; and (k) report writing. Another type of valuable information is the field placement supervisor's observations of the student as a member of the counseling staff. Evaluations concerning the following areas need to be considered and incorporated in the supervisor's evaluative comments: (a) promptness and dependability; (b) cooperation; (c) ease with co-workers; (d) reputation among clients; (e) global effectiveness as a counselor; (f) strengths; and (g) weaknesses.

Evaluations are meant not only to rate past performances but also to guide future development. Thus identified areas of student weaknesses must be acknowledged and addressed with specific strategies for making the necessary changes or acquiring the needed skills or competencies.

**Field Experience Supervisor Evaluation:** The Field Experience Supervisor Evaluation (attached) should serve as an assessment for the field experience supervisor and the student. While trainees are not expected to demonstrate every competency at each site it is hoped that a majority of these competencies will be shown at each setting and at the conclusion of all field experience it is expected that all competencies listed will be demonstrated. It is expected that the field experience supervisor will complete this evaluation form near the end of the field experience.

**PPS Field Experience Hours:** Please note that a minimum of 600 clock hours of field experience under the supervision of an experienced practitioner who holds a PPS credential is required for PPS students. In addition:

- A minimum of 400 clock hours shall be in a school setting in **direct** contact with pupils.
- Assignment shall be provided in at least two of three settings (elementary, middle and/or high school) and shall include a minimum of 200 clock hours at each setting, and
- At least 150 clock hours shall be with at least 10 pupils (individually and/or in a group) of racial/ethnic background different from that of the counselor trainee.
- A minimum of twenty-five (25) clock hours will involve group counseling and guidance activities in a school setting.
- Up to two hundred (200) clock hours may be in a setting other than schools provided that the candidate is supervised by an experienced practitioner who holds an appropriate degree or credential.

Students will enroll for four units per semester, for three semesters. Each semester, a total of 200 hours of field experience is required.

**PCC Field Experience Hours:** Please note that a minimum of 280 clock hours of field experience under the supervision of a licensed experienced practitioner who holds a LCSW, LMFT, Psy.D., MD, LPCC (or similar designation) is required for PCC students. In addition:

- A minimum of 140 clock hours each semester shall be in a counseling agency/organization in direct contact with clients.
- According to the BBS, the field experience must be conducted in a clinical setting that provides the following professional clinical counseling experiences: 1) applied psychotherapeutic techniques, 2) assessment, 3) diagnosis, and 4) treatment.
- The PCC student must receive an average of at least two hours (cumulative) per week of direct site supervisor contact. Consequently, the site supervisor must be present for a minimum of two hours per week at the location where the Counselor Education student is completing the field experience.
- Schools where students choose to complete their 280 hours of field experience for the PCC must provide the four counseling experiences in a clinical setting and the site supervisor must have the appropriate degree.

Students will enroll for four units per semester, for two semesters. Each semester, a total of 140 hours of field experience is required.

**Masters in Counseling (MA Only) Field Experience Hours:** Please note that a minimum of 200 clock hours of field experience under the supervision of an on-site supervisor who holds an appropriate credential, license, or degree.

- A site supervisor must be present during all counseling sessions. Exception: Counseling sessions conducted solely by the MA Only student requires written permission of each adult client and parent/guardian written permission for each juvenile client (see University permission form).
- The MA Only student must receive an average of at least one hour per week of direct site supervisor contact.

Students will enroll for four units per semester, for one semester, for which a total of 200 hours of field experience is required.

**List of Activities:** This is a list of some activities our students have performed. The purpose of the list is to give the site supervisor an idea of our expectations. Please see attached list of suggestions.

**Field Experience Log:** Students are expected to keep a daily log (attached) of activities and includes the date, activities, and number of hours spent at various activities.

**Client Informed Consent Statement/Parent Information:** Students are well informed about the law regulating students' rights to confidentiality. They will keep all information in strict confidence except in cases where (a) child abuse has occurred, (b) there is possible harm to self or others, (c) there has been a violation of law, or (d) consultation with another counselor of psychologist is necessary.

Where needed, students will prepare an Informed Consent Statement for each client in accordance with the specifications of that school district. We also require students to inform parents of the capacity in which they will work with their clients in conjunction with our field experience courses. Of course, you are welcome to modify these statements to conform to your school district's requirements. For PCC and MA Only students, an Informed Consent Statement form issued by CSU Stanislaus will be utilized, in addition to any consent forms that an agency or organization may mandate.

**Contacts Between the Field Experience Instructor and Field Experience Supervisor:** Field Experience instructors will make field site visits during the semester. Additionally, you are encouraged to initiate contact with the faculty as issues or questions arise. Faculty offices are located at California State University, Stanislaus. Our department office number is (209) 667-3364.

The Field Experience Instructor for your supervisee is \_\_\_\_\_  
who may be reached at: Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_