

MFT COUNSELING PRACTICUM AND TRAINEE EXPERIENCE

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. One unit of weekly clinical supervision (1 hour individual or 2 hours Group 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 counseling individuals, couples, families, children, and/or groups. A maximum of **75 hours** these face-to-face hours may be gained performing Client Centered Advocacy (CCA). CCA is defined in the Business and 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."

Please note: To qualify as a PCC intern, students are required to earn **280 hours of direct clinical experience** during practicum (providing therapy to clients). No hours of experience earned as a student count towards PCC licensure.

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

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

- Therapy & Clinical Supervision
- Workshops and Trainings
- Client Centered Advocacy
- Administering Psychological Tests, Reports, Writing Progress Notes

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 5302, 531S, 532S)

- Courses that must be successfully complete as a prerequisite for MFT Counseling Practicum (**CNS 501, 502, 504, 505, 506, 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.