Western’s **MFT Counseling Practicum** program is designed to supplement your classroom education with experience in real life counseling settings. Your three MFT Practicum classes at Western will involve both Clinical Supervision at your therapy site and feedback with your instructor & classmates. This counseling experience must be at an approved setting.

As a MFT Trainee counselor, you will always be under the Clinical Supervision of a licensed therapist. Weekly clinical supervision allows an MFT Trainee five \(5\) hours of client contact in each seven day period.

Students seeking MFT licensure in California [and graduation from Western Seminary] are required by the Board of Behavioral Sciences (BBS) to complete a **minimum** of **225 hours** of face-to-face experience counseling individuals, couples, families, children, and/or groups. These hours can be earned in two categories.

**150 hours** *minimum* must be earned by students providing therapy to clients. A **maximum** of **75 hours** may be gained performing Client Centered Advocacy (CCA). CCA is defined in Business & Professions Code as including, but not limited to, “researching, identifying, and accessing resources, or other activities, related to obtaining or providing services & supports for clients or groups of clients receiving psychotherapy or counseling services.”

A total of **3,000 hours** of experience are required by the BBS to sit for the MFT license examination. After graduation from Western’s MFT Program, all remaining hours are accrued as an MFT Intern.

Students are allowed to accrue a **maximum** of 1,300 hours of supervised experience prior to graduation. This may include:

- Therapy & Clinical Supervision (**Max 750 hrs**)
- Workshops and Trainings, (**Max 250 hrs**)
- Client Centered Advocacy (**Max 75 hrs**)
- Administering Psychological Tests, Reports, Writing Progress Notes (**Max 250 hrs**);
- Personal Psychotherapy (**Max 100 hrs**)

Prior to taking their final year at Western, and with approval of the Program Director, students may be permitted to accrue supervised hours as an MFT Trainee by starting MFT Counseling Practicum classes before entering into their final year of their MFT program. This voluntary option allows students to begin accruing supervised hours sooner than normal and can begin once a student has completed all the requirements. For the interested student, this allows them to graduate with a greater number of supervised MFT hours.

**GOALS OF MFT COUNSELING PRACTICUM**

- To become familiar and comfortable with the counseling process.
- To be able to diagnose and develop treatment interventions.
- To begin to identify with a particular approach to counseling.
- To identify one’s own strengths and weaknesses as a counselor.
- To learn how to integrate counseling with theology at a conceptual and a practical level.

**CHECKLIST FOR BEGINNING MFT COUNSELING PRACTICUM [CNS 530SA, 531SA, 532SA]**

- Courses that must be successfully complete as a prerequisite for MFT Counseling Practicum (**CNS 501, 502, 504, 505, 506, and 507**)
- Attendance at the MFT Practicum Manual Orientation meeting. This Orientation will provide you with essential information and necessary paperwork prior to beginning practicum.
- Students must be in good standing in the MFT program before beginning in Practicum.
- Students **must** have the approval of the MFT Director before beginning in any Practicum experience.
- The MFT Practicum Site must be approved by the MFT Offices before the student can begin working there.
- Students may begin their MFT Practicum experience earlier than their last year with permission from the MFT Program Director.