

INTERNSHIP FAQ'S

Why should I choose the UWG Counseling Center for my practicum/internship site?

SHORT ANSWER:

- Real, live, one-on-one counseling with 12-14 clients weekly
- Co-therapist in a counseling group
- Participate in outreach and psychoeducational programming
- Excellent supervision from LPC's who are also Approved Clinical Supervisors
- On-site supervision and availability of supervisors for consultation or emergencies
- Individual Office with computer, sofa and chair, desk, panic button
- Easy to work with clinical team and outstanding front office support

LONGER ANSWER:

One of the greatest advantages of choosing the Counseling Center for your practicum/internship is you get to do actual, one-on-one counseling with clients. Because there are no restrictions on the number of sessions a client may receive, you will have opportunity to do long-term counseling with some clients. This is a rarity as most sites have limits to the number of allowable sessions or have time limits based on the program or ability of the client to pay. Since the Center does not bill insurance, your focus will be on becoming the best possible counselor you can, not on record keeping and insurance compliance.

Another advantage is the quality and amount of supervision you will receive. You will have a minimum of 3 hours of supervision weekly, but the staff counselors have an "open door" policy and are available for impromptu consultation and supervision when they are not with clients. There are always licensed counselors on site and available in case of emergency or if you feel you are suddenly in over your head with a client. The supervising clinical staff are all NBCC Approved Clinical Supervisors (ACS) and have extensive experience providing supervision. All of the Center's Counselors are experienced clinicians.

Each intern will have a private office in which to work. Each office is equipped with a comfortable sofa and chair or loveseat, a desk, computer, phone and emergency panic button. You will be provided a digital recorder so you do not need to provide your own equipment. You will have your own mail box, you will have access to other office equipment if needed and an outstanding and competent front office staff to assist you as needed.

Additionally, you will have opportunity to work as a co-therapist in a counseling group, to participate in outreach and psychoeducational programs, free membership in the Georgia College Counseling Association and the opportunity to attend the annual conference on St. Simons Island. And finally, you will find that while the staff take their work and profession very seriously, they are very supportive, encouraging and easy to work with. (See “What is the Mission of the Counseling Center”)

How do I apply?

SHORT ANSWER:

- Complete an application packet consisting of a personal statement, letter of reference and personal information sheet.
- Schedule a meeting with the Assistant Director for Training
- Interview

LONGER ANSWER:

There is an application process that involves writing a personal statement, providing a letter of reference from your professor that taught CEPD 6140 Introduction to Counseling Practice, and a meeting with John Frevert, Assistant Director for Training. You will need to submit the personal statement and reference letter prior to meeting with John. After that meeting, if you continue with the application process, an interview will be scheduled with the staff of the Counseling Center.

Are there any prerequisites?

SHORT ANSWER:

- Yes.

LONGER ANSWER:

You must have taken CEPD 6140, Introduction to Counseling Practice. There is no course equivalent in psychology. It is preferred that you also have taken Group Counseling.

Am I guaranteed a practicum/internship placement if I apply and interview?

SHORT ANSWER:

- No. It's competitive

LONGER ANSWER:

No. The selection of students for practicum/internship is competitive. There are always more applicants than there are available positions. Selection is done by group consensus of the staff using multiple criterion, including "fit" with staff and other interns, your readiness to work with clients and your ability to be successful as part of our team.

How long is the practicum and internship?

SHORT ANSWER:

- 2 semester minimum, 3 semesters strongly preferred

LONGER ANSWER:

Most students complete 3 or more semesters at the Counseling Center. There is a 2 semester minimum you must be able to commit to, however, preference in the selection process will be given to students able to commit to 3 or more semesters. Learning to become a counselor is a developmental process that requires time, supervision, and consistent practice.

How will my schedule work and how many clients will I see?

SHORT ANSWER:

- 20 hours/week are required; you will see 12-14 clients weekly. Clients will be assigned.

LONGER ANSWER:

You are required to be at the Center 20 hours/week. As part of those 20 hours, you will have 2 hours of group supervision and 1 hour of individual supervision. You will likely also be scheduled to co-lead a themed counseling group 1 time a week. There will be additional supervision for that group. You will work out your scheduling with our Office Manager, and your schedule will stay the same throughout the semester. Clients will be scheduled for you after their intake with a staff counselor. Clients can be scheduled for bi-weekly appointments (every other week), or weekly depending on their needs. You will likely see 12-14 clients a week, more if they are scheduled bi-weekly. You will meet or exceed requirements for licensing.

What kinds of issues and concerns will my clients have?

SHORTER ANSWER:

- About 60% of clients present with anxiety and/or depression. But if it's in the DSM 5, It's possible you will encounter it at some point with clients.

LONGER ANSWER:

The majority of students seen at the Center present for issues related to depression and anxiety. However, you are likely to encounter students who have issues of substance abuse, family of origin problems, physical and sexual abuse, bi-polar disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorders, personality disorders, suicidal ideation, etc. You will also encounter issues and concerns related to adjusting to college life and meeting common developmental needs of this age group. Essentially, if it's in the DSM 5, it exists among our student body. During your first semester, clients will be selected for you that will be able to benefit from a creating a solid counselor-client relationship and the use of foundational counseling attending skills.

What will my supervision be like?

SHORT ANSWER:

- In your first semester, you will focus on mastering foundation counseling skills of reflection, summary, clarification, restatement, use of silence, appropriate questioning, timing and pacing.
- Supervision is a 2-way discussion and you will review recorded sessions with your supervisor as part of that discussion.
- Becoming a counselor is a developmental process and cannot be rushed.
- Supervision can be challenging.

LONGER ANSWER:

During your first semester at the Counseling Center, you will be limited in the skill set you are able to use with your clients. Until you demonstrate mastery and consistency using foundational attending skills--reflection, summary, clarification, restatement, timing, pacing, use of silence, appropriate and minimal use of questions – your supervision will focus almost entirely on helping you achieve proficiency with those skills. Each of your counseling sessions will be recorded and you will review those sessions with your supervisor as part of the supervision process. You will also present a case for group supervision several times a semester. Critique and input offered to you will be focused primarily on your level of readiness and skill development. In other words, supervision will meet you where you are in your own

growth and development as a counselor. The supervision process is intended to be a respectful 2-way discussion, and while supportive and helpful in nature, supervision can often feel challenging to an intern. You are strongly encouraged to discuss with your supervisor any feelings that might arise as part of the supervision process. This too, is part of becoming a counselor.

Learning to become a competent and able counselor requires time, quality supervision and consistent practice. Becoming a counselor is a developmental process that varies for each person, but which also follows a predictable course. Trying to complete more hours or training in a shorter time does not allow for successful learning and growth. Trying to speed up your practicum and internship would be like trying to speed up adolescence. It simply can't be done and will be different for different people.

What about the practicum/internship class I have to register for?

SHORT ANSWER:

- If you are in the College of Education, you register for the course section taught by Dr. Lisa Adams-Somerlot.
- If you are in Psychology, you will need to discuss how supervision will work for you in that department.
- You are not permitted to present recorded sessions outside of the Counseling Center and you are limited in what you may share about your clients to other students.

LONGER ANSWER:

If you are in the College of Education, you will register for the section of the practicum or internship course taught by Dr. Lisa Adams Somerlot. The academic content and requirements for the class will be met as part of the group supervision meeting in the Counseling Center. If you are in the Psychology Department, you will need to work out your supervision requirement for your department with your faculty. However, session recordings and client information cannot be shared outside of the Counseling Center. This will limit what you are able to share with other students who are in the practicum or internship class. Most often, the Psychology Department's supervision requirement is fulfilled by meeting one-on-one with your faculty supervisor. In the event you receive differing guidance from your faculty supervisor than from your site supervisor, you will follow the guidance of your site supervisor as you are working under his or her license.

Do I have to have insurance?

SHORT ANSWER:

- Yes.

LONGER ANSWER:

Yes. While practicing at the Counseling Center as a student registered for a practicum/internship class, you are covered under the University's insurance. However, for your own protection, you must carry your own insurance as well. You will have to provide proof of your insurance to the Counseling Center. There are several insurance providers you may choose; we suggest HPSO as it is endorsed by the American Counseling Association.

Will the Counseling Center communicate with my professors?

Short Answer:

- Yes.

LONGER ANSWER:

Yes. The practicum/internship is an academic class and as such you are responsible for meeting the academic requirements of your department and as stated in the syllabus. There is open communication between our staff and academic departments, and we often communicate your progress and challenges to the appropriate faculty member.

Are there any costs? Do I need to buy anything?

SHORT ANSWER:

- Only your insurance

LONGER ANSWER:

The only thing you need to pay for is your insurance. All office needs, including the digital recorder are provided. On occasion, you may be required to purchase a book to compliment specific training topics, but efforts are made to find resources that are not cost prohibitive.

I have seen or am currently seeing a counselor in the Counseling Center. Will that affect my ability to do a practicum/internship at the Center?

SHORT ANSWER:

- It's possible.

LONGER ANSWER:

The counseling staff are sensitive to the complexity of this particular issue. As counseling is a service available to any registered student, you cannot be denied access to this service. However, it is possible that your relationship with your previous or current counselor could create a dual relationship which could impact your work and training as a practicum or internship student.

Your counselor, whether previously or currently, will be part of the interview and selection process. Content you have shared with that counselor will not be shared with the other staff, but that counselor, like the rest of the staff, will evaluate your readiness and appropriateness for the position. If you are currently working a counselor, you will have the options of changing to a counselor at the center who is not involved in the supervision process, seeking an outside therapist at your expense, or seeing a counselor at the Employee Assistance Center free of charge. The EAP can only provide short-term counseling, likely 6-8 sessions.