

# PRACTICUM & INTERNSHIP STUDENT ORIENTATION



## MESSIAH

Graduate Program in Counseling

# Welcome!

We have developed this orientation to help you become familiar with the requirements and guidelines of our practicum and internship program. Please review the information before each field experience and feel free to contact the Practicum & Internship Coordinator at any time to discuss any questions or concerns.



Amy Cook, M.S.  
Practicum & Internship Coordinator  
acook@messiah.edu  
717-796-1800 x2771

# FIELD EXPERIENCES

1

**PRACTICUM**

**100 hours**

Pre-requisite for Internship

2

**INTERNSHIP I**

**300 hours**

3

**INTERNSHIP II**

**300 hours**

Each student will complete a minimum of 700 hours before graduating.  
Must include minimum number of direct hours (varies by track)  
Meets minimums required by CACREP

# Preparing for Practicum & Internship

Plan Ahead!

## First Steps

- Thoroughly read the Practicum/Internship Handbook and FAQs
- Review the Practicum/Internship Planning Guide & due dates
- Visit the Field Experience Site Database through Falcon Link: Self-Service Main Menu
- Update your résumé



## Pre-Registration

- Complete the pre-registration application form
- Once your pre-registration form has been accepted, you will be invited to the Pre-registration site in Canvas where the rest of the paperwork can be found and submitted.



## Stay In Touch

- Check your Messiah email regularly for reminders, policy updates, and other important information.
- Give careful attention to advising messages from Amy Cook

# THE PRE- REGISTRATION PROCESS

- Complete form to declare your intent
- Saves you a seat
- You will be invited to Canvas to complete the rest of the process
- Plan carefully and pay attention to due dates
- A pre-registration form must be completed for each field experience

# BASIC REQUIREMENTS

- Each field experience is part of a 3 credit course
- FULL SEMESTER (not early or late term)
- Hours are spread out across entire semester
- Summer is a good time for practicum (CMH/MCF only)
- Synchronous Zoom class sessions are mandatory on Tuesdays or Thursdays
- Registration process is different



# Practicum Details

The Practicum will be your first field experience and includes 100 hours on-site. Of these 100 hours, at least 40 hours need to be direct counseling hours with clients (50 direct hours for MCF track).

During your Practicum, you will be under the supervision of both a licensed or certified site supervisor and a Messiah University Faculty Supervisor. You will meet with your site supervisor for clinical supervision for one hour per week.

## Pre- Requisites:

COUN 501, and COUN 520 and Foundations (track specific course 507, 508, 509).

Personal counseling  
Updated clearances  
Professional liability  
insurance

Students must be in  
good standing and have  
a minimum GPA of 3.0

# Internship Details

Internship I and II take place after Practicum. Each Internship includes 300 hours on-site for a total of 600 Internship hours. Of the 300 on-site hours for each Internship, at least 120 hours need to be direct counseling hours with clients (125 direct hours for MCF track).

During your Internships, you will be under the supervision of both a licensed or certified site supervisor and a Messiah University Faculty Supervisor. You will meet with your site supervisor for clinical supervision for one hour per week.

## Pre- Requisites:

CHM/MCF tracks:  
COUN 523, 532, 540,  
and Practicum, along  
with a minimum of 39  
credits.

SCH track:  
COUN 532, 540, and  
Practicum with a  
minimum of 30 credits

Students must be in  
good standing and have  
a minimum GPA of 3.0



# Direct vs. Indirect Hours

## CMH/MCF Tracks

- Direct service means “working directly with clients” in such a way that contributes to the development of counseling skills and includes interactive activities such as intake interviewing, individual/couples/family counseling, group counseling, assessment, etc.
- Indirect hours include weekly meetings with the site supervisor, administrative work, staff meetings, in-services, treatment planning, observing sessions, & report writing.

## SCH Track

- Direct service means “working directly with students” and includes interactive activities such as individual counseling, group counseling, career counseling, classroom guidance, meetings with parents, new student orientation, etc.
- Indirect hours include weekly meetings with the site supervisor, administrative work, staff meetings, in-services, planning, observing classroom guidance, & record review.

### Activities that do not count towards your hours at all:

commuting time, group supervision with your class, driving between mobile therapy clients or different locations of your site

# Practicum & Internship Schedule

Each Practicum and Internship follows a full semester schedule according to the university calendar.

**Fall and Spring semesters: 17 weeks**

**Summer semester: 13 weeks**

- Students are required to complete their hours on-site throughout the full semester specified for the Practicum/Internship course. (i.e. students may not front-load hours)
- Due to issues of liability and financial aid, students may not begin logging hours before the first day of the semester or between two semesters. Special requests for exceptions to this policy may be considered only for indirect hours including fixed training or orientation activities. Contact Amy Cook for in advance for approval.
- Attendance in weekly or bi-weekly group supervision with your classmates in synchronous sessions is mandatory. Students are advised to keep their schedules free on Tuesday and Thursday evenings throughout the entire semester until their course meeting times are announced.

# PRE-PRACTICUM REQUIREMENTS

Personal  
Counseling

Clearances

Professional  
liability  
Insurance

Approved  
site &  
supervisor

# SEARCHING FOR YOUR SITE

**Be  
Prepared**

Know our requirements before  
you begin contacting sites

**Start  
wide**

Approach it like you would a  
job search

Use all available resources

**Be  
persistent**

Follow up!

# Finding a Site – CMH/MCF tracks

- Begin considering your field site options ASAP and create a list of potential sites.
- Visit the Field Experience Site Database in the Self-Service area of Falcon Link
- Begin your formal search at least a FULL semester before the time you plan to start your Practicum/Internship.
- When you find a potential site, we recommend that you schedule a time to meet with the site supervisor to get to know each other and talk about what types of activities you will be able to be involved with on-site. You may also use this time to discuss what your on-site schedule would look like, identify whether the supervision requirements could be met, and make sure the necessary credentials are in place. Bring a copy of your résumé to this initial meeting/interview along with the Practicum/Internship Handbook and Site Supervisor At-A-Glance document.

# Finding a Site – SCH track

- Begin considering your field site options ASAP and create a list of potential sites.
- Visit the Field Experience Site Database in the Self-Service area of Falcon Link
- In order to secure a site, please submit your pre-registration form listing the districts you are interested in working with in order of interest. The School Site Coordinator will then make the initial contact to each district on your behalf. After contact has been made, you will be contacted about proceeding with the next step. Per school districts' request, students are asked not to contact schools on their own until the coordinator has established contact unless you are employed there. Doing so could create unintentional barriers to the placement process.
- Students may be asked to meet with a potential placement for an interview. We also recommend that you bring a copy of your updated résumé to this meeting along with the Practicum/Internship Handbook and Contract to review.



# Clearances

- All students must have the assigned clearances before they are permitted to register for the course.
- Detailed instructions will be available to you in Canvas after you pre-register for your practicum.
- Clearances may be NO MORE than 1 year old when submitted to us. Once you have submitted them to us you will not need to resubmit them as long as you have been continuously enrolled in the program, however some sites may require newer clearances. It is your responsibility to check with your site's policies regarding your clearances.
- Please keep copies of your clearances for your records and provide them to your site.



Various Settings:  
students must gain  
experience in two  
different sites



Licensed  
Supervisors: each  
supervisor must be  
clinically licensed  
or certified



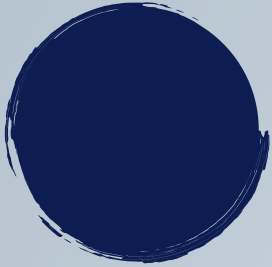
Group Counseling:  
minimum of 5 hours  
in at least one of  
your field  
experiences



Recording with  
clients: must have the  
opportunity to record  
with clients in at  
least one internship

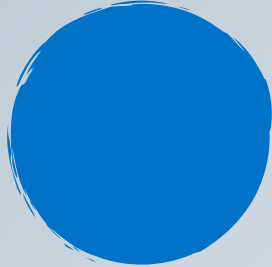
# PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

# Professional Details



## Email

All written correspondence should demonstrate your professionalism



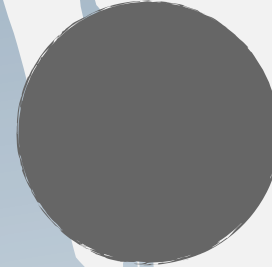
## Dress Code

Be sure to discuss the appropriate dress code of your site with your supervisor.



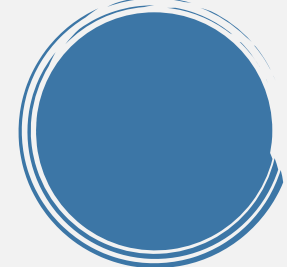
## Logs

Weekly logs and a semester summary log will be submitted to account for your hours. These logs will be used as official documentation to verify your hours for licensure & certification.



## Confidentiality

At all times, students must follow the ACA Ethics code and protect client confidentiality.



## Evaluations

In addition to your self-evaluation, you will be evaluated by your site supervisor and faculty supervisor at the midterm and end of the semester.

# FAQS

May I complete my field experience at my workplace?

What are the credential requirements of my supervisor?

May I complete all three required field experiences at the same agency or in the same school district?

May I complete my internship where I was once a client?

Answers to all of these are available in the handbook!

# IN CLOSING...

**AMY COOK**

📞 717-796-1800 x2771

✉️ [acook@messiah.edu](mailto:acook@messiah.edu)

🌐 [www.messiah.edu/counseling](http://www.messiah.edu/counseling)

READ EMAIL FROM ME

Plan ahead

Read your handbook

Be flexible with expectations

Keep in touch