

TRUMAN STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES AND EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

PROPOSED MASTER OF ARTS IN SCHOOL COUNSELING PROGRAM
EVALUATION AND RETENTION PROCEDURES

Evaluation will be an ongoing part of the student experience in the School Counselor Program. The faculty are committed to giving students ongoing feedback as to their academic, personal, and professional performance in the program. Evaluation is accomplished in the following ways:

1. Course grades
2. Admittance to Internship
3. Completion of Internship
3. Comprehensive Exam
4. Completion of Digital Portfolio
5. Completion of PRAXIS II (School Counseling)

Academic performance will be evaluated primarily by course grades and the comprehensive exam. Professional performance and personal suitability for school counseling will be evaluated prior to enrolling in COUN 668G: Internship and throughout the Internship, based on evaluations of the students counseling practice by Counseling faculty and on-site supervisors. These procedures are further explained below.

COURSE GRADES

The requirements and criteria for receiving course grades will vary from course to course and instructor to instructor. These procedures will be explained in each course and on the course syllabus for each course. If a student is unclear about the criteria for evaluation in a particular course, the instructor should be consulted.

ADMITTANCE TO THE PRACTICUM AND INTERNSHIP EXPERIENCES

Only students admitted to the Master of Arts in School Counseling Program at Truman State University may enroll in the clinical experience. During the Internship the Counseling student will be working as a school counselor. The faculty of the Counseling Program must assume responsibility for the performance of the student while in these settings. We, therefore, are concerned that certain criteria are met by all students participating in the Internship.

Students admitted to the Internship experiences will have exhibited:

1. proficiency in basic counseling skills;
2. adequate academic preparation;
3. personal maturity;
4. professional conduct;
5. knowledge of the ethical code.

Suitability for the Internship will be determined by the student and the faculty prior to the completion of The Counseling Relationship I course and prior to the student enrolling in the Internship. The counseling faculty and the student will meet together to accomplish three objectives:

1. to discuss the student's strengths and weaknesses as a potential school counselor;
2. to develop a personal and professional plan with the student;
3. to determine the student's internship status. (admitted, provisionally admitted, not admitted)

As a result of this meeting, students will be admitted to the Internship, provisionally admitted (admitted upon the meeting of certain specific criteria determined at the meeting) or not admitted.

The not admitted status means the student is not prepared for the Internship experience and the necessary preparation will take a considerable amount of time and commitment. Such students will be provided with help in developing a remediation plan or in finding a more suitable career option. Possible remediation options are described below.

REMEDICATION OPTIONS

Periodically students have difficulties in attaining proficiency in both basic and advanced counseling skills. Reasons for such difficulties may include, but are not limited to, personal attributes inconsistent with those necessary for the practice of counseling, difficulties integrating theory and practice, and/or personal trauma. In many instances, a period of remediation may help a student overcome some of these difficulties and prevent removal from the program.

By developing a set of concrete procedures concerning the process of remediation, much of the stress, fear, and embarrassment can be eliminated. In many cases, problems can be detected during The Counseling Relationship I class and remedial actions will be taken prior to the student's entering Internship. However, this is not always the case. In the case of a more advanced student being identified as needing remediation, several complex questions must be addressed. Not the least of which is incorporating both faculty and site supervisory feedback. The following are some of the possible remedial options.

Option #1

The student is required to desist in the accumulation of all clinical hours. The student is required to enter into a period of intensive training with a faculty supervisor and/or supervisors to eliminate any and all deficits in counseling skills (including process, conceptualization, and personalization skills). The student must demonstrate satisfactory progress in eliminating identified deficiencies prior to returning to their clinical setting and the continued acquisition of clinical hours.

Option #2

The student is required to desist in the accumulation of all direct contact clinical hours. The student may continue to collect indirect contact hours at their chosen clinical setting with the permission of the site supervisor. The student is required to enter into a period of intensive training with a faculty supervisor and/or supervisors to eliminate any and all deficits in

counseling skills (including process, conceptualization, and personalization skills). The student must demonstrate satisfactory progress in eliminating identified deficiencies prior to returning to the clinical setting and the continued acquisition of direct contact clinical hours.

Option #3

The student is allowed to continue accumulating clinical hours toward the completion of the Internship. The student, however, is required to enter into a period of intensive training and supervision with a faculty supervisor and/or supervisors to eliminate any and all deficits in counseling skills (including process, conceptualization, and personalization skills). The student must demonstrate satisfactory progress in eliminating identified deficiencies prior to terminating intensive training or supervision. If sufficient progress is not attained, more restrictive options will be considered which include the termination of accumulating clinical practice hours.

Option #4

The student enters into a period of probation in which the student may continue accumulation of clinical hours. The student will be required to participate in additional supervision and intensive evaluation and feedback procedures to eliminate any and all deficits in counseling skills (including process, conceptualization, and personalization skills). The student must demonstrate satisfactory progress in eliminating identified deficiencies prior to terminating additional supervision and evaluation procedures.

Option #5

The student is required to enter into a period of remediation which may include any combination of above measures in addition to other measures as contracted with Counseling faculty, including, but not limited to the following:

- 1) personal counseling for a pre-determined period of time.
- 2) collaborative conferences with both faculty and site supervisors to monitor and evaluate progress.
- 3) written and/or oral projects designed to demonstrate progress in an identified area of requisite competency.
- 4) intensive live supervision.

*** In each case, failure to provide evidence of satisfactory progress may result in the utilization of more intensive and restrictive measures of remediation OR the receipt of an unsatisfactory grade for their clinical practice.

*** In some cases the student may receive a grade of Incomplete or In-progress during their period of remediation, which upon satisfactory completion of the period of remediation will be changed to an agreed upon satisfactory grade. Unsatisfactory completion of the remediation period will result in the receipt of an agreed upon unsatisfactory grade (F) for their clinical practice. This may result in termination of the student's enrollment status from the School Counseling Program.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

The comprehensive examination will be taken during the student's final semester of study while completing the Internship. Students should be gathering information and studying for the exam throughout their program. The comprehensive exam consists of questions taken from the following areas of study:

1. Human Growth and Development
2. Group Procedures
3. Helping Relationships
4. Research and Evaluation
5. Social and Cultural Foundations
6. Lifestyle and Career Development
7. Appraisal
8. Professional Orientation
9. School Counseling Theory and Practice

(Detailed objectives that explain these areas appear in Appendix D.)

The date of the comprehensive exam will be scheduled at the beginning of the student's last semester. The exam is scheduled on one full day. In the morning students will complete the questions covering:

Group Procedures
The Helping Relationship
Human Growth and Development
Professional Orientation.

During the afternoon students will complete:

Social and Cultural Foundations
Lifestyle and Career Development
Appraisal
Research and Evaluation
School Counseling Theory and Practice

Evaluation of the comprehensive exam will take approximately two weeks. At least two Counseling faculty will evaluate the exam. At that point there will be four options:

1. The student will pass the comprehensive exam;
2. The student will rewrite specific sections of the exam to the satisfaction of the evaluating faculty;
3. The a student will complete an oral examination over specific areas, to the satisfaction of the evaluating faculty;
4. The student will fail the exam.

Any student who fails at least one but less than four sections of the exam will meet with the Counseling Program Director to discuss the most appropriate option for remediation of the domain section(s) failed. The student will be passed when the two Counseling faculty exam evaluators reach agreement that the student has adequately demonstrated mastery of all content areas.

Any student who fails four or more of the sections will be considered to have failed the exam and will need to retake the exam at another scheduled time. The entire exam can be taken a maximum of three times. A student will not be permitted to retake the exam after three failures.

DIGITAL PORTFOLIO

The Digital Portfolio is a requirement of the School Counseling Program. Its purpose is to allow you to demonstrate your ability to meet state and national school counselor standards and School Counseling program competencies. You may also use it as an employment tool to demonstrate growth as a professional School Counselor as well as the ability to use technology. Specific information regarding what must be included and the format of the portfolio is available on the Department of Education website. Final versions of digital portfolios **must be submitted on CD only**.

PRAXIS II

The Praxis II Content Knowledge/Specialty Area Assessments are included among the Praxis Series(R) of professional examinations, which was developed and is administered by the Educational Testing Service. The assessments are designed to measure knowledge of specific subjects and teaching skills that candidates for K-12 certification have acquired through the completion of professional education programs. The Missouri State Board of Education has adopted the following assessments and their respective qualifying scores for each corresponding area of professional certification.

All applicants for an initial Missouri certificate of license in school counseling must successfully complete the designated Praxis II Content Knowledge examination for School Guidance and Counseling. School counseling students will take the Praxis II while completing the Internship experience.