



Thomas University Fieldwork

Division of Social and Behavioral
Science

Masters of Science in Counseling

Practicum and Internship Site Selection – Information and Tips

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 begin with Practicum, later you will deepen your fieldwork experience with Internships I and II.

*The Addiction Specialization requires Internship III

Fieldwork Placement Settings

- The Master of Science in Counseling program offers 4 specialization areas: (1) Clinical Mental Health Counseling; (2) Clinical Rehabilitation Counseling; (3) Addiction Counseling; and (4) Professional School Counseling.
- The fieldwork placement chosen must be in the specialty area pursued and supervised by someone with the credentials related to that specialty.
- Professional School Counseling students must make sure that their fieldwork experience rounds out the requirement of experiencing all the grade bands (PreK-2; 3-5; 6-8; 9-12) over the course of the program.
- * Any student wishing to pursue TWO separate specializations must complete not only the coursework for both specializations, but a full fieldwork experience in both specialties (900 hours).

Required Hours

Practicum

- 100 Total hours
- 6-7 hours/week (Fall or Spring)
- 10 hours/week (Summer)

Internship (I & II)

- 300 Hours each
- 18.75 hours/week (Fall or Spring)
- 30 hours/week (Summer)

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 students program.
 - Obtain knowledge of the program's expectations (through completion of the Fieldwork Agreement form).
 - Have appropriate training in counseling supervision

Experiential Learning Cloud (formerly Tevera)

- Students are responsible to purchase a ELC 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 \$200 fee for ELC.
 - Once an account is created it can be used throughout all fieldwork courses, and beyond into your professional career.
 - If purchased via the TU bookstore the cost is \$267.
- Student ELC 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 (300 hours) is then completed followed by Internship II (300 hours)
- Internship III (300 hours) is required for students specializing in Addictions and Alcoholism Counseling
 - *Make sure your state does not require a practicum that is above 100 hours (i.e. South Carolina requires a 150-hour practicum)

Steps in the Fieldwork Site Selection Process

1

- Register for fieldwork course with Division advisor

2

- If a site is not already identified, conduct research in your local community for possible site options. The Thomas University Fieldwork Coordinator is available to consult on site options. Remember the site must compliment your specialty area.

3

- Once the site has been tentatively selected and the information is provided in the Fieldwork Intent Form in ELC, the TU Fieldwork Coordinator will review the information to ensure suitability. If approved, the student will be notified and able to move on to the next steps of Fieldwork onboarding paperwork.

4

- Student will add their site and site supervisor in the site placement environment in ELC, complete the Fieldwork Agreement and the MOU with their site. Only an appropriate site supervisor can be selected to complete these forms.

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 Fieldwork courses while working full-time may need to plan on extra time to locate a site, and may need to adjust their work schedule accordingly to be on site for the required amount of hours. You will need to be available to be on site during working hours so plan ahead for this change!

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 uploaded to ELC and must be available upon request by the fieldwork site/agency

- Options:
 - <https://www.hpso.com/>
 - <https://www.counseling.org/membership/liability-insurance>
 - <https://www.proliability.com/>
- Graduate students joining the American Counseling Association may be eligible for a discount 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 be settled 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 Support

Thomas University Fieldwork Coordinator
vroberts@thomasu.edu

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ELC Support

ELC has a help link to help troubleshoot problems.
The Counseling Connections Shell has a detailed step
by step instructional Powerpoint to guide you
through all the onboarding steps for fieldwork if you
need assistance.