



M.Ed. School Counselor Practicum Handbook

Discover the Counseling Buff in You



Counselor Education Program

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M.Ed. School Counseling Practicum Requirements

Students in the School Counseling program focus their training on planning, implementing, and evaluating guidance and counseling programs to meet the unique social, physical, intellectual, and emotional needs of children and adolescents in school settings. Aspiring school counselors must demonstrate a broad understanding of counseling theories, career development, assessment, and relevant societal factors.

We anticipate that students will have the opportunity to use and apply the skills developed in the degree program at their placement sites. Practicum is designed to help students begin to apply theory to practice.

Practicum Course Sequencing

Students will complete the following pre-requisites:

- COUN 6375 Essential Helping Skills
- COUN 6365 Diagnosis and treatment

M.Ed. School Counseling degree seeking students must complete a 160 hour practicum of which 60 hours are direct student contact (e.g., classroom guidance lessons, individual or small group counseling, etc.) under the supervision of a Certified School Counselor (CSC). Site supervisor documentation must be submitted to and approved by WT program faculty.

BEFORE STARTING PRACTICUM

Select a Site

Students planning to enroll in COUN 6399 must seek out appropriate sites to collect experience. They are encouraged to begin networking and searching for their practicum sites at least a semester or two prior to enrolling in the courses. While the faculty can assist students with necessary referrals, students will ultimately be responsible for obtaining and securing a site.

Students are responsible for securing access to practicum sites in local and neighboring school districts that are TEA approved (<https://txschools.gov/schools>) with a school counselor who is certified and has a minimum of three years of experience. We encourage students to seek a site placement at least two to three semesters before they anticipate completing practicum.

Students may consider the following guidelines while securing a field placement site:

1. Contact the various school counselors/schools in your area via email or phone calls.
2. Be prepared to follow through with an interview process should the site request it.
3. Secure a site supervisor that meets TEA's requirements (minimum 3 year's experience as a Certified School Counselor in Texas)

Select a Site Supervisor

As students find a suitable site for them to gain their school counselor experience, they also seek out an appropriate supervisor. Site supervisors for school counseling must meet the following requirements as set forth by West Texas A&M university and the Texas Education Agency:

1. Site supervisors must be credentialed as a Certified School Counselor.
2. Site supervisors must have a minimum of three years of pertinent professional experience in the program area in which the student is enrolled.
3. Site supervisors must be willing to offer in-person or online weekly supervision and observe and evaluate students during the course of practicum.

For students seeking certification outside of Texas:

The M.Ed. School Counseling program at WTAMU prepares students for certification in Texas. If students seek certification in another state, they are required to review and understand the requirements from the state they wish to seek certification. Students are also required to inform their program advisor and university supervisor of school practicum requirements of their intended state.

Site Supervisor Responsibilities

Site Supervisor will:

1. Help the candidate develop a work schedule that allows them to meet the required internship hours, as well as meet the needs of the school
2. Meet with the intern formally at least once per week for an hour.
3. Supervise the candidates work while at the site, assign professional duties that allow the intern to meet the professional activities required by the practicum class
4. Assist the candidate in completing all documentation for class in a professional and timely manner and sign weekly logs.
5. Report any time a candidate is not meeting the professional responsibilities of the site or demonstrating unsatisfactory, unethical, or illegal performance in practicum; notify the faculty of record.

Submit Practicum Application

Students must submit an official practicum application to be reviewed and approved by WT program faculty. Once the application is approved, students will be granted permission to register for the course. Potential practicum students will send their application and supplemental documents to the counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu email address. Supplemental documents include:

1. Site supervisor resume
2. Site supervisor official service record (obtained from the district HR office)
3. Site supervisor certificate issued by TEA

School counseling practicum is **not** available in the summer semester. Applications are accepted the first day of registration until the due date.

- **Fall:** April 1st – August 7th
- **Spring:** November 1st – December 7th

Secure Insurance

Counselors are required by law to carry liability/malpractice insurance. As counselors in training are working with clients, practicum students must have insurance coverage in the minimum amount of \$1,000,000 incident/\$3,000,000 aggregate. Students enrolled in Practicum must submit a copy of the first page of their current professional liability insurance policy showing the counselor's name, policy number, and date of coverage. Students can purchase insurance online from American Counseling Association or HPSO.

We recommend securing insurance as close to your practicum start date as possible to ensure you have complete coverage.

DURING PRACTICUM

Practicum Course Requirements

According to TEA and accredited program guidelines, students must receive regular supervision in face-to-face time that is a minimum of:

- **One hour weekly with site supervisor**
- Three 45-minute informal observations (video recordings completed with site supervisor and university supervisor) and reflection assignment
 - To meet TEA standards school counseling practicum students must have 135 total minutes of observation.
- Supervised hours as completing activities aligned with the [School Counselor certification](#) standards. Students will be required to complete 160 supervised of which 60 are direct

Accruing Practicum Hours

A school counseling student enrolled in the school counseling practicum will be required to complete 160 hours, of which a minimum of 60 are direct student contact hours. Students may not begin accruing hours until the following documents have been submitted and approved by university supervisor. You will be notified through WTClass the date you may begin logging hours once these documents are graded:

- Site supervisor agreement
- WT Practicum agreement
- Site supervisor service record
- Site supervisor resume
- Site supervisor certificate issued by TEA
- Proof of insurance

Practicum Hours: Direct and Indirect

Students, site supervisors, and fieldwork course instructors collaborate to document both the direct counseling and indirect supportive work that students need to successfully complete their Practicum experiences. Both types of hours are important for students' professional development. For school counseling candidates, all hours must be tied to a standard (see [rule §239.15](#)) when documented in the logs.

- TAC 681.2 (11) **Direct client** contact -Time spent counseling clients.
- TAC 681.2 (14) **Indirect hours** - Time spent in management, administration or other aspects of counseling service ancillary to direct client contact.

Practicum Logs

- Students will submit bi-weekly practicum logs according to deadlines outlined in WTClass to ensure students are making progress
- Students may log hours for Practicum starting five days before the first day of class if they have documents listed above have been graded/approved
- Students are required to receive at least one hour of supervision per week from their site

supervisor (counted as indirect hours)

- Students are responsible for submitting appropriate documentation (e.g., logs and supervisor evaluations) on the due dates posted in the current course syllabus
- Students are expected to set their daily and semester schedule to be mindful of both their site hours and the university calendar, including daily work schedule, holidays, vacation days, etc.
- Students may only collect hours from 5 days before the start of class to the last class day.
- Students are expected to keep a final copy of their practicum logs after graduation

Practicum Assignments

Counseling Informal/Formal Observation Tapes (3 total)

- 45-minute video/audio
- Signed permission form
- Pre observation form filled out
- Reflection
- Evaluation from Site Supervisor

Logs

- Documented time that aligns with School Counselor certification standards
- 160 total, minimum of 60 direct

Practice TExEs 252

- Complete the practice 252 with a raw score of 250 and upload results to WTClass

Comprehensive School Counseling Program

- Develop a Comprehensive School Counseling Program (CSCP) that can be delivered to all students. The purpose of a comprehensive school counseling program is to address students' academic, career, and social/emotional development needs. School counselors implement these programs, acting as leaders, advocates, collaborators, and consultants to create systemic change and ensure equitable educational outcomes.

Obtaining a School Counselor Certificate

Practice TE_xES 252

- **Complete Practice TE_xES 252:**
 - Go to certifyteacher.com
 - Select TE_xES
 - Select School Counselor (252) Test Prep , and click See Price
 - Select Promo Code and click Place your Order
 - Enter your Promo Code
 - Send Practice TE_xES 252 results to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu and request test approval
 - Results of a raw score of 250 and higher will receive approval

TE_xES 252

- After submitting passing Practice TE_xES 252 results, candidates will receive a "Request Official Test Approval" form
- Complete Part 1 of the "Request Official Test Approval" form and return it to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu

Certification

- Submit official TE_xES 252 results to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu.
- Candidates will be required to apply for certification on TEA's website:
 - Log on to your account
 - Click on Application's link: "Standard Certificate Texas Program"
 - Apply for Standard Certificate through WTAMU's "Univ Based" preparation route
 - Submit the appropriate fee to TEA for the certificate
- Students can only be certified once the degree is conferred by graduate school.

WTAMU School Counselor TExES 252 Testing Approval Policy

First attempt

- 30-day test window from time of approval
- One passing attempt on Certify Teacher TExES 252, minimum 250 RAW score
- Passing attempt must be within 30 days of request for test approval

Second attempt

- Mandatory 30 day wait period, per TEA
- 30-day test window from time of approval
- 25 hours of monitored studying
- 3 passing attempts on 240 Tutoring TExES 252, minimum 250 RAW score, must be different versions
- Passing attempts must be within 30 days of request for test approval
- One monitored testing session with a faculty member

Third attempt

- Mandatory 30 day wait period, per TEA
- 30-day test window from time of approval
- 50 hours of monitored studying
- 6 passing attempts on 240 Tutoring TExES 252, minimum 250 RAW score, must be different versions
- Passing attempts must be within 30 days of request for test approval
- Two monitored testing sessions with a faculty member

Intern/Probationary School Counselor Certificate

School Counseling students (candidates) are eligible for an intern/probational school counselor certificate in their last year of the program (this would mean, the student should have 12 to 15 credits left within the program).

To be eligible for an intern/probationary certificate, the candidate would need to

- Pass the TExES 252. and to receive test approval the candidate will need to:
 1. Complete practice TExES 252 with instructions in the handbook
 2. Submit the practice TExES 252, current service record, and offer letter via email to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu. You will need to have 2 years of teaching experience on a Texas standard teaching certificate to receive the intern/probationary certification
- A job offer from a school district for a school counselor position
- A site supervisor (school counselor with three years of school counseling experience) within the school district
- A field supervisor (this will be the faculty within the counselor education program at WTAMU)

Once the candidate has received a job offer, they would have to contact counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu for a Statement of Eligibility form to be filled out by the hiring district. No intern/probationary certificate can be given out to candidates without a job offer.

Once the job offer has been accepted, the candidate must submit:

- The completed statement of eligibility (completed by the hiring district)
- The candidates service record (with the number of years of teaching experience)
- Site supervisor's resume
- Site supervisor's service record
- Site supervisors school counselor certificate

During the intern/probationary certificate, the school counseling candidate is required to complete:

- The entire practicum course
- During the entire year on an intern certificate, you will be required to complete 5 tapes in total. Three can be completed in one semester while enrolled in practicum (COUN 6399) and two others can be completed in the other semester. It will be the student's responsibility to reach out to the School Counseling Program Chair to submit the tapes.
- The intern certificate lasts 1 year, for example June 2019 to May 2020. If you graduate earlier, please reach out to the School Counseling Program Chair as soon as your degree is conferred.

West Texas A&M University

SCHOOL COUNSELING PRACTICUM APPLICATION

Name: Date:

Phone number:

E-mail:

Total hours (credits) completed in program (include current semester):

Program Advisor:

TEA ID: WT ID:

Practicum Site

Name of School

School District:

Address:

Site Supervisor Name:

Site Supervisor's Certification:

Supervisor's years of experience as a School Counselor:

Supervisor's TEA ID:

Requested Practicum Class and Due Dates for Application

Each semester and each site requires a new application

Deadlines for each semester: Fall: August 7th **Spring:** December 7th

Registration request for:

Course	Semester	Year
• COUN 6399 – Practicum	<input type="checkbox"/> Spring <input type="checkbox"/> Fall	

By signing below, the student and supervisor have discussed the requirements for hours and tapes for practicum per the M.Ed. School Counseling practicum handbook.

Site Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

This form **must** be emailed to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu **with** the following attachments:
1) site supervisor's service record, 2) resume, and 3) school counselor certificate

SCHOOL COUNSELING PRACTICUM FAQ

1. **How many hours do I need to complete?** *In practicum, you need to complete 160 hours. 60 direct and 100 indirect.*
2. **What are direct hours?** *Any hours you spend face to face with a student which includes individual counseling sessions, group counseling sessions, and guidance lessons.*
3. **What are indirect hours?** *Any hours you spend completing administrative duties without the presence of direct student contact.*
4. **How do I label the logs?** *You have an example provided in the “practicum hours” assignment folder in WT class*
5. **How many tapes do I have to submit?** *You will complete 3 tapes. Each tape will be 45 minutes.*
6. **What if each of my tapes are less than 45 minutes?** *If your tapes are of 45 minutes or less, then I would suggest putting 2 tapes together and submit it as 1 tape.*
7. **How often do I have to meet with my supervision?** *You are required to meet with your supervisor once a week for 1 hour.*
8. **What kind of sessions can I complete for the recorded tapes?** *You can complete a one-on-one individual counseling session with a student or a guidance lesson.*
9. **Do I have to get an audio/video consent from parents?** *For individual counseling session, you have to get the consent form from the parents. For guidance lessons, only your site supervisor has to sign the paperwork unless a student’s face is visible in the video. If a student’s face is visible in the guidance lesson, you have to get the consent form signed by the student’s parents.*
10. **What is the practice TExES 252?** *Practice TExES 252 is a program requirement to receive test approval for TExES 252. You need an 250 raw score on the practice TExES 252 to be able to receive test approval for TExES 252.*
11. **How and when can I take the practice TExES 252?** *You can complete the TExES 252 anytime during the semester. You will complete your practice TEXES 252 on <https://www.certifyteacher.com/> The discount code for Certify Teacher where students can study for the TEXES 252 is WTAMU6041. Please sign up using only your WTAMU email address.*
12. **What is the TExES 252?** *This is a state test requirement for certification.*
13. **How can I complete the TExES 252?** *You need to complete practice TExES 252 through Certify Teacher and receive a 250 raw score on it before you receive test approval for the official TExES 252. You will submit the results in the assignment dropbox in WT class.*
14. **How many attempts do I have to pass the practice TExES 252?** *You have as many tries as you need.*
15. **How many attempts do I have to pass the TExES 252?** *You will be provided 1 attempt to pass the TExES 252. See WTAMU testing policy on pg. 8 of the SC Practicum Handbook.*
16. **Do I have to complete the practice TExES 252 or TExES 252 if I am from a different State and do not need certification in Texas?** *No, if you do not want to receive certification in Texas, you do not have to complete the practice TExES 252 or the TEx252. You will have to look into the requirements in your state and contact the board that provides school counseling certification.*

Changing a Counseling Practicum Site

If at any given point during the semester, the field placement site becomes problematic for the student, they may consider a change in placement. In such situations the following procedures must be followed:

- The intern discusses the problem(s) with the faculty of record and the program chair, to determine whether a solution can occur within the existing placement.
- The Intern may be asked to continue with the placement until the end of the semester, and an agreement may be made that a change of placement will occur for the following semester.
- If a solution is not found, and a change of placement is necessary during the semester, the request for change of site must be completed by submitting a new application to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu

Changing a Site Supervisor

If a change in Site Supervisor occurs at any time during Practicum, the faculty of record must be consulted immediately. A new supervisor must meet the requirements mentioned above. A new application with complete details must be submitted to counseloredprogram@wtamu.edu before any supervised hours have started. Student will be required to submit the following for the site supervisor:

- Site supervisor resume
- Site supervisor service record (document from HR with the number of years of experience)
- Site supervisor Certificate from TEA's website

If a supervisor, requests to discontinue supervising a student due to medical or leisure leave, an alternate supervisor must be approved temporarily. The alternate supervisor must also meet the site supervisor requirements set forth for WTAMU site supervisor. Application submission with complete details is required.