

Thomas University Fieldwork

Division of Counseling & Psychology

Practicum and Internship Site Selection – Information and Tips
for Success

Fieldwork is an Important Part of your Graduate Program

- Now that you have completed some, or most of your coursework, you are ready to gain practical experiences in a supervised setting.
- Fieldwork includes *Practicum* and two *Internship* courses. *
- As a new fieldwork student, you will “get your feet wet” with *Practicum*.
- Later, you will deepen your fieldwork experiences with *Internships I and II*.

*The Addictions & Alcoholism Counseling Specialization requires an *Internship III* course

Required Hours

Practicum:

- **100** total hours
- 6-7 hours/week -- fall or spring semester
- 10 hours/week --summer semester

Internship (I & II)

- **450** hours each
- 28 hours/week -- fall or spring semester
- 40 hours/week --summer semester

40% of the total hours must be spent providing direct services to persons with physical and/or mental disabilities utilizing graduate counseling skills

Site Supervisor – Required Qualifications

- TU asks that site supervisors employed by a counseling and/or rehabilitation program:
 - * Hold a master's degree in counseling or a related profession with equivalent qualifications.
 - * Hold appropriate professional licenses and/or certifications.
 - * Have **two years** of professional experience in alignment with the student's program.
 - * Obtain knowledge of the program's expectations (through completion of the Fieldwork Agreement form).
 - * Have appropriate training in counseling supervision

Typhon

- Students are responsible to purchase a Typhon account to log fieldwork hours.
- This web-based program saves time and resources and allows students, and their site supervisors, to log and approve weekly hours.
- There is a one-time \$80.00 fee for Typhon – once an account is created it can be used throughout all fieldwork courses.
- Student Typhon accounts must be ready to use by the first week of the semester.

Fieldwork Succession

- Practicum (100 hours) is always the first course taken and must be completed in its own semester. Additional hours accrued over the 100 required hours cannot be counted toward internship.
- Internship I (450 hours) is then completed followed by Internship II (450 hours)
- Internship III (450 hours) is required for students specializing in Addictions and Alcoholism Counseling

Steps in the Fieldwork Site Selection Process

1. Submit on-line Fieldwork Intent Form at (at least 8 weeks prior to the semester). Form is found on the program website under the Fieldwork Link.
2. Register for fieldwork course with Division advisor.
3. If site is not known, conduct research in local community for possible site options. The Thomas University (TU) CMHCRC Fieldwork Coordinator is available to consult on site options.

Contact the Division of Counseling & Psychology to get the name and number of the TU Fieldwork Coordinator.

Steps in the Fieldwork Site Selection Process, continued

4. Once the site has been tentatively selected and the information is provided on the on-line Fieldwork Intent Form, the TU Fieldwork Coordinator will review the information to ensure suitability. If approved, the student will be notified.
5. Student registers for and pays a one-time, \$80.00 fee for Typhon, TU's fieldwork web tool for fieldwork hour tracking. Once registered for Typhon, the access will apply to all fieldwork courses. Student must be registered before the first week of the semester.
6. The agency/site supervisor and the student will be provided with the Fieldwork Agreement form outlining expectations for the semester. This form requires signatures of the student and the agency/site supervisor. It must be completed no later than the end of the second week of class. The Fieldwork Coordinator will seek to secure a Memorandum of Understanding with the site.

Site Selection Basics

- Plan early!
- Site logistics can take several weeks
 - Many agencies have requirements such as First Aid Certification, Immunizations, Background checks, trainings etc.
- Students participating in a fieldwork course while working full-time may need to plan on extra time to locate a site

Agencies to Consider

- Mental Health Centers
- Substance Abuse Programs
- Vocational Programs for Individuals with Developmental/Intellectual Disabilities
- Crisis Centers (24-hour crisis lines, domestic violence shelters, etc.)
- State Vocational Rehabilitation Programs
- Transitional Housing Programs

Site – Place of Employment

- Some students accomplish fieldwork hours at their place of employment
- This arrangement requires the student to customize fieldwork duties with their supervisor that are distinct from regular work duties so that “new learning” takes place
- Approval will be based on a review of a written description of fieldwork and regular work duties provided by the student

Liability Insurance

- Students are responsible to purchase/hold liability insurance throughout all fieldwork courses
- A copy of the coverage needs to be sent to the Division or uploaded to Typhon and must be available upon request by the fieldwork site/agency
- Options:
 - <http://nrca-net.org/Liability1.html>
 - <http://www.hpsso.com/students/studentindex.php3>
 - www.proliability.com
- Graduate students joining the American Counseling Association may be eligible for liability as part of membership
 - <http://www.counseling.org/membership/aca-and-you/students>

Plan ahead!

- It's never too early to begin exploring sites. Site selection should start no later than 8 weeks prior to the approaching semester.
- A site needs to be confirmed and in place by the start of the semester allowing the student to begin fieldwork hours immediately.
- Students unable to start their fieldwork hours within the first week of the semester may be dropped from their course.
- The Fieldwork Coordinator is available to brainstorm options.

Technical Assistance/ Support

Thomas University

Fieldwork Coordinator

229-226-1621

Division of Counseling & Psychology