

# **Training Site Guidelines and Requirements**

## **MA Community Counseling**

**Argosy University, CHICAGO CAMPUS**  
225 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60601  
Fax (312) 777-7747

---

*We appreciate the clinical and counseling training opportunities that practicum sites provide our graduate students at Argosy University, Chicago. We consider students' supervised counseling experiences (i.e., practica and internships) to be among the most important professional preparation activities in which the students participate.*

*Practicum and internship experiences for MA Community Counseling (MACC) students are designed to meet the standards of the Council of the Accreditation of Counseling and Related Education Programs (CACREP). The CACREP website can be found at: <http://www.cacrep.org>.*

*To ensure that our students receive an optimal experience, and their clinical training match with CACREP requirements, we require that sites adhere to the following major guidelines:*

### **Stages of Clinical training Requirements for MA Community Counseling students:**

***Practicum*** – it usually refers to the first 100 hours of their on-site clinical training which should compose of a minimum 40 direct service hours and 60 indirect hours. During practicum, students are required to have both group (5 hours minimum) and individual counseling experience (15 hours minimum).

***Internship*** - Internship starts immediately upon student's successful completion of practicum. It requires 600 field hours, including a minimum of 240 direct hours which can be either group and/or individual counseling experience, and 360 indirect hours.

### **Direct and Indirect Hours**

Direct client contact hours which can be attained through clinically based contact with clients, including individual and/or group counseling, intake evaluations, phone conversations regarding clinical and treatment issues, crisis intervention, etc. Indirect service hours can be achieved through individual and group supervision, didactic training, meetings, consultation, peer supervision, record keeping, case conferences, etc.

### **Group Counseling Experience**

During practicum, students need to have group counseling to comply with CACREP standards. Students are expected to facilitate group work. Students should be provided opportunities to discuss or debrief the group process and related dynamics, as well as clinical issues with the site supervisor. For students who are not able to attain group counseling experience from their primary practicum site, they can establish supplemental sites to facilitate groups to fulfill this requirement.

### **Length of Clinical Training Experience**

The practicum and internship require a combined minimum of 700 hours of field experience. The practicum generally averages 10-12 hours per week during the 100 required hours, while the internship typically requires an average of 16-20 hours a week, depending on site requirements.

### **On-site Supervision & Evaluation**

- MA Counseling and Clinical students must be supervised by a licensed clinician with a Masters or Doctorate degree and preferably a professional license (e.g., LCPC or LCSW).
- We require that students have a **minimum** of 2 hours of supervision per week. Individual supervision is preferred, though one hour of individual plus one hour of group supervision is acceptable.
- Supervisors are required to conduct three formal evaluations on students' progress during their entire clinical training period.
  - At the end of practicum, that is at the completion of their first 100 hours of clinical training;
  - At the end of students' first half internship experience, or at the end of March; and
  - At the end of students' internship experience.
- Students also complete a log of their activities and hours which they review with their supervisor during each evaluation period. Both the supervisor and the student sign the evaluation form and the hour logs.
- Students also complete anonymous evaluation form on the practicum site as feedback to the AU/ISPP Training Department.

### **Site Supervisor and Practicum Seminar Leaders**

Students participate in seminars at ISPP/AU Chicago in conjunction with their practicum/internship. We ask that supervisors and seminar leaders maintain contact throughout the training year to coordinate their instruction and evaluation of students.

### **Audio/Video - tape counseling sessions**

Students are required to audio-tape their counseling sessions in order to routinely (weekly or bi-weekly) present their work at their on-campus seminars and individual supervision sessions. MA Community Counseling students are also required to complete two examinations (one in practicum, and one during internship) where they are required to audio-tape their clinical work. These tapes, along with accompanying written reports enable supervisors and faculty to evaluate the student's clinical skills and competence.

### **Contractual Relationship – the site, the student, and the university**

By the first week of practicum, the site supervisor and student are required to sign a Practicum Agreement Form which is a three way binding contract between the student, the site, and the university. It also details the above guidelines and requirements (e.g. practicum on-site hours). The Form is signed by the site supervisor, the practicum/internship student, and AU Chicago Training Director of the MA in Community Counseling program (MACC), Gary Koch. All parties must be in agreement if any changes occur within the contract.

### **Overall Climate of the Site**

It is important that AU Chicago students have a training program that is supported and understood by the administration and staff at the field site. Students need to have a sufficiently available, appropriate, and diverse clientele with whom to work. The training milieu must be safe, supportive, challenging, and provide appropriate space for students to conduct their clinical work. The practicum/internship site must have a satisfactory emphasis and responsiveness to cultural diversity with respect to gender, race, sexual orientation, disability, and religion. It is also important that the overall agency abides by a code of conduct and ethics as delineated by various mental health professions (e.g., psychology, social work, psychiatry, etc.).

### **Documents Needed for Becoming a Formal Affiliated Site of AU/MACC**

*Prospective practicum/internship sites---i.e. those interested in establishing a formal affiliation with AU Chicago and training its students---need to do the following:*

1. Complete the Field Site Information Form (included)
2. Send the supervisors' licenses along with resumes or vitae of training supervisors
3. Send information about the agency as a whole (e.g., brochures or pamphlets)
4. Send a narrative description of their training program including:
  - An overview of the program in which practicum/internship will take place
  - Description of clients served
  - Types and range of services provided
  - Types of students (MA Community Counseling students)
  - Specific expectations of students (e.g., experienced in adolescent therapy, self-motivated, etc.)
  - Arrangements for supervision and other learning experiences
  - Application and selection procedures including a description of the optimal practicum candidate (i.e., one who best matches the requirements of the site), types of writing sample if required.
  - Other necessary information, requirements, or procedures concerning training

*The MACC Training Director reviews all materials from prospective practicum sites. They grant provisional approval to a site with satisfactory training opportunities. A routine site visit is conducted at some point before or after such approval. Final approval is granted after a review of the training site experiences over the course of a year.*

The MACC Training Department at AU Chicago is committed to developing and maintaining strong relationships with the many practicum sites at which our students do their training. We invite site directors and supervisors to contact us or students' seminar leaders with any query or concern. We encourage working collaboratively to resolve any challenging situations or difficulties.

- Gray Koch, Ph.D., Director of Training, Counselor Education Department, (312) 777-7694, [gkoch@argoy.edu](mailto:gkoch@argoy.edu)