



MA Counseling Practicum/Internship Handbook

Discover the Counseling Buff in You



Counselor Education Program
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COUNSELOR EDUCATION PROGRAM

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Practicum and Internship Requirements

Students will have the opportunity to use and apply the skills developed in the degree program at their placement sites. Practicum is designed to help students begin to apply theory to practice. Internship affords this same opportunity at a deeper level and is considered an important transitional step between academic training and the world of professional practice.

MA Counseling Program (LPC) Practicum and Internship – Course Requirements

Number of Hours Required for the Course

An LPC track student needs a TOTAL of 300 hours to fulfill the pre-graduation requirements for the LPC in Texas per ([TAC Code 681.83](#)), of the 300 hours, 100 hours must be direct. We recommend students complete 150 hours in practicum and 150 hours in internship. The content in the Practicum and Internship courses are the same for MA counseling students.

Practicum/Internship Hours: Direct and Indirect

Students, site supervisors, and faculty supervisor collaborate to document both the direct counseling and indirect supportive work/hours which includes weekly supervision hours, that students need to successfully complete their Practicum and Internship experiences. Both types of hours are important for students' professional development.

TAC 681.2 (11) **Direct client contact** -Time spent counseling clients.

TAC 681.2 (14) **Indirect hours** - Time spent in management, administration, or other aspects of counseling service ancillary to direct client contact.

All students are required to keep a copy of their log for the board. It is the student's responsibility to share them with the faculty when required for Licensure. In your final semester of Internship, you will submit your accumulative hours for the faculty to sign for your licensure. Students will log these hours using the Excel Spreadsheet provided in WTClass.

Practicum and Internship Policies and Procedures

The Practicum and Internship experiences are critical components in the preparation of professional counselors. The following is information that applies to students regardless of their specialty area.

A Semester Before Beginning Practicum or Internship *

1. Students seek out potential placement sites based on their interest and availability.
2. Students will submit the practicum/internship application prior to registration.
3. Once applications are approved by your adviser, you will be granted access to register for Practicum or Internship.

*If you live in a major metropolitan area, start looking at least a year in advance.

Selecting a Site

Students planning to enroll in COUN 6399 Practicum or 6398 Internship, must seek out appropriate sites to collect experience. While WTAMU Faculty can assist students with necessary referrals, students will be responsible for obtaining and securing a site. Students may consider the following guidelines while securing a field placement site:

1. The Practicum and Internship application is required prior to enrolling in COUN 6398/6399
2. Contact the various sites in your area via email or phone calls. *
* See the FAQ section at end of Handbook for suggestions.
3. On finding a site, be prepared to go through an interview and training requested by the Practicum/Internship site.
4. Once students find a Practicum/Internship site, students will submit the Practicum and/or Internship application.
5. One application needs to be submitted per course, per semester. **Applications are only accepted the first day of registration through the due date period.** The due date period for the Practicum and/or Internship application are:

Summer: April 1st through May 7th

Fall: April 1st through August 7th

Spring: From November 1st through December 7th

Application must be submitted to: counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu Incomplete applications will be returned to the student.

Selecting a Site Supervisor

It is the student's responsibility to seek a qualified site supervisor. As students find a suitable site to gain their clinical experience, they must discuss the following criteria and expectations. Site supervisors must meet the following requirements as set forth by West Texas A&M university:

1. Credentialed as a Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), or Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), Licensed Master Social Worker (LMSW), Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT), or a Licensed Psychologist, with two years of experience after acquiring their full license. (LCDC) by itself does not meet the state or WTAMU requirements.
2. Site supervisors must offer in-person or virtual weekly supervision for at least one hour as well as observe and evaluate students during the course of Practicum and/or Internship.
3. It is preferable that site supervisors have at least two years of professional experience with the student's intended population of interest that semester.
4. Students will verify their site supervisor's licensure information, through an online search at their states Behavioral Health Executive Counsel website: [Verify License](#) collect a screenshot of the licensure information and send it with their Practicum Internship Application to the counseloreducationprogram@wtamu.edu.

Starting Your Practicum/Internship

Insurance Requirements

Counselors are required by law to carry liability/malpractice insurance. As counselors in training are working with clients, practicum students must have insurance coverage in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 incident/\$3,000,000 aggregate. Students enrolled in Practicum must submit a copy of the first page of their current professional liability insurance policy showing the counselor's name, policy number, and date of coverage. Students can purchase insurance online from the American Counseling Association, HPSO or other comparable insurances.

IMPORTANT NOTICE! It is important to consider when you purchase your insurance policy since it is in effect for one year from the date of purchase. If you purchase it early and it terminates coverage before you are done with Practicum and Internship you will be required to purchase more insurance.

Documents to be Submitted before Logging Hours

The following documents must be submitted through your class and approved before logging hours:

1. Practicum/Internship Agreement Form signed
2. Site Supervision Agreement Form signed
3. Liability Insurance
4. Screenshot of site supervisor's credentialing information

Logging Hours

1. Students may log hours for Practicum and Internship starting five days before the first day of class if they have submitted the signed documents listed above to WTCClass and notified that they can begin logging hours.
2. Students are required to receive at least one hour of supervision per week from their site. This is counted as indirect hours.
3. Students are responsible for submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., logs and supervisor evaluations) on the due dates posted in their course syllabi.
4. Arrange a work schedule with the site supervisors. Students are expected to set their daily and semester schedule to be mindful of both their site hours and the university calendar including daily work schedule, holidays, vacation days, etc.
5. Perform site responsibilities in a professional manner.
6. Comply with all legal and ethical regulations; bring all potential ethical and legal issues to the attention of their site and university supervisors. [22 TAC 681.35](#) ; [22 TAC 681.45](#)

Counseling Practicum/Internship Rights and Responsibilities

Student Intern Professional Responsibilities

“Counselors aspire to open, honest, and accurate communication in dealing with the public and other professionals. Counselors facilitate access to counseling services, and they practice in a non-discriminatory manner within the boundaries of professional and personal competence; they also have a responsibility to abide by the *ACA Code of Ethics*.” (American Counseling Association, 2014, Section C) [2014 ACA Code of Ethics](#).

Students maintain a professional image. As counselors, behavior, attire, and attitude reflect upon the department, university, and the counseling profession in general. Consequently, it is important to maintain a professional image for the community, clients, peers, and professors. Several things can be done to enhance the image projected, including, but not limited to:

1. Dress appropriately and professionally when interviewing, visiting the site, or seeing clients.
2. Address Site Staff in a professional manner.
3. Communicate with site personnel using the phone or email to ask for an appointment/interview.
4. Texting is not considered a professional form of communication for setting up an interview.
5. Maintain confidentiality.
6. Follow site protocols regarding emergency procedures.
7. Know and practice within the current [2014 ACA Code of Ethics](#). And [TAC 681](#)

University Supervisor Responsibilities

University Supervisor will:

1. Facilitate communication between university and site.
2. Notify students that they must adhere to the administrative policies, rules, standards, schedules, and practices of the site.
3. Assign a grade of Pass or Fail.

Site Supervisor Responsibilities

Site Supervisor will:

1. Help the intern develop a work schedule that allows them to meet the required internship hours, as well as meet the needs of the organization.
2. Meet with the intern formally at least once per week for an hour.
3. Supervise the intern's work while at the site. Assign professional duties that align with the activities required by the internship handbook, as well as by the site itself for professionals working in the area of concentration.

4. Assist the intern in completing all documentation in a professional and timely manner and sign weekly logs.
5. Notify the university supervisor immediately of any concerns regarding the intern.

LPC Practicum/Internship Paperwork for Class

To be submitted to the WT Class ONLY. Please do not email these. These forms are found in your WT Class.

1. Site Supervision Agreement
2. Practicum/Internship Student Agreement form
3. Practicum/Internship Hour Logs
4. Students are to use the Excel Spreadsheet provided in the current learning platform in both Practicum and Internship to keep a record of logged hours. Students will continue to use the same Excel spreadsheet from semester to semester, so it creates a complete log of all 300 hours for Texas applicants (More hours for some other states). This record will be turned into the LPC board by the student when applying for licensure.
5. Informed Consent Forms for recordings
6. Site Supervisor Evaluation
7. SOAP Note Template
8. Practicum Summary Sheet
9. Program Evaluation
10. Between Semester Policies
11. Temporary Waiver of Supervision Between Semesters

Licensure for Professional Counseling (LPC)

The program is designed to meet the academic and field experience requirements for licensure and certification in Texas. In addition to submitting logs to your instructors and documenting Practicum and Internship hours, all students are responsible for keeping copies of these logs, so they can complete the paperwork necessary to obtain their licensure.

Steps to Apply for licensure – LPC Associate (formerly Intern)

LPC- Associate Online Application:

Follow the instructions at this link:

(<https://www.bhec.texas.gov/texas-state-board-of-examiners-of-professional-counselors/applying-for-a-license/index.html>)

- **BEFORE** accessing the Online Licensing System, you will need to have the following forms completed and scanned into your device to be attached to your electronic application.
- Practicum Documentation Form – This form is completed by the appropriate faculty/administration member of your counseling program and returned to you for inclusion in your application.
- Jurisprudence Examination Completion Certificate – You must take the Jurisprudence Exam prior to submitting your application for license. The exam must be completed no earlier than six months before submitting your application. Upon completion of the exam, you will be issued a certificate.
- Supervisory Agreement Form – This form is the agreement between you and your board approved supervisor. It must be completed by you and signed by both you and your supervisor. Both you and your supervisor must maintain a copy of this form for your supervision.
- Military Service Members, Veterans, and their Spouses – If you or your spouse have qualifying military service, please complete the Military Supplemental Form. You will need to have your DD214 form.
- Additional Documents that must come in from 3rd Parties (cannot be uploaded with app)
- NCE/NCMHCE Scores – If you took the NCE/NCMHCE outside of Texas, please contact NBCC to request a copy of your scores to be sent to our office. If you need to schedule an exam, please contact NBCC as the state licensing board does not administer or schedule the exam. You may register at: <https://www.nbcc.org/licensure/examregistration>.

- National Practitioner Data Bank (NPDB) self-query report – Please request a self-query from the NPDB. This will be mailed to you by the NPDB. You will need to mail us the unopened self-query. Information on NPDB self-query is found [here](#).
- Fingerprinting – Upon submission of your application you will be sent information on getting fingerprinted. The fingerprinting is done electronically, and locations are all over the country. There is a fee paid to the fingerprint facility. Typically, it takes approximately 15 minutes to complete the process of getting fingerprinted.
- Official Transcripts – The board requires submission of official transcripts. These cannot be uploaded with your application. Instead, they must be submitted directly to the board. The board prefers electronic submission but will accept hardcopy transcripts.
- Electronic transcripts should be emailed to: transcripts@bhec.texas.gov
- Hardcopy transcripts should be mailed to:

BHEC LPC Transcripts
1801 Congress Ave, Ste. 7.300
Austin, TX 78701

LPC-Associate Online Application

Once you have all the required documentation saved on your device, proceed to the [Online Licensing System](#).

The user guide for setting up an account and using the online licensing system to apply for an LPC Associate license can be found [here](#).

Frequently Asked Questions: (FAQ)

Where are some places I can seek out for Practicum or Internship?

It is the student's responsibility to find a site. These are suggestions only, the student must vet these to see that they meet the criteria mentioned earlier: Family Support Services; The Bridge CAC (Amarillo) or any Children's Advocacy Center; The Pavilion Mental Hospital; Oceans Mental Hospital; Juvenile Detention Centers; Local Jails; Local Prison Centers, College Student Counseling Centers; Individual or Group Private Counseling Practices; MHMR, more appropriately called TPC or Star HealthCare; Drug and Alcohol Treatment Centers; Amarillo Jr. College, or any Junior College; Boys and Girl Ranches; Suicide Hot Lines, Hospitals; Residential Treatment Centers. There are others...

Can I Change a Counseling Practicum or Internship Site?

If at any given point during the semester, the field placement site becomes problematic, you may consider a change in placement. In such situations the following procedures must be followed:

1. The intern discusses the problem(s) with the faculty of record and the program chair, to determine whether a solution can occur within the existing placement. The Intern may be asked to continue with the placement until the end of the semester, and an agreement may be made that a change of placement will occur for the following semester.
2. If a solution is not found, and a change of placement is necessary during the semester, the request for change of site must be completed by submitting a new application to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu.

Can I change a Site Supervisor?

If a change in Site Supervisor occurs at any time during Practicum or Internship, the faculty of record must be consulted immediately. The new supervisor must meet the requirements mentioned above. A new application with complete details must be submitted to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu before any supervised hours have started.

If a supervisor requests to discontinue supervising a student due to medical or leisure leave, an alternate supervisor must be approved temporarily. The alternate supervisor must also meet the site supervisor requirements set forth for WTAMU site supervisor. Application submission with complete details is required to be sent to: counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu.

What if I don't acquire all of my hours during Practicum and Internship?

One credit course – COUN 6095 - ONLY after the completion of COUN 6399 - practicum and COUN 6398 - internship**:

1. Communicative with course faculty throughout the semester about hours and any struggles
2. For MA Counseling, students can enroll in the one credit hour course ONLY if they have less than 20 direct hours and 40 indirect hours remaining after completing both practicum and internship for MA Counseling. Must have completed tapes in practicum and internship.
3. Students enrolled in the M.Ed. School Counseling & M.Ed. School Counseling + LPC are NOT eligible for the 1 credit hour course for the school counseling practicum
4. Students enrolled in the M.Ed. School Counseling + LPC ARE eligible to enroll in the 1 credit hour course only for LPC hours that are not completed in their LPC Internship class.

****NOTE****

- **The one credit course is NOT a replacement for the three-credit hour practicum and three credit hour internship as required by the degree plan
- **School Counseling practicum hours will not count towards the one credit hour course
- **This course is not eligible for financial aid

What happens if I do not complete my hours by the end of the program?

Following the above instructions, you will either qualify for the one credit class or the three credit class and enroll for another semester until you acquire all 300 hours.

Can I complete 300 practicum and internship hours in one semester?

The state of Texas requires 300 hours (100 direct and 200 indirect). Students have the option to complete all hours in one semester. If a student can complete all their hours in one term, they have two options.

1. Take another elective to complete the degree requirements. All three typescripts and supporting documents would be due in this one course.
2. Take another semester of practicum/internship. Two typescripts and supporting documents would be due in the first practicum or internship, and one typescript and supporting documents would be required in the second practicum or internship.

What if I am seeking an out-of-state licensure?

The MA Counseling program at WTAMU prepares students for licensure in Texas. If students seek licensure in another state, they are required to review and understand the requirements from the state they wish to seek licensure. Students are also required to inform their program advisor and university, of practicum and internship requirements of their state.

Can I remain at my practicum/Internship site between semesters?

Students can remain at their site between semesters, but the hours will not count towards the 300 hours, for example when the Spring semester ends early May, and Summer 1 starts in June. This can only be done if:

1. The site supervisor/site requires the student to remain at the site between semesters.
2. The student understands that the University, College, Department, program, program faculty, and the faculty of record are not liable for any issues between semesters.
3. The faculty of record will not be supervising the students between semesters.
4. The supervision needs would fall completely on the site supervisor.
5. The hours accumulated between semesters will not count towards the 300 hours, 100 direct or 200 indirect.
6. Per TAC rule, these hours will NOT count towards the 3000 hours required as an LPC-Associate upon graduation.
7. The student and the site supervisor submit the form "Temporary Waiver of Supervision Between Semesters" to the faculty of record and counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu two weeks before the end of the semester.

West Texas A&M University
LPC Practicum/Internship Application

Name:	Date:
Email:	Phone #:
WT ID:	Total Hours completed:
Program Advisor:	Prac/Intern Site:
Name of Agency:	Address:
Agency Ph #:	Site Supervisor:
Site Supervisor's Lic #:	Number of years' experience:

Requested Practicum/Internship class and due dates for application, each semester and each site requires a new application.

Deadline for the semester: Summer: May 7th, Fall: August 7th, Spring December 7th

Please Mark your selections below:

Course	Semester	Year
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">COUN 6399 PRACTICUM</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Spring</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 200px; height: 40px;"></div>
Or	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Summer</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div>	
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">COUN 6398 Internship</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div>	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px; display: inline-block;">Fall</div> <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 30px; height: 20px; display: inline-block; vertical-align: middle;"></div>	

By signing below the student and supervisor have discussed the requirements for hours and Typescripts for Practicum and Internship per the program Practicum Internship Handbook.

Site Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

This form must be submitted to: counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu