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Counselor Education Program

The Counselor Education Program (CEP) prepares professional school counselors. It is based on a Freirian model of education where everyone has equal responsibility for the success of each class and the program. The CEP fosters networking and cooperation as opposed to competition. The CEP requires high standards of integrity and academic rigor. Since the MEd in Counselor Education is a professional degree, it balances academic rigor with ample practice. The classes require a great deal of reading and are conducted as seminars. Students come to the table ready to integrate their life experiences with their reading in a learning community. The CEP has an emphasis on diversity, culture, language, and issues of privilege and oppression.

Required Texts


Social Justice Teachings of the Catholic Church and Counselor Education Program

**Subsidiarity:** Integrated in each course in the Counselor Education program is a sense of community. Students are guided to respect different perspectives within normed views. By using case study samples, students are exposed to varying situations not otherwise experienced.

**Dignity and rights of children:** The dignity and rights of all University of St Thomas counseling program students, along with the grade school students in which they work with, receive confidentiality, respect and appropriate supervision.

**People have a right to an education:** Equality is a major theme integrated in the Counselor Education program. In each course, equality is stressed as evidenced in courses such as, however not limited to, Cultural Foundations and Multicultural Populations

**General Course Description**

Counseling Practicum is designed as a supervised practical counseling experience which requires an in-depth reflection on the practice of the supervised application of counseling and therapeutic intervention processes in a field setting. Students will demonstrate their ability to use theories, microskills, and appropriate counseling techniques and interventions, through reading, supervision and the actual counseling experience. This course requires both individual and group counseling experiences. Mandatory are 160 clock hours in an approved school counseling setting.

Practicum COUN 5368 has been developed to provide you, the student with a closely supervised counseling experience to facilitate further development as a professional counselor. Practicum students will discuss, reflect on, and evaluate their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses to working with clients. Students are expected to demonstrate their ability to integrate and apply counseling theory and skills in an individual or group sessions, and adherence to the ethical and legal standards of the counseling profession.

Practicum offers the student an invaluable opportunity to increase and improve their counseling skills through professional work experience. It is vital that the student demonstrate awareness that this experience is gained through working with counseling issues via a responsible, professional, ethical and legal standards at all times.

Practicum students will discuss case studies and assigned readings during the practicum seminar. Students will develop technology skills by using the internet to investigate and demonstrate best practices. For all intent and purposes in this class, *best practice* is defined as legal, ethical, and effective practice.
Specific Competencies

Assumptions: Professional counselors will:

1. Apply knowledge, ability, and skill in the areas of human growth and development and in the use of the DSM-V;
2. Know and can apply the counseling skills in the helping relationship;
3. Can work with clients to identify client issues and set goals and objectives clearly and realistically;
4. Understand and is able to practice the counseling process;
5. Understand and access clients appropriately;
6. Are sensitive to issues of diversity and culture and apply their self-knowledge and knowledge of diversity and culture in the counseling relationship appropriately;
7. Is able to accurately self-assess, request assistance, and accept feedback appropriately;
8. Understand the role language plays in counseling, especially when the client’s first language is not English;
9. Are sensitive to issues of first language and apply their knowledge, abilities, and skills of first language issues to counseling;
10. Understand the issues of oppression and privilege and use best practice in working with these issues in the counseling relationship;
11. Have knowledge and skills in social, cultural, and family issues;
12. Apply knowledge and skills of Individual and Group Counseling;
13. Join relevant professional organizations;
14. Have knowledge of and skills to function effectively in the setting in which they are fulfilling the requirements of their counseling practicum, for example, school, agency, hospital;
15. Demonstrate skills and knowledge concerning the ethical use of technology;
16. Are able to be flexible and open to new ideas;
17. Are cooperative with others;
18. Are aware of their own impact on others;
19. Are able to deal with conflict appropriately and effectively;
20. Are able to accept personal responsibility;
21. Are able to express feelings effectively and appropriately;
22. Are familiar with the Code of Ethics of the counseling profession and the legal responsibilities of a professional counselor.

Based on these assumptions, the Learner outcome - Students will:

1. Understand theories of development, personality, and counseling and apply them appropriately to client issues and interventions in counseling;
2. Apply knowledge of the DSM-V when appropriate;
3. Practice the helping skills of unconditional positive regard, empathy, genuineness, and nonverbal and verbal behaviors related to the effective execution of the counseling relationship;
4. Practice the principles of ethics, especially, the primary principle of ethics respect for persons;
5. Engage in a therapeutic alliance;
6. Conceptualize effectively client issues and work effectively with clients to develop goals and objectives;
7. Manage the process of the counseling relationship with its beginning, middle, and end;
8. Use appropriate formative and summative evaluation of their counseling;
9. Engage in review and apply the appropriate assessment instruments with clients;
10. Employ appropriate language effectively in counseling, especially when the client’s first language is not English;
11. Address appropriately issues of diversity, culture, and first language in counseling sessions and in their reflection on counseling sessions;
12. Demonstrate comfort in dealing with issues of oppression and privilege with clients when appropriate;
13. Facilitate group process effectively;
14. Deepen their understanding of societal issues and trends in such a way that they can be effective with clients individually and in groups;
15. Behave with integrity in an ethical and legal manner at all times;
16. Become familiar with the organization in which they fulfill their counseling practicum requirements;
17. Be competent with the sources of information and legal and ethical use of technology;
18. Are able to accurately self-assess, request assistance, and accept feedback appropriately;
19. Be flexible and open to new ideas;
20. Be aware of their own impact on others;
21. Work with and resolve conflict;
22. Accept personal responsibility;
23. Express their feelings effectively and appropriately;
24. Able to adhere to the Code of Ethics of the profession and the legal responsibilities of a professional school counselor;

**Required competencies include but are not limited to the following:**

1. Establishing effective therapeutic relationships through the use of respect, empathy, and genuineness with clients;
2. Assessing clients’ concerns and working with clients for the purpose of setting appropriate therapeutic goals, objectives, and boundaries;
3. Selecting and implementing appropriate counseling strategies;
4. Evaluating counseling progress;
5. Terminating counseling relationships;
6. Demonstrating operational skill using Level 3 responses;
7. Developing competence in giving and receiving professional feedback on counseling performance;
8. Acquiring knowledge, ability, and skill in cooperating with colleague counselors and supervisors;
9. Demonstrating willingness to reflect on their own thoughts, feelings, and behaviors as beginning counselors.

**Pedagogy**

Counseling Practicum uses a Freirian model as its pedagogy. Consequently, the professor believes that students and professor have equal responsibility for the success of this course. Roles are different; responsibilities are equally salient. In addition, the professor believes that pertinent life experiences brought to the table in conversation are essential contributions to the development of the knowledge, ability, and skills needed to succeed in this course. Those who are conversational in more than one language have the opportunity to bring this gift to the table and use this gift to enhance their counseling experience. Since this is the capstone course, the professor expects to see evidence of the knowledge, abilities, and skills mastered in the academic courses of the Counselor Education Program.

The role of students is to be able to demonstrate their mastery of the readings, have knowledge, abilities, and skills from their other counseling courses, and integrate their previous body of knowledge with the Counseling Practicum. In other words, they demonstrate the integration of their
field experiences with all previous applicable academic work and life experiences, as they have
scholarly, professional conversations with their classmates and professor.

Retention

Professional Qualities

For retention in Counseling Practicum and the Counselor Education Program students are required to
“demonstrate the professional qualities and personal commitment necessary for success in a program
designed to develop . . . professional counselors” (School of Education Catalog (2010-2012, p. 2). In
other words, students are required to practice academic rigor, social generosity, and demonstrate the
personal, physical, and mental health expected in the counseling profession. The emotional and mental
health of professional counselors is essential to their functioning in a legal, ethical, confident, and
competent manner. The responsibility of gate keeping on the part of the director of the Counselor
Education Program at the University of Saint Thomas protects the students, the degree, and the
profession.

Integrity

Integrity is the most important quality for success in the Counselor Education Program at the University
of Saint Thomas. Integrity requires students to be authentic and honest in all academic, affective, and
social activities. Integrity implies that students become familiar with and practice at all time the ACA

Professional counselors perform their services in an environment of trust. They have the potential to do
great good and great harm. Integrity is essential for the adequate performance of their profession. The
professor has the discretion to fail students in courses or dismiss students from the Counselor Education
Program for a violation of integrity.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is taking credit for any thought, idea, or written or spoken work that does not come from the
student writing the paper or presenting the oral assignment. Plagiarism is a serious offense against
integrity that will result in students’ failing the course or dismissal from the Counselor Education
Program at the discretion of the professor.

It is very tempting to copy and paste works from the internet, borrow the work of friends, or rephrase
another paper that students have written in the past and then change a few phrases here and there.
Students are required to meet the standards explained in the APA Manual (2010) regarding avoiding
plagiarism. In other words, plagiarism involves copying from a source without using the proper APA
notation.

If quoting no more than 40 words, students are required to use quotation marks and provide sources and
page numbers. If quoting more than 40 words, students must indent and provide the sources and page
numbers. Quotation marks are not used. Mere copying is not considered master’s level work even if it is
noted properly. There must be a one-to-one correspondence between what is cited in the body of the
manuscript and what is placed in the references.

Copying a paragraph or more and changing words here and there is also plagiarism. Paraphrasing a
paragraph or more is also plagiarism. Paraphrasing an idea with proper citing is not plagiarism.
To avoid plagiarism close all sources while writing. Graduate work requires integration of information.
Drawing from one source, then another source, etc. is not graduate level work.
Copying from other papers, which students have written, without using proper APA (2010) notation is also plagiarism. The rules are the same whether students copy from sources they did or did not write. If quoting no more than 40 words, students are required to use quotation marks and provide sources and page numbers. If quoting more than 40 words, students must indent and provide the sources and page numbers. Quotation marks are not used.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of integrity; and, it is not tolerated in the Counselor Education Program. Students who engage in plagiarism have demonstrated that they do not have the moral standards necessary to be trusted with clients. Students who engage in plagiarism will be failed in the course or dismissed from Counselor Education Program.

Success in this course and in the Counselor Education Program requires personal discipline, commitment to academic excellence, and professional development. In addition, success requires focus on excellent performance in all areas of professional practice. Successful students with these characteristics understand what plagiarism is and never plagiarize for any reason.

**Language Diversity**

The Counselor Education Program values the speaking of more than one language. It is especially sensitive to issues of language diversity, both on behalf of students for whom English is not their first language and in preparation to work with clients for whom English is not their first language. The professor is available to assist students who need help with spoken or written English. In addition, it is recommended that students who are bilingual or multilingual bring these gifts to the table in their journey through the Counselor Education Program.

**Americans with Disabilities Act**

In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, the professor will make all possible and reasonable adjustments in policies, practices, services, and facilities to ensure equal and optimal access to educational programs and activities. Whenever a special accommodation is necessary in order to ensure access to full participation by students with special needs, students must inform the professor of any needed accommodations within the first two weeks of the semester. In addition, students must contact the University Office for ADA Compliance (713-525-3162) or email Dr. Rose Signorello signorr@stthom.edu.

It is essential that the professor receive official documentation for any accommodations that are made on behalf of students. When students take standardized Texas State tests for professional school counselor, they will be required to show documentation of accommodations which had been made in graduate school.

**Technology**

Students must have adequate computer and internet capability to complete this class. Failure to submit coursework according to the due dates because of technology difficulties will not be an appropriate excuse. It is the student’s responsibility to maintain appropriate equipment and connection at all times to fully participate in the class.
Drop

If, at any point, you decide to not participate in this course, it is your responsibility to officially drop or withdraw from enrollment. Failure to do so may result in a failing grade. A student may recover all tuition for the current course when proper documentation is received prior to the third day of the current course. Contact both the professor and your academic advisor at:

Course Evaluation

University of St Thomas provides for evaluation of the course and instructor. Specific directions that describe this process will be provided near the completion of the course. Students are requested to complete the course evaluation so that the information can be used for future course planning and redesign based on student needs and suggestions.

Syllabus Subject to Change

While information and assurances are provided in this course syllabus, it should be understood that content may change in keeping with new research and literature and that events beyond the control of the instructor could occur. Students will be informed of any substantive occurrences that will produce syllabus changes.
Course Requirements

Practicum Site Requirements

*Please refer to the COUN 5368- School Counseling Practicum Manual.

**Group:** In this course, you will need to work with a **small group** on a weekly basis over the period of the last **7 weeks** of the course, and see this group at least **seven** times. Sessions should be approximately **30 - 45 minutes in length.** This group can be, but does not need to be, a member of your school population. You will be supported through meetings with your Site-Based Mentor and University Supervisor.

Keep weekly SOAP Notes as part of your Portfolio to turn in at the last class period.

1\textsuperscript{st} meeting: Informed consent, Confidentiality statement, Goals.
2\textsuperscript{nd} meeting: Complete SOAP notes, seek consultation when needed
3\textsuperscript{rd} meeting: Complete SOAP notes, seek consultation when needed
4\textsuperscript{th} meeting: Complete SOAP notes, seek consultation when needed
5\textsuperscript{th} meeting: Complete SOAP notes, seek consultation when needed
6\textsuperscript{th} meeting: Complete SOAP notes, seek consultation when needed
7\textsuperscript{th} meeting: Close the counseling relationship and/or discuss continuing with permission, referring to another counselor, or ending counseling.

**School Counseling Practice Test:** Each student who is graduating with 36 hours must earn an **80%** on the TExES practice test (#152). Students may take the practice test as many times as necessary to earn an 80%. Assessment dates will be announced by the professor on the first day of class.

**Practicum Course Manual:** Students will complete the required documents of the practicum manual on the appropriate days throughout the course. Students will also be required to completed weekly logs that will be signed by the site-supervisor and the university supervisor. Weekly meetings with the site-supervisor are expected and must be properly documented.

**Evaluation and Grading**

Evaluation is based upon class preparedness and engagement and success at the counseling practicum site. Students will demonstrate the ability to reflect on their own thinking, feeling, and behaving as beginning counselors. Students will be successful in the field as demonstrated by the site visits of the professor and the evaluation of the site supervisor.
Assignments

**Participation Responsibilities:** It is very important that you keep up with the assigned readings, lectures, and activities. All assignments, including weekly discussions must adhere to the American Psychological Association (APA) style 6th edition guidelines (APA, 2010).

**Philosophy Paper (12%)**

Students will write a 5-8 page paper titled: *My Philosophy: Implications for me as a Professional Counselor.* This paper **will be written in APA style**, Time New Roman, 12 pt. pitch. **This paper is due May 2, 2018.**

**Weekly Reflexive Journal (12%):**

The weekly reflexive journal should be updated on at least a bi-weekly basis. It should consist of experiences, thoughts, reflections, opinions, and attitudes towards the practicum course and field hour experiences, including meetings with site-based supervisors and university supervisor. Submit this paper in the last week of class.

**Discussion Board (12%):**

The exchange of ideas among peers engaged in scholarly inquiry is one of the key aspects of graduate level learning and is a required in this course.

**Requirements:** You are expected to participate in weekly discussion post. Discussion topics/questions are provided in the Discussion Board area of Blackboard. In addition, you are expected to respond to your fellow students’ postings. To count as participation, responses need to be thoughtful; that is, they must refer to the week's readings, relevant issues in the news, information obtained from other sources, and/or ideas expressed in other class members’ postings. Where appropriate, you should use references to support your position. Please pay attention to the class calendar as discussion questions will be posed ten times through this course. The Discussion questions require an answer; 2 paragraphs long; and a substantial response to three other student’s posting and for full credit.

**Conference Participation (12%)**

Students are **required** to participate in individual face-to-face conferences with the instructor. The times and dates will be pre-established, if the student is not able to meet during the mutually agree time, he/she is responsible for finding someone to switch times with. At least 2 face-to-face meetings are required.

**Video Scenarios (12%)**

As a part of the practicum manual students are required to submit a flash drive containing a mock counseling session. The person acting as the client should come in with a problem appropriate for the age group that the counselor anticipates serving. The topic should NOT be discussed prior to the taping of the session. The session will be scored based off of the counselor intern’s ability to deploy the basic counseling skills. The 5 – 10-minute video will be watched and discussed in class as the feedback will be valuable to everyone. The rubric is located within the practicum manual.
**Intervention Presentation (12%)**

Students will select a chapter from “Counseling Strategies that Work!” and will present in a hands-on, interactive lesson, how to address the topic covered in the text. Students are not required to present the chapter, but rather the expectation is to present a means for a school counselor to handle the particular topic discussed within his/her chapter.

**In Vivo Visits “alive in their natural setting” (12%)**

Students are required to make one visit to three schools other than where they work. One visit must be in an elementary school, one in a middle school, and one in a high school. Students will interview one of the counselors in each school. After each visit, students will write a one-page essay reflecting on their visit. Paper should be written in APA style. **Submit this paper in the last week of class.**

**Final Course Project (16%)**

You will create a portfolio. The final course project will be submitted on final day of class. It will consist of your (1) Summary Practicum reports: Logs & Plans with dates of meetings with Site-Supervisor; (2) Reflexive Journal (at least 14 pages), (3) Philosophy Paper; (4) mid-term & Final evaluations, **signed by your site supervisor**; (5) your evaluation of your site-supervisor; (6) In-Vivo Visit; (7) Intervention Presentation; and (8) Video Scenario.

**Grades**

1. Philosophy Paper 12%
2. Reflexive Journal 12%
3. Blackboard Discussion Board 12%
4. Conference Participation 12%
5. In Vivo Assignment 12%
6. Intervention Presentation 12%
7. Video Scenario 12%
8. Final Course Project 16%

**FINAL GRADE**

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Students will be graded A, B, C, D or F. Grades will depend upon the evaluation given by the site supervisor at the practicum site, the demonstration of knowledge, abilities, and skills. Demonstration of the ability to reflect on one’s own thoughts, feelings, and behavior is essential to successfully completing this course. Achievement of Level 3 responses with clients is a minimum requirement for successful completion of this course.

For a grade of A in this course students will meet the requirements in an outstanding manner. The definition of outstanding is demonstrating more than is expected of a beginning master’s candidate in the opinion of the professor after having taken into consideration the pertinent variables, which are defined as those written into the syllabus.