



THOMAS UNIVERSITY

Division of Counseling and Psychology

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR STUDENTS PLANNING PRACTICUM OR INTERNSHIP FIELDWORK

Students need to work closely with Division faculty to plan field coursework. Each student's needs are different and it is up to the student to communicate with their faculty advisor and TU Fieldwork Coordinator to best meet their needs. Open communication with faculty advisors and the Fieldwork Coordinator will go a long way in ensuring academic success while planning for Practicum and Internship classes.

If a student is planning on enrolling in RCE 680, 681, 682, or 683, he/she must fill out an on-line Intent form no later than eight weeks prior to the start of each semester for each Practicum or Internship class. The Intent form is to be filled out thoroughly addressing all applicable sections. Students are responsible for updating partially completed Intent forms with final site selection information. Students must complete an on-line form for each enrolled semester. The on-line form is located at the Division's webpage under the Internship link:

The Division's fieldwork coordinator is:

Stacie Reilly, sreilly@thomasu.edu
(229) 977-7673

TU's Fieldwork Student Tracking System

Students must submit and receive site supervisor approval for Practicum and Internship fieldwork hours using Typhon. Typhon is an electronic student tracking system for uploading logs and reports. There is a required, one-time fee of \$80.00 to create an initial student profile in Typhon. Students are required to have access before the start of the semester.

Practicum Prerequisites

Students must have the following 12 semester hours completed in the program before enrolling in RCE 680 Counseling Practicum.

RCE 601 Introduction to Counseling

RCE 605	Medical Aspects of Disability
RCE 620	Theories and Techniques of Counseling
RCE 611	Psychological Aspects of Disability

It is strongly encouraged that students be at the end of their coursework prior to enrolling in fieldwork in order to have the best experience on site!

Practicum Requirements

Practicum fieldwork students are expected to complete a 100 hour commitment. The 100 hours can be broken down according to the semester. 40% or 40 hours must be direct client contact with persons with a physical or mental health disability. **Please See Table***

Semester	Fall	Spring	Summer
Total Hours	100	100	100
Average Hours Per Week	6.5	6.5	10
Weeks Per Semester	16	16	10

***Students who will be enrolled in Internship I or II over the summer semester may have to plan to accrue additional hours in the Fall/Spring semester in which he or she is enrolled in Internship in order to complete all 900 hours.**

Internship

Students enrolling in Internship must have completed RCE 680 Practicum.

Internship Requirements

Internship fieldwork students are expected to complete a 900 hour internship. The 900 hours can be broken down according to the semester. 40% or 360 hours must be direct client contact hours with persons with a physical or mental health disability.

Please See Table*

Semester	Fall	Spring	Summer
Total Hours	450	450	450
Average Hours Per Week	28	28	40
Weeks Per Semester	16	16	10

The Process:

1. Student registers for a fieldwork course with his/her Faculty advisor and conducts research within their local community for possible site selections. The Thomas University (TU) Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator is available

to consult on site options.

2. Student submits an on-line Fieldwork Intent form (no later than eight weeks prior to the semester start).
3. The TU Counseling Fieldwork Coordinator will review the Intent form to assure suitability and will notify the student if approval is granted and will initiate a Memorandum of Agreement with the site supervisor.
4. Upon site approval, the student will proceed with completion of the Fieldwork Agreement form. This form requires signatures of the student and the site supervisor. It must be completed no later than the end of the first week of class.
5. The student will purchase Typhon access in order to submit and obtain approval of weekly fieldwork hours.
6. The student will join the faculty supervisor's on-line course on the first day of the semester and will participate in required, weekly, supervision sessions throughout the semester.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

Students must purchase professional liability insurance prior to fieldwork initiation. Professional liability insurance protects professional practitioners against the unlikely event of negligence claims made by patients/clients. One year of coverage can be purchased at a student rate for a nominal charge. Students may look into discount options for professional liability insurance through association membership (NRA, NRCA). The following are provided as options to consider:

<http://nrca-net.org/insurance.html>

<http://www.hpsso.com/students/studentindex.php3>

www.proliability.com

Students must keep a copy of their liability coverage to be made available upon request by either the collaborating agency or Thomas University. Students **must** also email a copy of their liability insurance to the following Thomas University representative:

Candace Strickland
Administrative Assistant
Division of Counseling and Psychology
Thomas University
cstrickland@thomasu.edu

It is imperative that a copy of every student's Liability Insurance be kept on file at Thomas University while the student is enrolled in school. The student is also responsible for their yearly renewal of liability insurance.

SITE SELECTION

While some students have a planned site at which to conduct Practicum or Internship, others do not. After completing the Intent form online, the Field Coordinator will begin work with those students who have not determined a site. It is the job of the Field Coordinator, upon request, to provide suggestions to the student as to where to do fieldwork. It is the student's responsibility to reach out to the agencies in their community to set up a site, determine orientation procedures, etc. It is important to note that the student must be able to begin their field hours at an approved site **by the first week of class** with few exceptions.

Each agency has unique procedures related to interns and processes can take several days – sometimes weeks. If a student is not in a position to begin fieldwork hours the first week of school, the student may be asked to drop the class.

Occasionally, employed students are able to customize work duties with their supervisor's approval allowing fieldwork to take place at the employment site. It is important to note that this type of arrangement can only be approved if alternative duties (different from the regular work assignment) can be implemented providing new learning opportunities for the student. The following site requirements apply to these arrangements.

Site Requirements

Appropriate sites will have programs of counseling or rehabilitation services designed to ameliorate the conditions of individuals with counseling needs, disabilities (physical, developmental, emotional, mental, forensic, substance abuse, dual diagnosis, etc.) as well as individuals from other at-risk populations (ex-offenders, delinquents, the elderly, persons who are socio-economically disadvantaged).

Students with a Site Selection

If a student has already conducted research into a site that will be appropriate for their practicum or internship experience, the student must specify this on the Intent form. It is imperative that students provide the agency information on the Intent form and fully describe anticipated duties. Even if a student continues with the same agency for another semester, the student will still need to complete an Intent form for each new semester.

Site Undetermined

If a student does not have a site selected or pre-arranged, the student will need to indicate potential sites in their community on the Intent form. The Field Coordinator will work with the student to make initial contact to solidify a practicum or internship site. If the student does not have any resources or ideas for a potential site, the student must indicate so in the Intent form. The Field

Coordinator will then attempt to assist the student in coming up with a list of potential sites that fit with student interest, geographical location, etc. The primary responsibility for site arrangement rests with the student, but the Field Coordinator is there to assist.

Things to Keep in Mind

For students just beginning to explore fieldwork options, consider calling the agencies of interest from a vocational perspective. Mental health centers, vocational programs for persons with developmental disabilities, substance abuse programs, public and private vocational rehabilitation – all of these are examples of places to consider and contact in preparation for fieldwork courses. The most challenging fieldwork opportunities to set up are those that need to take place at night or on the weekends (to accommodate a student's full time employment schedule). Students in this situation are advised to build in extra time to secure a site.

Many students may be interested to know that most states have internship programs within their public vocational rehabilitation (VR) system. These programs do require lead-time and chances for participating in an internship are stronger for students willing to work in a variety of offices. Again – the key is to prepare and act early.

Please note that state VR programs often prefer to accept an intern in the final semester of the graduate program.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Some sites have additional requirements for fieldwork participation (e.g., First Aid Certification, Immunizations, Background Checks). Fees associated with site requirements must be covered by the student.

Fieldwork students will participate in weekly supervision with both the site as well as the faculty supervisor. To participate with fellow students in weekly, on-line faculty supervision, students need the necessary computer hardware/software. Specifically, students must be able to join Zoom meetings for the course and should have an available webcam. Students with questions related to these hardware/software requirements should check with the University's student IT support division.

Students also need to complete case logs throughout the semester on a weekly basis. Case logs will be completed using a specific format on Typhon and will be explained thoroughly at the start of the Practicum semester. This format will be followed throughout the fieldwork experience.

NOTE: Students who do not file an Intent form in accordance with the required timeframes may jeopardize options for Practicum or Internship fieldwork in the upcoming semester. If accommodations are needed to complete Practicum or Internship fieldwork, a letter specifying the type of accommodation(s) needed

should be provided along with the Intent form. Students without an internship site initiated and underway by the 5th day of class will be required to drop the course, with few exceptions.

Questions should be communicated through e-mail to sreilly@thomasu.edu.

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(229) 977-7673

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