

An aerial photograph of Westminster College campus, showing several large, multi-story brick buildings with traditional architectural features like gables and dormers. The campus is surrounded by lush green trees and grassy areas. A central courtyard with a circular garden is visible. Parking lots with several cars are scattered around the buildings. In the background, there are more campus buildings and some distant structures.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE Graduate School

Practicum/Internship Handbook

**2020-
2021**

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

New Wilmington, Pennsylvania

2020-2021 Practicum/Internship Handbook

The Graduate School

Thompson-Clark Hall, Second Floor

724-946-7353

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THE COUNSELOR EDUCATION **PRACTICUM**

The practicum and internship are school-based experiential learning courses that serve as the culminating experiences of the student's professional development and are required for certification and/or licensure as a school counselor. These experiences provide the student an opportunity to begin the practice of school counseling services under the supervision of a certified or licensed school counselor in a school setting. More information about practicum and internship requirements is found below.

General School Counseling Practicum Requirements

The School Counseling and Clinical Mental Health Counselor Practicum (CE 981) is a one-semester, 100 clock-hour school-based course, in which the student gains experience in conducting individual and group counseling with students under the supervision of a certified or Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC). The Counseling Practicum class is a required course in Master's Degree program. **Students are permitted to register for the practicum after completing the prerequisite coursework: CE 810 Foundations of Counseling, CE 820 Elementary and Secondary School Counseling, CE 830 Group Counseling, CE 840 Career Development and Counseling, CE 850 Counseling Techniques, and CE 890 Counseling Theories and Practice.** A student must earn above a B minus in all prerequisite coursework to be eligible to begin the practicum. A student must then earn above a B minus in the practicum before being eligible for enrolling in the School Counseling Internship. The Practicum must be successfully completed before enrolling in the Internship.

The primary goal of the practicum is the development of individual and group counseling skills. The development of effective counseling skills requires purposeful, sustained and intensive learning experiences in an authentic setting. As such, the practicum is designed to permit the student to focus solely on counseling skills to the exclusion of the myriad of other skills that are needed to become an effective school counselor. The student will have the opportunity to gain experience in all of the other areas of a school counselor's duties during the internship.

Preparing for the Practicum and Internship

There are a number of steps that students must complete before registering for the practicum. Students must become thoroughly familiar with all program requirements outlined in this handbook and the Graduate Catalog early in their program of studies. All forms can be found on the Counselor Education Graduate Students page on Desire To Learn (D2L) and on www.westminster.edu/academics/graduate.

There are four general steps that a student must take to prepare for the Practicum:

1. Complete all pre-requisite coursework.
2. Schedule an advising conference with The Counselor Education Program Coordinator.
3. Apply for and receive all clearances from appropriate agencies.
4. Complete the Practicum Proposal Form in its entirety.

Prerequisite Coursework

Students must earn a "B" (3.0 GPA) or better in each of the prerequisites to be able to enroll in the CE 981 School Counseling Practicum. A grade of "B minus" (2.7 GPA) or lower will require the student to repeat the class. If a student is unable to meet these grade requirements or elects not to take the School Counseling Practicum, an alternate course may be selected so that the student may graduate with the general Master of Education degree in Education. If a student elects to take an alternative route to the degree must be approved by Counselor Education Program Coordinator.

Pre-requisite Courses:

- CE 810 Foundations of Counseling
- CE 820 Elementary and Secondary School Counseling
- CE 830 Group Counseling
- CE 840 Career Development of Counseling
- CE 850 Techniques of Counseling
- CE 890 Counseling Theories and Practice

Advising Conference

You should begin considering where you would like to complete the practicum and internship upon being admitted to the program. If you work full-time in the school setting, it is likely that you would want to complete the practicum and internship in the building or district in which you work. **If you do not work in the school setting, you should begin discussing potential placements with other students, the Counselor Education Program Coordinator, or teachers and counselors who are working in the schools.** When you decide on which semester you would like to begin the practicum and you have received all the clearances described in

item four below, you should schedule a conference with the Counselor Education Program Coordinator to discuss possibilities and provide official approval for placement.

The Practicum Proposal

A Practicum Proposal form must be completed in its entirety and submitted for review to The Counselor Education Program Coordinator following the advising conference. The form can be found on the Graduate Program website at www.westminster.edu/grad or through the Director of the Graduate School. A sample of this form can be found at the end of this handbook for your review. The deadline for submitting a proposal is November 1 for a practicum that will be completed in the spring semester and March 1 for a practicum that will be completed in the fall semester. The checklist on the form will outline the tasks that must be completed. It is important for students to become familiar with these requirements well before the deadline for submission. You must review the Practicum Proposal form and obtain the appropriate signatures with your school counseling supervisor when you secure a placement.

Securing a Placement

After you have completed the four steps outlined above, you will need to identify a school counselor with whom you would like to work in your practicum and internship.

- Contact the school counselor or LPC with whom you would like to work and make an appointment to meet with them. Explain the requirements of the practicum and internship and ask any questions that you might have.
- To be approved as your site-based supervisor, this counselor must be certified or licensed as a school or professional counselor (LPC), have two years of counseling experience and cannot be a close friend or relative of yours. If you have questions about what constitutes a “close friend,” discuss this with the Counselor Education Program Coordinator.
- When you and the school counselor have mutually decided that you would like to work together in the practicum and internship, you will need to gain the building principal's approval and his/her signature on the Practicum Proposal form. The school counselor will assist you with this form. If the principal has any questions, you may wish to provide him/her with a copy of the training agreement for review.
- The course instructor will meet with you and your new supervisor to review and sign the Practicum Training Agreement at a later date. The course instructor will facilitate this meeting.
- When you receive the school-based supervisor's and principal's explicit approval and signature, you should give the Counselor Education Program Coordinator the fully completed Practicum Proposal form by the deadline noted above for review and approval.

Clearances

Before registering for School Counseling Practicum or Internship, you must submit these clearances to the Graduate Program Administrative Coordinator.

Clearances Needed	When & How to Obtain	When to
Child Abuse (Act 151)	Before submitting the Practicum Proposal Form	Must be renewed annually. http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/background_checks_(act_114)/7493/act_151_(child_abuse_background_checks)/601428
PPD Shot Verification	Your physician	http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/background_checks_(act_114)/7493
PA Criminal History Clearance (Act 34)	Apply online at: https://patch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp	Will be valid beyond one year if you are continuously enrolled and your criminal status does not change.
FBI Criminal History Fingerprints (Act 114)	Apply online at: http://www.pa.cogentid.com	Will be valid beyond one year if you are continuously enrolled and your criminal status does not change.
Signature Page This is your agreement to notify the college if your criminal history status changes.	This form is available at: D2L page	Valid if you are continuously enrolled and your criminal status does not change. \$38

Act 114 of 2006, Section 111 of the Public School Code was amended effective April 1, 2007. The fingerprint-based background check is a multiple-step process: The applicant must register prior to going to the fingerprint site. Walk in service without prior registration will not be provided at any fingerprinting location.

Registration is completed online or over the phone. Telephonic registration is available at 1-888-439-2486, Monday through Friday, 8am to 6pm EST. During the registration process, all demographic data for the applicant is collected (name, address, SSN, etc.) so there is no data entry required at the fingerprint collection site.

A billing account must be established prior to the date applicants go to be fingerprinted. The applicant proceeds to the fingerprint site of their choice for fingerprinting. The location of the fingerprint sites and days and hours of operation for each site will be posted on Cogent Systems' website at www.pa.cogentid.com. Please secure your FBI check immediately, then in 6-8 weeks when your FBI Check results come to you, bring the original to the Graduate Program Secretary for us to copy and keep on file.

Please note that four items are now needed for you to be out in schools:

1. Current PA Criminal History Background Checks
2. PA CHILD ABUSE HISTORY Clearances
3. A negative PPD test result
4. FBI Fingerprint Criminal History Background Check
5. Act 24 Signature Page

Please note that since Westminster is in PA (no matter what state you are from) the PA clearances are needed, as your certification will come from the Pennsylvania Education Department. If a student ends up working in another state, it is likely that the student will need to request additional background checks/credentials.

The Graduate Program Office will maintain a file with your FBI Fingerprint clearance and PA History Clearance information. Students need to apply for these particular processes one time. As long as students are continuously enrolled at Westminster College, the FBI clearance and PA Criminal History Clearance will be valid unless there is a change in criminal history status.

If there is any change in a student's status, the student is obligated to notify our Department of that change and to follow up by requesting and submitting new FBI and PA Criminal History clearances to Westminster's Graduate Program.

Timelines for the Practicum

You should plan to begin the practicum during the first week of class meetings for the semester unless other arrangements are made with the Director of the Graduate School. You should not be working directly with students until you meet with the Counselor Education Program Coordinator and your school-based supervisor after the first Practicum class meeting. Activities during the first week or two of the practicum include becoming oriented to the office, program, staff, faculty and school policies and procedures.

You should plan to **complete the 100 hours of the practicum over the course of the entire semester**. As with any new skill development experience, time and practice are needed. As such, you should not rush this process in an effort to complete the practicum as quickly as you can. The conceptual and executive skills that you will develop are those that require deliberation, reflection and ongoing discussion and supervision. This can only be accomplished if you purposefully pace yourself over the course of the semester. You must complete the 100-hour experience before starting any internship activities. If you are having difficulty in getting students for counseling or conducting a group, you should discuss this *immediately* with the course instructor. On occasion, a student may wish to extend the practicum beyond the semester and can do so with the permission of the instructor. If you experience any problems in your personal life or in the practicum or internship site that interferes with your ability to do what is expected of you, you must discuss this as soon as possible with The Counselor Education Program Coordinator. In some circumstances in which a student is unable to do what is expected, an alternative practicum site may be required.

Training Agreements

The training agreements used in the practicum and internship are used to describe what the student, the supervisor and the College can mutually expect from one another for the duration of the practicum and internship. During the first class meeting, the practicum instructor will arrange to meet with the student and the supervisor at the school. During this meeting, the training agreement will be reviewed and signed by all parties. A similar meeting will be arranged during the first class meeting of the Internship class. A sample training agreement for the practicum can be found in Appendix A and a sample training agreement for the internship can be found in Appendix B. Both forms are posted the program website. You should be thoroughly familiar with the expectations described in these documents. You should not complete an agreement as this will be done in the meeting with your supervisor by The Counselor Education Program Coordinator.

Activities in the Practicum

During the first class meeting for the counseling practicum, the instructor will make appointments to meet with the student and the supervising school counselor to review the training agreement for the practicum. Following this meeting, the site administrator (ie LPC supervisor or principal) will be asked to review this agreement and sign it indicating his or her support of the field experience.

Instructions and expectations about all course requirements will be communicated by the instructor of the class. The class will meet weekly for group supervision for the same amount of time as other classes in the program. Individual supervision for each student is also required in addition to class. Students are required to record counseling sessions to review in group or individual supervision. The video camera is set up to record the pre-service counseling student ONLY. The “client” should not be visible in any frame of the 30-minute video, he/she is only heard. This video is viewed by the pre-service counselor, on-site supervisor, and college supervisor only and its contents will remain confidential. Receiving constructive feedback on the pre-service counselor’s counseling skills and techniques is critical at this stage and a formative part of the learning process. *There is no exception to this requirement.* Under the rare circumstance that the “client”/school will not permit taping of sessions, verbatim typed transcripts may be substituted, but only in extreme circumstances after consultation with the school counselor, principal and/or superintendent.

The practicum is designed to provide an opportunity for students to develop individual and group counseling skills in the school setting under the supervision of a certified or licensed school counselor. The practicum generally is completed in one semester and consists of 100 clock hours of experience, 50 of which are in the direct provision of individual and group counseling with students. The remaining 50 hours are to be devoted to all of those activities that lend themselves to the development of counseling skills, understanding of client problems or concerns, management of the counseling case, case-related research and receiving supervision. Students should not be involved in the other school counseling program activities that are typically conducted by a school counselor such as consultation, program coordination, and classroom guidance during the practicum. These experiences will occur in the school counseling internship.

Students may, at times, begin working on the internship before the end of the semester in which they are enrolled in practicum. An early internship start can only occur if the student has successfully completed the 100 hours in the practicum, gained the explicit approval from the practicum instructor, and can only begin after the tenth week of the semester. An Internship Plan (see below) must be completed and approved by the Counselor Education Program Coordinator. This early start plan is rarely possible for full time teachers due to schedule restraints.

THE SCHOOL COUNSELING INTERNSHIP

The next step in school-based experiential learning is the supervised Counseling Internship. In the internship, the student continues to work on developing individual and group counseling skills that began in the practicum but begins to engage in program coordination, consultation and other related classroom based or clinical activities. It is in the internship that a student has the opportunities to gain experience in all facets of work in a school counseling program.

Activities in the Internship

In the internship, the student will be expected to engage in individual and group counseling, and consultation. Each of these service delivery modes will be aimed at impacting the personal, emotional, academic, and career development of youth & adults. A minimum of 40 percent of the student’s internship time will be in direct contact with youth & adult clients, teachers, parents and administrators delivering these services. The counseling supervisor and student will identify specific activities in each of the delivery modes noted above and will target each area of development noted above. Although the student is expected to contribute to the operation of the counseling program, it must be remembered that the purpose of the internship is to develop new skills and knowledge consistent with master’s degree preparation.

Internship Class

Students should plan to attend the internship class during the first week of the semester. Expectations and procedures for the semester will be reviewed. During the first meeting of the internship, the instructor will make appointments to meet with the student, the supervising school counselor to develop a personalized training agreement for the internship, similar to that of the practicum. The internship class generally meets every two weeks for group supervision and attendance is required. Critical learning incidents encountered in the internship site, assigned readings and other assignments will be discussed during class.

Timelines for Completion of Internship

The practicum and internship are most often completed in the same building under the supervision of the same supervisor. While the 100-hour practicum is completed in one semester, the internship is usually completed over the course of one academic year or two semesters. The total hour requirement is 420 hours. Students often are able to accrue internship hours in the summer before

the academic year begins when the supervising school counselor begins his or her extended contract. Similarly, students may also work in June after the academic year has ended.

The Internship Plan (School Counseling Candidates)

The student will complete an internship plan, in collaboration with the school counseling supervisor and will submit it to the instructor near the end of the practicum. The purpose of the plan is to identify those activities that you and your supervisor hope to complete over the course of the internship. This will provide direction and purpose both to you and your supervisor. The plan should reflect those types of activities that you would like to do, activities that your supervisor believes would be beneficial to you. The plan is meant to be a living document that you and your supervisor will adjust during the course of the internship in response to the needs of the program and unforeseen opportunities that will arise.

The format of the plan is structured on the American School Counselor Association's National Model for comprehensive school counseling program. In this model, counselors engage in four general categories of service delivery activities that include counseling, program coordination, consultation services, and classroom guidance. These services are aimed at facilitating the academic, career and social and emotional development of students.

Internship Requirements for the Ohio K-12 School Counselor License

In Ohio, the School Counselor license is a K-12 credential. As such, Ohio students must complete both an elementary and a secondary school counseling internship in the same manner as students pursuing the elementary and the secondary school counselor certifications in Pennsylvania as described above. The elementary internship is a 300 clock hour experience in a K-6 setting and the secondary internship requires an additional three hundred clock hours in a 7-12 school environment.

Note: OH will permit our students to go through the licensure process in OH with a letter from the Head of our Graduate Studies program stating that they have met all requirements for PA certification for school counseling. Ohio will also accept Praxis II scores so students may choose to complete either the OAE or Praxis II examinations.

Students should follow the directions for registration in the section entitled "3." Registration for Internships for Students Desiring Both PA Elementary and Secondary School Counselor Certifications"

A Note Regarding Authority Related to Pennsylvania Certification and Ohio Licensure

The Counselor Education Program is designed to meet the preparation requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education for the Elementary School Counselor and Secondary School Counselor Certifications and the Ohio Department of Education's preparation requirements for licensure as a K-12 school counselor.

It is important for the student to understand that although Westminster College provides the master's degree program and internship experiences, the respective state boards of education have the ultimate authority in issuing certificates and licenses.

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL
Proposal for Counseling Practicum/Internship
(CE 981/CE 991/CE 993)

This proposal must be completed & submitted to the CE Program Coordinator. Notify Dr. Alison DuBois by email at duboisal@westminster.edu of your intent to make this proposal. Please review the current School Counseling Advising Handbook **before** completing this form. Make sure that **all** information is entered below or it will be returned.

Name: _____ Today's Date _____

Home phone: _____ Work: _____ Cell: _____

Email: _____

Location that you plan to do the practicum and/or internship:

Building Name & District _____

Mailing Address _____

Do you plan to complete the internship at the same site as the practicum? yes _____ no _____.

Proposed Supervising

Name of Building

School Counselor _____

Principal _____

Phone _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Email _____

Check all that apply to you. All items must be checked below for your proposal to be considered.

___ I have read the Counselor Education Advising Handbook, understand the contents and agree to follow all procedures regarding proposing and completing the practicum and internship.

___ The school counseling supervisor has a current certificate as a School Counselor in Pennsylvania or licensure as a School Counselor or Ohio and has at least 2 years of school counseling experience.

___ The building principal is aware of the requirements of the practicum and internship and how I plan to complete the requirements during the school day.

___ I have received the **explicit** permission by the principal of the school to complete the practicum and internship.

___ I understand that I must have personal professional liability insurance, criminal background check, and child abuse history clearance before I begin the practicum.

___ I understand that the School Counseling Coordinator at Westminster will give final approval for placement after consultation with the building principal and/or supervisor as needed.

____ I have completed or will complete the following courses before starting the practicum and have earned a grade of "B" or better in each class: CE 850 Techniques of Counseling, CE 830 Group Counseling, CE 890 Theories and CE 840 Career Development and Counseling. **New:** CE 810 Foundations of Counseling, CE 820 Elementary and Secondary School Counseling, and Passing appropriate Praxis Exams are required for Practica starting in Fall 2011 & beyond.

Student's Signature _____ date _____

Supervisor's Signature _____ date _____

Site Supervisor Signature Indicating
Preliminary Approval of the Practicum _____ date _____

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL
College - School District
Counseling Preparation Memorandum of Agreement

The purpose of this partnership between Westminster College and the designated school district is to collaboratively prepare school leaders within the spirit of the mission statement of the School Counseling Program. The particular emphasis of the collaboration is the improvement of student achievement. This is not a legal document but rather an understanding of cooperation.

The College and the School District will collaborate in:

- Candidate selection
- Program curriculum
- Field experiences
- Internships
- Candidate evaluation
- Post-certification support

Counseling Site Responsibilities

- Select qualified candidates
- Provide qualified mentors
- Enable field experience/internship
- Assist with district or agency specific activities
- Provide feedback
- Support, supervise, and assess interns
- Ensure state-required hours of internship experience are met

_____ School District

District/Agency Representative Signature

District/Agency Representative Name and Title

School

College Responsibilities

- *Admit qualified candidates
- *Train mentors
- *Provide college liaison
- *Coordinate mentor/liaison/student meeting
- *Facilitate internship design
- *Provide feedback
- *Support, supervise, and assess interns
- *Ensure state-required hours of internship experience are met

Westminster College

College Representative Signature

College Representative Name and Title

Date

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL
Counselor Education Program Fieldwork Log

Student Intern: _____ Week Ending: _____

Site Supervisor: _____

District and School: _____

Course: _____ Practicum _____ Elementary _____ Secondary _____

Date	Direct	Indirect	Description of Activities
<p>Total: _____/_____ Cumulative: Direct_____ Indirect_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Total_____</p>			

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Site Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE GRADUATE SCHOOL
Counseling Site Supervisor's Evaluation
Counselor Education CE 981

Student's Name: _____

School Name: _____

Site Supervisor's Name: _____

For each item, please rate the counseling student's skill on a scale of 1 through 4. (Please circle).
 1=Unsatisfactory 2=Needs Improvement 3=Adequate 4=Excellent N/A=Not Applicable

1. Demonstrates evidence of personal organizational skills.	1	2	3	4	N/A
2. Demonstrates proficiency in the organizations and administration of assigned duties.	1	2	3	4	N/A
3. Adheres to the policies, procedures and practices of the school.	1	2	3	4	N/A
4. Demonstrates professionalism; Adheres to professional ethical standards (ACA ASCA).	1	2	3	4	N/A
5. Provides effective individual and group counseling with students; addresses issues in career, academic and social/emotional areas.	1	2	3	4	N/A
6. Provides timely, appropriate and productive individual and group counseling for students.	1	2	3	4	N/A
7. Establishes rapport with students; Builds an environment of trust that facilitates client disclosure; Establishes a working alliance with clients that promotes change.	1	2	3	4	N/A
8. Sensitivity to cultural and gender differences; Relates well to diverse clients.	1	2	3	4	N/A
9. Establishes rapport with school personnel; Appears comfortable interacting with staff members and communicates effectively.	1	2	3	4	N/A
10. Manages crisis situations effectively.	1	2	3	4	N/A
11. Actively seeks supervision from Supervisor when necessary.	1	2	3	4	N/A
12. Receptive to feedback and suggestions from Supervisor; Demonstrates an awareness of areas that need improvement.	1	2	3	4	N/A
13. Successfully implements suggestions from Supervisor.	1	2	3	4	N/A
14. Communicates effectively with Supervisor.	1	2	3	4	N/A

1. Please list your recommendations for student learning. What skills does the student need to work on in the internship?

2. Please describe any concerns that have not been addressed elsewhere in this evaluation. You may also wish to call the Graduate School (724) 946-7353 if you would like to discuss something with the program coordinator privately.

Thank you for serving as this student's supervisor. Please give to student to return to me.
Please sign below after reviewing the evaluation with the student.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

Supervisor's Signature _____ Date _____

CONTACT US TODAY!

WESTMINSTER COLLEGE

319 S. Market Street
New Wilmington, PA 16172

STAY CONNECTED

CALL: 724-946-7353

VISIT: westminster.edu/graduate

EMAIL: graduatestudies@westminster.edu

JOIN THE CONVERSATION

