# Table of Contents

Counseling Intern Agreement ........................................................................................................... 3
Attestation Agreement Statement: ................................................................................................. 3

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 4

Counseling Internship ....................................................................................................................... 4

Goals of the Internship ...................................................................................................................... 5
  Clinical Mental Health Counseling .................................................................................................. 5
  School Counseling ......................................................................................................................... 7

Dual Specialization Policy ................................................................................................................ 8

Site Selection and Interviews ............................................................................................................ 8

Applying for Internship .................................................................................................................... 9

211 Teaching Internship .................................................................................................................. 10

Criminal Background Check ........................................................................................................... 11

Liability Insurance .......................................................................................................................... 12

Credit Hours for Registration .......................................................................................................... 12

School Counseling Specialization: Content Area Test (181) .......................................................... 13

The Internship Experience .............................................................................................................. 13

Counseling Internship Expectations ............................................................................................... 13
  General Internship Guidelines: ..................................................................................................... 13
  The Internship Site Supervisor Expectations: .............................................................................. 14
  The University Supervisor Expectations: ..................................................................................... 15
  The Intern’s Expectations: ............................................................................................................. 16

Master’s Internship Seminar Attendance Policy ............................................................................ 17

Master’s Program Internship Completion Policy ........................................................................... 17

Frequently Asked Questions about Internship .............................................................................. 18

Appendices ....................................................................................................................................... 22

Appendix A: Counseling Program Core Curriculum ....................................................................... 22
Appendix B: Specialization Courses ............................................................................................... 23
Appendix C: Direct and Indirect Internship Services ....................................................................... 24
Appendix D: Frequently Asked Questions about School Counselor Exams and Licensure ....... 25
Counseling Intern Agreement

Before the start of your first counseling internship semester and before your first on-site appointment make sure to have read the current Master’s Counseling Internship Handbook and complete the attestation agreement in your Tk20 Internship Field Experience Binder. Do note that you will NOT be able to accumulate internship hours until this is completed.

Attestation Agreement Statement:

By including my electronic signature below, I am attesting to having received access to the most current version of Northern Illinois University’s Counseling, Adult, & Higher Education Department Counseling Internship Handbook. I declare that I have read this handbook in its entirety and have been granted opportunities to clarify its contents. I am confirming my understanding of counseling internship expectations, policies, and procedures outlined in this manual. I agree to adhere of the policies and procedures within this current version of the Master’s Counseling Internship Handbook. I also, attest that I understand the expectations of counseling internship and the potential outcomes if I do not meet or exceed those expectations based on ACA ethics, CACREP Standards, and Professional Dispositions outlined in each of these referenced texts.
Introduction

This handbook is a guide to planning your internship experience. The handbook reviews basic information about:

- Goals of Internship
- Procedures for Internship Site Selection
- Application for Internship
- Registration and Preparation to Start Internship
- Program Expectations and CACREP Standards
- Internship Completion Policies

All forms needed for the internship experience for both the master’s and doctoral counseling programs are included in the Tk20 Student System. Feedback on internship procedures and practices are welcomed. The counseling faculty and staff want your internship to be an outstanding learning and professional development experience.

You are responsible for finding and securing an internship site placement. Internship students are encouraged to select a site carefully and early, based on their professional goals, interests, abilities, and skills. The type of clientele served in the setting, types of services provided in the setting, and the staffing needs of the site are also important. You must be approved for internship by counseling program faculty. Please note that although you are responsible for initiating your site selection, the internship coordinator must approve the final selection. This manual does not replace the information and advice you receive from faculty and staff advisors. Please consult with your advisor throughout application and internship processes.

Counseling Internship

An internship is defined as a supervised learning experience designed to provide students with opportunities to implement knowledge and theory acquired through course work in actual work settings. Therefore, the core curriculum and other practical course work must be completed before internship experiences are started.

The internship program at NIU is part of the nationally accredited CACREP program. CACREP regards internship as a distinctly defined, post-practicum supervised clinical experience intended to enable counselors-in-training to refine and enhance basic counseling or student development skills, and integrate professional knowledge and skills appropriate to students’ area of specialization and initial post-graduation professional placement.

The nature and placement of the internship is determined by students’ career goals and area of specialization. Counselors-in-training are expected to identify and complete internship experiences in a setting that is congruent with their designated specialization. Because of the diversity of career goals, student characteristics, and unique learning experiences of each student, internship experiences must be individually developed. It is your responsibility to do this in cooperation with your advisor, the internship coordinator,
and the site supervisor. Placement sites must be able to provide the diverse and comprehensive experience needed for a successful internship experience.

Students must complete 600 clock hours of internship, and 240 of those hours must qualify as direct service hours (see appendix C). Students must complete at least 400 cumulative internship hours in their specialization setting and at least 300 cumulative internship hours at their primary site.

Goals of the Internship

Through the internship experience, counselors-in-training should learn and experience, under supervision, the roles and responsibilities of professionals employed at the site. In addition, counselors-in-training will have specific professional goals to fulfill during internship experiences. A plan to meet these goals will be developed jointly with the site supervisor and counselors-in-training, with the assistance of the university supervisor as necessary. **Although the goals of individual counselors-in-training will vary, basic internship requirements outlined by the counseling program must also be addressed and included in internship plans.**

- Learning about client characteristics of individuals served by institutions offering counseling services, including, but not limited to the effects of socioeconomic status, unemployment, aging, gender, sexual orientation and sexual preferences, spiritual and/or religious values, race, ethnicity, chronic illness, developmental transitions, interpersonal needs, family context, and community violence;
- Learning about organizational, fiscal, and legal dimensions of the institutions and settings in which counselors practice;
- Understanding the theories and techniques of conducting needs assessment to design, implement, and evaluate counseling interventions, programs, and systems;
- Understanding the principles of program development and service delivery for clientele based on assumptions of normal development, including, but not limited to prevention, implementation of support groups, peer facilitation, training, parent education, career information and counseling, and encouragement of self-help;
- Exploring roles of counselors in a variety of practice settings and relationships between counselors and other professionals in these settings.
- Exploring the requirements for operation, management, and support of counseling programs/agencies.

Clinical Mental Health Counseling

Required Experiences

- Intake Evaluation: Conducting an intake interview and mental health history for planning counseling interventions.
Counseling Intervention: Provide individual and group counseling under supervision with diverse client populations that represent the demographic diversity of the agency community.

Clinical Assessment: Complete at least one biopsychosocial and/or formal mental status client assessments with at least three different clients.

Consultation: Document interactions with third-party providers or other agency professionals and how the issues were handled. Consult at with a partner, parent, family member, or teacher about a client concern.

Crisis Response: Review the crisis protocol for your agency. Discuss with your supervisor your role as a counselor-in-training when there is a crisis. Discuss suicide assessment and hospitalization policies at your agency and when applicable initiate client dialogs about suicide ideation in sessions.

Client/Professional Advocacy: Practice effective strategies for client advocacy in public policy and government relations issues.

Program Evaluation: Create an evaluation plan (conduct if possible) relevant to agency’s service delivery including marketing, intake procedures, referral processes, interventions, client follow-up and outcomes, provider training and continued development, provider wellness and efficacy, and other relevant program efficacy and sustainability measures.

Professional Development: Participate in learning seminars and workshops that are provided for site personnel or attend outside conferences/workshops designed for practicing professionals.

Recommended Experiences
- After-hours/On-call Response: Complete at least one on-call shift (as defined by agency policy and procedures) under agency supervision.
- Case Conference/Staffing: observe, participate-in, and co-facilitate case presentations and staffing discussions
- Community Outreach: Observe and participate in community intervention and education characteristic of human service programs and networks in local community (public, private, and volunteer)
- Case Management: Implement effective strategies for promoting client understanding of and access to community resources
- Curriculum Development: Create or revise (facilitate if possible) at least one prevention group topic relevant to the agency’s service provisions. Have someone observe the session and gather feedback from observer. If possible, collect feedback form participants.
School Counseling

Required Experiences

- **Classroom Curriculum:** Teach at least one developmental counseling class on a topic from one of the three domains. Have someone observe the session and gather feedback from observer. Class presentation may come from your curriculum project. Optional: Collect feedback from students on the session.

- **Group Experience:** Lead a minimum of 4 group sessions with a co-leader or on your own. Write up a brief report on the type of group and pertinent information about the group. Optional: Get feedback from group members.

- **Exceptional Students:** Attend at least two IEP or 504 meetings and discuss with your supervisor the different roles of stakeholders.

- **Assessment and/or Evaluation:** Spend time talking with your supervisor about doing an assessment at your school that will help bring information about student (or faculty or parent) need to the attention of your counseling program. Build upon what you learned in class. Organize, design, total your findings and report them to the chair or supervisor of the counseling program. Document this on your timesheet and with your university supervisor. Discuss what counselors could do to respond to these needs. Optional: present this to the principal of the school.

- **Consultation:** Document interactions with parents and how the issues were handled. Consult at least once with a teacher over a student/classroom concern.

- **Career Counseling:** Conduct at least three career counseling sessions. Do these conjointly if necessary. Discuss this experience with your supervisor and in your journals.

- **Crisis Plan:** Read the crisis plan for your school. Discuss with your supervisor what your role is as a counselor when there is a crisis. Document that you have done this with your university supervisor.

- **Suicide Response:** Discover what the protocol is for students who are suicidal or talk about suicide ideation in a session. Discuss this with your supervisor.

- **Classroom/Teacher Visits:** Visit at least two representative classes in your school to familiarize yourself with what you don’t know about curriculum. Write about these in your journal. You must visit at least two classrooms from varying arenas such as vocational education, physical education, special education, dual credit courses, etc.

- **College Counseling:** Meet with at least three students to discuss college planning. Write about these in your journal. Consider what resources you need to do this effectively.

Recommended Experiences

- **Systems Support:** Review with supervisor the management activities that establish, maintain, and enhance the total guidance and counseling program. Participate in meetings, plans, or evaluations of such supports if possible.
Educational/Employability Planning: Administer and interpreting test and inventory results, and assist students with school-to-work transition planning.

Professional Development: Participate in service training activities, counseling staff meetings, and relevant teacher in-service meetings. Attend outside conferences or workshops designed for professional school counselors.

Dual Specialization Policy

Students wishing to specialize in more than one area of the counseling program are able to accomplish this by adding required coursework in the second area as well as by completing additional internship experiences. The best way to assure success is to work closely with your advisor so that coursework is completed in the proper sequence and all requirements are met. The following information delineates coursework and internship requirements:

- **CORE COURSES:** You will need to successfully complete all core courses that are required for the Masters in Education in Counseling Program (appendix A).
- **SPECIALIZED STUDIES:** You will have to complete all course requirements for BOTH areas successfully, including the CMHC elective course (see appendix B).
- **SUPERVISED EXPERIENCES:** CAHC 550: A student wishing to dual specialize in CMHC and School Counseling needs to complete a minimum of 16-clock hours of audio-recorded individual school counseling sessions in a school setting, a minimum of 15 clock hours of counseling in the CCTC, and 15 hours of group counseling.
- **CAHC 586 INTERNSHIP:** A typical counseling internship experience includes the completion of a minimum 600 clock-hour experience post-practicum completion. Students who apply, and are approved, to teach CAHC 211 may use a maximum of 200 clock-hours (50 direct, 150 indirect) of their teaching internship toward their internship program requirement of 600 internship clock-hours.

In dual specializing, counselors-in-training must complete a minimum of 400 clock-hours of counseling internship in each specialization setting with appropriate supervision in order to declare completion of Dual Specialization in CMHC and School Counseling (i.e., minimum of 800 clock-hours of counseling internship in at least one school and at least one community agency site). Forty percent or 160 hours in each specialization would need to be direct service hours. Counselors-in-training wishing to teach CAHC 211 AND dual specialize will graduate with approximately 1000 clock-hours of internship (depending if CAHC 211 was taught solo or co-taught and if student chose to teach more than one semester).

Site Selection and Interviews

You and your faculty advisor cooperatively select appropriate agencies/educational settings for interviewing. Personal and professional counseling goals and the goals of the university program are considered carefully. You should discuss internship goals, career aspirations, and potential sites with your advisor up to one year prior to the actual beginning of internship experiences.
Lists of counseling internships where previous interns have worked may be reviewed and discussed. The approval of internship sites is based upon the ability of the site to meet or exceed the CACREP standards and counseling program expectations. These include the kinds of experiences offered, the quality of supervision, the quality of support provided to counselors-in-training, and the ability of the site to provide sufficient working hours.

Counseling interns work in a variety of internship sites. Sites may include substance abuse counseling centers, community mental health agencies, universities and community colleges, youth services agencies, K-12 schools, career centers, and others counseling provider settings. You are encouraged to interview with supervisors from more than one setting to insure compatibility between your goals and the potential experience in the setting. You need to prepare carefully for the interview just as you would for permanent employment searches. You should prepare the following materials for your internship site application and to take to internship interview for site supervisors/directors:

1. Cover letter that clarifies professional goals and career interests.
2. Resume outlining education, training, professional experiences, and transferable skills.

Some sites may require initial placement contact form university faculty or staff; however, the faculty does not place counselors-in-training with internship sites. The advisor and internship coordinator must approve sites, although it is the responsibility of the site and/or site supervisor to accept or reject prospective interns.

Policy on Internships in Private Practice Settings

Master’s students in the NIU counseling program are not permitted to use private practice site placements for completion of counseling internship experiences. A private practice is defined by the Professional Counselor and Clinical Professional Counselor Licensing and Practice Act (2012) in the state of Illinois as:

"Independent private practice of clinical professional counseling means the application of clinical professional counseling knowledge and skills by a licensed clinical professional counselor who regulates and is responsible for her or his own practice or treatment procedures."

If students are unsure if their desired site location qualifies as private practice, they should request a meeting with their advisor and/or the internship coordinator to consult on the appropriateness of an internship site.

Applying for Internship

You must complete the counseling internship application and submit it to the internship committee via Tk20 Student System. Applications are reviewed by the full faculty.

- Fill out Part One of the CAHC 586 Internship Application before the semester deadlines below. We use part one to verify students’ intent to register for internship.
  - Summer/Fall internship - NO LATER THAN JANUARY 15
Spring internship - NO LATER THAN SEPTEMBER 15

- Submit the completed internship application via Tk20 by the Part Two semester deadlines (December 15th for spring and May 15th for summer/fall semesters).

- If you intend to begin internship before the start of NIU Internship Seminar meetings, you must notify your advisor and university supervisor in writing to inform the department of your plans and your site supervisor must sign the letter form attached to your Internship Field Experience Binder in Tk20, expressing the site’s willingness to take full responsibility for you and your clinical work during that time frame. Your internship plan agreement must detail the date your internship will officially begin.

- Complete an Internship Plan agreement before your internship begins. You should meet with your site supervisor to develop your plan. This plan should be as specific as possible, including time you will spend at on-site, various activities in which you intend to participate, outside events that you plan on attending, plans to complete required internship experiences, and other goals and objectives.

- Enroll for one credit hour of CAHC 586 per every 100 clock hours you intend to complete at your internship site for the semester.

- Complete applicable tuition waiver forms, which can be obtained from Tk20’s Documents Room; submit this completed waiver form along with the Selective Service form (also found with Tk20 documents) to Gabel Hall 200.

NOTE: Internship applications, plans, hours tracking, live observations, evaluations, and other internship documentation must be completed separately for each semester in which counselors-in-training intend to enroll in CAHC 586 internship.

NOTE: If you complete internship at two sites, you must complete two separate plans and two separate sets of hours tracking.

NOTE: Although you may use the same plan contents if continuing at the same internship site beyond one semester, (provided you are performing the same duties/activities), you must provide new copies with amended dates for the specific and current NIU semester. If any duties change, or if you are going to a new site, you must create a new plan.

NOTE: School Counseling interns must commit themselves to a minimum of three consecutive hours per day at their site. Occasionally, school counseling students opt to perform 200 internship hours at an agency that serves youth (e.g., Youth Services Bureau).

211 Teaching Internship

Students applying for CAHC 211 teaching internship may complete these internship experiences anytime and the maximum clock-hours of counted toward student’s 600 clock-hour requirement for gradation will not exceed 200 clock-hours. Requirements for teaching CAHC 211 include successful completion of CAHC 511 and application approval from the CAHC 211 program coordinator.
Criminal Background Check

The Counseling program requires that all practicum applicants submit to a criminal background check by the Illinois State Police and the Federal Bureau of Investigation (Adam Walsh Child Protection Act) as outlined in the attached NIU Criminal Background Check Information Sheet prior to approval for counseling practicum and subsequent internship experiences. This is consistent with the state law that requires Illinois school districts to conduct criminal background investigations of applicants for certified and non-certified positions, including counseling licensure. An applicant whose background check results in a status of "no record" may be admitted into counseling practicum.

- An applicant may not be placed in any schools if the background check determines that he or she has been convicted of criminal behavior that, by law, automatically prohibits him or her from attaining Professional Educator Licensure in Illinois.

- The offenses that automatically prohibit licensure include first degree murder, any Class X felony, juvenile pimping, soliciting a juvenile prostitute, exploitation of a child, obscenity, child pornography, criminal sexual assault, aggravated criminal sexual assault, criminal sexual abuse, aggravated criminal sexual abuse, some offenses set forth in the Cannabis Control Act, and some crimes defined in the Illinois Controlled Substances Act.

- Applicants whose criminal background check reveals an offense other than these may be recommended for approval if, in the judgment of the program, the offense should not disqualify the individual from obtaining a counseling degree. Applicants are advised that their admission into the counseling program, approval for counseling practicum, and advancement to internship does not guarantee professional licensure or certification post-degree. These applicants must follow the additional admission process indicated below.

- Please note that criminal background checks are also conducted as part of the Illinois counseling licensure process. This is a separate evaluation process from NIU’s counseling program and may end in different results. Students who are concerned that their backgrounds may prohibit them from obtaining counseling licensure may contact the Illinois Department of Professional Regulations for an evaluation prior to applying.

If a student interrupts his/her program for one semester or longer, a criminal background check may be required upon his/her reentry. A criminal background check is only good for two years. Thus, completion of more than one background check may be required during the course of a students' degree program and/or internship experiences.

It generally requires three to six weeks to obtain the results of a fingerprint check. During that period the student is not permitted to participate in field experiences in the schools.

Applicants are responsible for all fees connected with this procedure. Applicants may retrieve Illinois State Police background check forms from the Community Counseling Training Center at NIU in Graham 416 or request a Non-Fingerprint Request Form from: www.isp.state.il.us/crimhistory/uciaformreq.cfm
Original forms must be submitted to the Illinois State Police (not copies, retrieve new forms if you need to make moderate to large corrections). Students should indicate the current CAHE Department chair as the requester/receiver of background check results. The results of this background check are kept confidential from the Counseling faculty. If a positive response is found from the background check, this information is shared with the Department Chair of Counseling, Adult and Higher Education and shared with the student.

Dr. Suzanne Degges-White
Northern Illinois University
Gabel Hall 200
DeKalb, IL 60115-2828

Liability Insurance

Counseling interns are required to have professional liability insurance prior to participation in the internship experience. You must have a policy that provides a minimum liability of $1 million per incident and $1 million per annual aggregate. Professional liability insurance is offered to student members of many professional organizations, i.e., ACA, ASCA. You may not start collecting internship hours until proof of insurance has been verified by the internship coordinator.

Credit Hours for Registration

Six hundred (600) clock-hours of involvement in counseling and counseling-related activities are required for completion of the internship. In some cases, more than one semester will be required. For registration purposes, one credit hour equals 100 clock hours. For example, if a student only expects to complete 300 clock hours of internship in one semester, that student would register for three credit hours. A permit number is required to register for enrollment in CAHC 586 courses. Each semester after internship applications are approved, accepted applicants will receive internship acceptance materials including their enrollment permission number via Tk20 Student System message.

Internship acceptance and permit numbers may be distributed up to 30 days after NIU's open enrollment period begins. Applicants do not need to worry about being locked-out of CAHC 586 sections for which they were approved. However, once permit numbers are distributed to students, it is imperative that students enroll in their approve course sections within five days otherwise the course may be dropped all together.

Counselors-in-training must be enrolled for at least one credit-hour of internship seminar (CAHC 586) whenever they are accruing internship experience hours (including teaching CAHC 211). If a student requests a temporary incomplete due to non-fulfillment of credit-hour enrollment for the previous semester, the intern, advisor, site supervisor, and university supervisor must communicate on the expected contract extension for fulfilling incomplete contract hours. If interns are not able to fulfill incomplete contract hours before the start of the next NIU semester the intern must enroll for at least one credit hour of
internship seminar and complete required university responsibilities as arranged with the interns' advisor and university supervisor.

School Counseling Specialization: Content Area Test (181)

According to Public Act 097-0607: An Act Concerning Education, as of July 1, 2012:

All applicants seeking a State license shall be required to pass a test of content area knowledge for each area of endorsement for which there is an applicable test. There shall be no exception to this requirement. No candidate shall be allowed to student teach, serve as the teacher of record, or begin an internship or residency required for licensure until he or she has passed the applicable content area test. (Sec. 21B-30; d)

School counseling interns are subject to teacher law in Illinois and must complete and pass the Content 181 Test for school counselors prior to the start of counseling internship. NIU's counseling program policy is that students pass the content 181 exam prior to submitting application for internship (see above for internship application deadlines). See appendix D for frequently asked questions about school counselor examinations (TAP, ACT+Writing, Content 181) and licensure preparations. To view the entire law go to: http://www.ilga.gov/legislation/publicacts/97/097-0607.htm

The Internship Experience

The Internship is an intensive field-based experience for candidates in the master’s degree programs in counseling. Interns integrate advanced competencies and knowledge with professional supervision. Placements occur in a variety of community agencies, school, college, or institutional settings. Application for the internship and approval for placement are required prior to enrollment and on-site activities. Prospective interns need to have completed all components of counseling practicum course experiences before beginning counseling internship seminar experiences and accumulating internship hours. Interns are encouraged to plan a 9 to 10 month internship experience at one to two site locations. A minimum of six hundred (600) clock-hours in internship placement are required. The grading system is Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.

Counseling Internship Expectations

General Internship Guidelines:

- The site supervisor will need to have a master’s degree in a counseling related field and have at least two years of professional practice experience. In addition, the supervisor must be an active (a) Licensed Clinical Professional Counselor (LCPC), (b)Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC), (c) Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW), or Licensed Psychologist for community agency settings. More specifically, a school counseling site supervisor must at minimum have an active Professional
Educators License (PEL). There are several PEL endorsements, be sure the supervisor has the required School Counselor endorsement. **NO EXCEPTIONS!**

- Within the specified time frame, as indicated on internship plan form, the site supervisor will be the primary internship supervisor. Each intern is assigned to an internship seminar taught by a university supervisor (faculty liaison). The site supervisor and intern shall communicate with the university supervisor regarding progress, concerns, and performance evaluations.

- Master’s level interns need to accrue at least 600 clock-hours (at least 240 direct contact hours) of internship experiences to complete degree requirements.

- Interns can create an internship at their place of employment if they are able to design an internship experience that is qualitatively different from their typical work responsibilities. The new responsibilities must be in compliance with the counseling profession to which they aspire. The site supervisor must provide counseling intervention supervision beyond administrative supervision.

- Indirect internship hours or non-contact time (i.e., planning, progress notes, counseling projects, etc.) can be accrued while the intern is away from the site, with the approval of the university supervisor and clarified with the site supervisor. This approval should be granted before interns decide to complete counseling related work away from their site.

**The Internship Site Supervisor Expectations:**

- Expose interns to the activities/responsibilities that a professional would experience in this setting and provide opportunities for interns’ participation according to their educational needs, demonstrated abilities, and professional interests.

- Work with interns in selecting programs, projects, and research activities relevant to the site that will help interns enhance their counseling skills and professional disposition.

- Meet a minimum of **ONE hour each week for counseling/clinical supervision sessions** and be available for on-site emergency situations.

- Ensure that interns have opportunities to accumulate the agreed upon clock-hours as specified in internship plan forms.

- For each NIU semester that interns are contracted at your site, review “live” samples of interns’ involvement with clients. This work sample must be at least 30 minutes, can be reviewed by direct observations or by recordings, and can include various types of professional practice (individual/group/family counseling, presenting curriculum, or facilitating staff presentations/trainings). Complete the live observation feedback record included in interns Final Evaluation form in the Tk20 system (live observations can be recorded when completed and prior to final evaluation periods when applicable).
• On a bi-weekly basis, validate (with electronic notation and electronic signature) the amount of clock hours interns spent on various counseling related activities. Interns will complete the internship log forms on a **weekly basis**. The university supervisor will also validate these log forms.

• Collaborate with the university supervisor on interns’ progress and complete a final written evaluation of interns’ performance and potential (midterm evaluations are optional).

• **Attend the supervision workshop at the beginning of the NIU internship semester for which you have contracted to supervise interns.**

**The University Supervisor Expectations:**

• Ensure that the Internship Plan meets individualized educational and professional development needs of interns as well as counseling program expectations. The plan agreement needs to be completed by both the intern and the site supervisor. The university supervisor may collaborate if necessary and will also approve the plan. Once completed, the student, the student’s advisor, site supervisor, and university supervisor should validate the plan agreement with their electronics signature forms.

• Verify that interns have current liability insurance during counseling internship.

• **Remain in contact with the site supervisor throughout the semester.** Conduct at least one in-person site visit each semester interns are contracted at the site. Phone or e-mail contact is expected on at least TWO occasions: at the beginning of the semester and at the end of the semester. This policy applies independently for each semester the intern is enrolled in NIU internship seminar.

• If concerns arise, the university supervisor is typically the first level of mediation. If issues cannot be resolved at this level, the NIU counseling internship coordinator will intervene.

• The final evaluation document should reflect the internship plan. It is the university supervisor’s responsibility to see that this is done prior to the site supervisor completing the evaluation and before university semester evaluations are due (grades).

• Solicit evaluative feedback from site supervisor and assume primary responsibility for assigning grade (S/U/I). If an intern, requests and is approved for an Incomplete in internship, the university supervisor is responsible for completing grade change paperwork once the intern has indicated they have fulfilled their site and university contracted clock and credit hours.

• Confirm that the periodic review of the interns work performance is being conducted by the site supervisor. This review must include observations and/or recordings.
The Intern’s Expectations:

- Establish agreed upon internship plan, hours and dates for each site (maximum two-sites per semester). This may involve a modification to the internship agreement if a particular project the intern is involved in runs beyond the expected end date for internship.

- Provide documentation for liability insurance prior to accruing internship hours. Students will NOT be able to count internship hours until insurance coverage is documented with NIU.

- Conduct yourself in a professional manner (i.e., arriving to the site on time, adequately completing tasks by their designated deadlines, wearing appropriate attire, etc.).

- Maintain accurate internship logs of activities and obtain site supervisor’s bi-weekly hours approval. The counseling program’s standardized time log sheet is provided for you within your Tk20 Internship Field Experience Binder each semester. You must use this form; no exceptions. Log sheets need to be completed by interns on a weekly basis (daily updates are recommended).

- Periodically review the number of direct contact and indirect hours with the site supervisor. It is your responsibility to keep track of your hours and inform your university and site supervisor of the progression of those hours.

- If a student has two internship placements, 300 of those hours must be accrued at one primary site location. A total of 400 clock-hours (of 600 degree required hours) must be at specialization-specific sites.

- School counseling interns and Clinical Mental Health Interns have specific required internship experiences to complete over the course of their entire internship experiences. Specifically, School Counseling Interns must log a minimum of three consecutive hours per day on days when performing internship responsibilities at each school site.

- Meet a minimum of one hour each week for supervision conducted by the site supervisor. Arrive for supervision with questions or concerns, growth considerations, and professional-strengths comments.

- Conduct yourself in accordance to the professional ethics and codes for counseling as well as for the respective internship sites. School counselors-in-training will refer to both ACA and ASCA guidelines and ethical codes; clinical mental health counselors-in-training refer to ACA ethical codes.

- Seek information and knowledge to be successful in the counseling role. Students are highly encouraged attend conferences such as ICA, ISCA, IMHCA.

- Participate in projects, programs, research activities, and other opportunities that have been agreed upon with the site supervisor.

- Complete all appropriate responsibilities agreed upon with site supervisor.
• Frequently evaluate and discuss progress with both the site supervisor and university supervisor. This may involve renegotiating the initial internship plan/goals.

• Make arrangements for the site supervisor to review “live” samples of your work each semester the intern is enrolled at NIU. A 30-minute sample involving direct work with clients/students either by observation or a recording. Documentation of this review is to be included in the Intern’s Final Evaluation each semester.

• Contact the university supervisor IMMEDIATELY if there are concerns related to internship.

Master's Internship Seminar Attendance Policy

During each semester interns are enrolled for internship credit, students must attend internship seminar meetings that are typically held on Tuesday nights. Summer internship seminars typically meet weekly, while fall and spring seminar meetings are typically bi-weekly. Failure to attend the seminar may result in an unsatisfactory grade for that semester of internship, even if the student is doing satisfactory work at their site. Absences will be monitored by instructor and make-up work may be required for missed sessions.

As noted above, students are strongly encouraged to complete their area of counseling specialization internship over the course of at least two semesters (even if 211 internship was previously completed). Students who have completed at least two full semesters at the same site and/or are not contracted with their site(s) for a full NIU internship semester may petition for modification of seminar attendance policies based on instructor’s decision in consultation with the intern’s program advisor. The student is required to develop a plan with the instructor that may include not attending the seminar during part of the semester.

Master's Program Internship Completion Policy

All Master’s students in the counseling program must successfully complete a total of 600-clock-hours of professional internship experiences with a minimum of 400 clock-hours in their area of specialization to be eligible for graduation. Students may meet this requirement over the course of two to three semesters on average. Students who want to complete 600 hours in one semester or to take internship for more than three semesters must petition the faculty explaining extenuating circumstances for their request. Students requesting a single semester internship (600 hours completed during one semester) must submit petition to the internship coordinator the semester before they apply for internship seminar. Students requesting to extend their internship beyond three semesters must submit their petition to the internship coordinator at the beginning of their third internship seminar semester.

There are three opportunities for students to complete up to 200 clock-hours of internship experiences outside of their primary specialization site. The first opportunity may be given to students who take internship credit for teaching CAHC 211 classes. Interns may also
apply for completing internship at the Community Counseling Training Center at NIU (CCTC). CCTC Internship applicants should be aware of the following requirements:

Master’s and Doctoral applicants must:

- have successfully completed practicum (CAHC 550 or CAHC 750)
- Be registered for internship while providing counseling in the CCTC (CAHC 586 or CAHC 786)
- Seek out and secure an approved supervisor to provide weekly clinical supervision
- Provide proof of professional liability insurance coverage
- Complete other CCTC duties as assigned, such as center scheduling, responding to CCTC inquiries, or community outreach

CCTC Master’s Counseling Interns minimum requirements:

- Maintain 7 working hours in the CCTC each week, including 1 hour of staffing and 2 office work hours each week for CCTC duties as assigned (scheduling, client reception, community outreach, etc.)
- Maintain a minimum client load of 4 clients each week, excluding NIU breaks

CCTC Doctoral Counseling Interns minimum requirements:

- Maintain a minimum client load of 4 clients each week, excluding NIU breaks
- Be available for 90 minutes of CCTC group staffing meetings each week

The third opportunity for completing non-specialization internship experiences would be for students who wish to complete a non-clinical internship. Students who are interested in this must discuss this with their advisor and the internship coordinator. The student must submit a request in writing to the internship coordinator. The request must be submitted before the internship application deadline at least one semester in advance of when the student is planning to complete the non-clinical internship. The coordinator will take the request to the faculty for a final decision. No more than 200 clock-hours of non-clinical internship may be counted toward students’ internship requirements for graduation.

Frequently Asked Questions about Internship

*I want to start earning internship hours early (in December, May, or August) - what do I do?*

It is possible to accrue internship hours during the times when NIU is not in session. The earliest one may be allowed to embark on earning hours is the Monday following the December, May, or August graduations. However, before you can start accruing hours, you must: be approved for internship by the counseling faculty; have received a letter from the internship coordinator informing you about your acceptance into internship; and have submitted an internship plan that has the approval of your site supervisor and your advisor specifying the types of duties and activities you will be performing while interning at the site. You must further have your site supervisor supply a letter to the internship coordinator in which the site supervisor (a) states that she/he is aware that NIU is not in session during these weeks and (b) agrees to take full responsibility for your performance during this time when NIU is not in session. This form letter is available to site supervisors.
via Tk20 intern assessments and must be signed before internship hours can be accrued. The internship plan agreement and proof of liability insurance are also required.

**I may be a few hours short. Can I still graduate?**

If you have not fulfilled the requirements for completing internship (e.g., minimum number of total or direct service hours, paperwork, assignments, etc.) you will receive a grade of incomplete and you may not graduate. If you have already applied for Spring or Fall graduation ceremonies, you may still be able to walk in graduation, but your diploma will not be conferred until your required experiences and/or documentation have been completed and grade change forms from the university supervisor/seminar instructor have been submitted to the graduate school. To avoid a graduation delay, it is important to plan ahead at your site, work collaboratively with the site and university supervisors, and keep accurate internship time logs.

Example: suppose that a student is 40 clock hours short of fulfilling the 600 hour minimum by the time May graduation occurs. It might take that student two or three weeks to accrue those hours at her or his site. The student may receive a temporary grade of Incomplete which will revert to Satisfactory pending the successful completion of hours. In this case, the student's graduation will be delayed until August.

**Can I intern at more than one site in a semester?**

Yes, you can. However, you cannot have more than TWO internship sites per semester. Interns should remember that over the course of their entire NIU counseling internship a minimum of 300 hours must be accrued at one primary area of specialization site.

**I am currently in the school counseling area of professional preparation. Can I intern at a non-school setting?**

Yes, CACREP accreditation standards allow for this opportunity. A maximum of 200 clock-hours toward internship can be accrued in a non-school setting. Some students elect to teach CAHC 211 others may intern in the CCTC. Another acceptable and specialization related alternative is to intern for 200 hours in an agency serving youth and families.

**I’m planning to do an internship at my school of employment. How do I schedule that?**

It’s likely that you will need to rearrange your work schedule in order to accommodate an internship at your current school of employment. That’s why it’s vitally important to plan ahead. Consult with your building principal about how your classroom responsibilities and schedule might be modified. You should also keep in mind the following requirement: on days when you are performing your internship in the school, **you must log a MINIMUM of three consecutive clock hours**---this requirement affords you an experience that more closely approximates how a school counselor actually functions in the position.

**Can I complete practicum and internship at the same time?**

CACREP standards clearly state that a student must have completed 100 clock hours of practicum experience before being allowed to start a clinical internship.
The exception to the practicum stipulation pertains to the teaching of CAHC 211 for internship credit. A student may receive up to 200 clock hours credited toward internship requirements (maximum of 50 direct-service hours and 150 indirect-service hours) by teaching CAHC 211 prior to (or during) the semester of practicum. Successful completion of CAHC 511 is one of the qualifications for a CAHC 211 internship. Contact the CAHC 211 program coordinator for more information about that internship experience.

**Can I get a paid internship?**

Yes, but these opportunities are very rare. Most students who are getting paid while doing internship are interning at the public school where they have been employed as a teacher. A few students in the higher education and clinical mental health counseling areas of professional preparation are getting paid because they have incorporated new and more challenging responsibilities into their already existing job. Once in a while we hear from a school principal who is looking to recruit a new counselor by offering a paying internship. Check with the coordinator of the school counseling area for information.

Very few community or agency sites offer paid internships. Sometimes an agency agrees to hire a master’s student before her or his graduation and will offer to create a supervised internship covering the first several months of employment. Of course, the job responsibilities must be commensurate with what is expected of a master's level professional. If this seems like a possibility for you, speak with your advisor or the internship coordinator about the details.

**Can I get internship credit for the job I am doing now?**

The answer is MAYBE, but keep in mind this qualifier, that the goal of this counselor preparation program is for students to develop new counseling skills and expertise and that the internship is a students’ capstone experience for acquiring those skills and that expertise. Thus, you CANNOT receive credit for internship for the job that you are already doing---that would not allow you to acquire new skills. However, it is possible to work at your employment site incorporating new internship experiences into your current job if you develop a plan that allows you to perform counseling-related activities that are significantly different from and that are at a more challenging level of expertise than your current job requires.

For example, consider Jane Doe, a master’s student who now works at XYZ Community College. Among her major duties at XYZ, Jane keeps track of students’ progress toward graduation, does group administration of various career and personality tests, and helps coordinate the college’s retention program. Under the requirements of internship, none of these duties (important though they be) qualify for internship service hours. However, if Jane works out a plan with her current supervisor at XYZ that allows for some modification of her current duties, then she may be able to earn credit for internship hours. Assume that Jane does this with the approval of her supervisor; she now engages in different, more challenging experiences that, under supervision, allow her to: perform individual and group test interpretations, provide individual academic advising to new students, and work on the evaluation of the retention program.
Remember that a critical aspect is to work creatively and collaboratively with your supervisor or administrator at your current work site in order to modify your job responsibilities so that you can earn internship credit for new, more professionally challenging counseling activities.

**I want to specialize in two areas of professional preparation while I pursue a master's degree. What additional internship experiences must I complete?**

Students who wish to specialize in more than one area of counseling are able to accomplish this by adding required coursework in the second area as well as by completing additional practicum and internship experiences. The best way to assure the success of this is to work closely with your advisor so that coursework is completed in the proper sequence and all requirements are met. For more details refer to page 8; Dual Specialization Policy.

**I thought I was entitled to a tuition waiver for being enrolled in internship. Today in the mail I got a bill from the Bursar's Office for this semester's tuition. What gives??**

Currently students who were admitted to the graduate school are entitled a tuition waiver of the internship credit-hours for which they enroll. Interns must submit the tuition waiver request and selective service confirmation form EACH SEMESTER for which they would like to have their internship seminar course tuition waived. These forms can be found online and in the Tk20 Documents Room. These two forms must be submitted to the CAHE Department office in Gabel Hall 200 prior to the start of the internship semester. If these forms are submitted late, submitted separately, or submitted incomplete there may be a delay in processing. After submission to the Department these request are forwarded to the Graduate School.

The Graduate School must give their approval to the names on the list, and the list next gets forwarded to the Bursar’s Office. So there is some delay in the entire process. At times the process is delayed because some students wait until the very last minute to clarify their plans and intentions about enrolling in internship. That's why it's so important for us to know as soon as possible about students' plans to take internship! If a bill comes to you, pay the fees portion promptly (fees cannot be waived) and simply wait a few weeks for the tuition waiver paperwork to be completed. If the tuition waiver is not processed after 6 weeks of your submission, e-mail the graduate school to check on their receipt of your waiver forms (gradsch@niu.edu).
Appendices

Appendix A: Counseling Program Core Curriculum

*CAHC  500  Professional Identity and Ethics in Counseling (3)
*CAHC  501  Diagnosis of Mental Health Issues in Counseling (3)
*CAHC  511  Career Counseling (3)
*CAHC  525  Counseling Skills and Strategies (3) (PRQ: Admitted to program)
*CAHC  530  Counseling Theories and Practices (3)
*CAHC  533X Standardized Testing (3)
*CAHC  540  Group Counseling (3)
+CAHC  565  Multicultural Counseling (3) (PRQ: CAHC 500)
^CAHC  567  Substance Abuse Issues in Counseling (3) (PRQ: CAHC 501)
^CAHC  593  Crisis Intervention (3) (PRQ: CAHC 500, 501, 525)
*ETR   520  Introduction to Educational Research (3)
^EPS   710  Human Development across the Lifespan (3)
+CAHC  550  Practicum in Counseling (3) (PRQ: Consent of department)
CAHC   586  Internship in Counseling (6 credit hours – 600 hours) (PRQ: Consent of department)
CAHC   586  (Optional) Internship in Counseling (CAHC 211) (2) (PRQ: Consent of department)
Appendix B: Specialization Courses

Clinical Mental Health Counseling Specialization Courses

^CAHC 524 Clinical Mental Health Counseling: Programs, Issues, and Practices (3)

^CAHC 532 Evidence-Informed Practices in Clinical Mental Health (3)

(PRQ: CAHC 500, 501, 533X, ETR 520)

^CAHC 784X Theoretical Foundations of Family Therapy (3)

^Course Elective chosen in consultation with your advisor: 590-Workshop in Counseling;
592-Special Topics in Counseling; 594-LGBT Issues in Counseling; 595-
Women & Careers; 596-Religious & Spiritual Issues in Counseling; 597-
Independent Research in Counseling; 699-Master's Thesis; 766-Human
Sexuality Counseling; 767-Counseling Older People; CAHE 544-Transitional
Issues in Career Counseling & Placement

School Counseling Specialization Courses

^CAHC 513 Post-Secondary College Counseling for School Counselors (3)

*CAHC 521 Counseling with Children (3) (PRQ: CAHC 500, 525, 530)

+CAHC 523 School Counseling: Programs, Issues, and Practices (3)

^CAHC 570 Consultation and Management in Developmental School Counseling
Programs (3) (PRQ: 500, 523, 533, ETR 520)
Appendix C: Direct and Indirect Internship Services

Direct Service (examples)
- Individual Counseling
- Couples Counseling
- Family Counseling
- Group Counseling
- Career Counseling
- Advisement
- Teaching
- Psychological Evaluation/Test Administration
- Crisis Intervention
- Providing Consultation
- Presenting/Conducting professional workshops or seminars

Indirect Service (examples)
- Supervision (on-site)
- Supervision (university)
- Team or Faculty Conference/Staffing
- Program Development and Evaluation
- Case Conferences/Receiving Consultation
- Observations
- Research and Preparation
- Record Keeping and/or Administrative Tasks
- Attending Professional Workshops/Seminars/Presentations
- Staff Meetings
Appendix D: Frequently Asked Questions about School Counselor Exams and Licensure

*How and where do I sign up for the content test?*
Registration information: [http://www.icts.nesinc.com/IL16_testdates.asp](http://www.icts.nesinc.com/IL16_testdates.asp)

*Who should I contact if I need help preparing for the test?*
Study guides and sample test questions can be found on the ICTS website under the “prepare” heading at this link: [http://www.icts.nesinc.com/IL_PM.asp?t=181](http://www.icts.nesinc.com/IL_PM.asp?t=181)

*What if I cannot afford the registration fee at this time?*
No exceptions or waivers are available to this rule. Therefore, you may need to consider postponing your internship.

*What if I cannot take the test on either of the dates?*
No exceptions or waivers are available to this rule. Thus, you will need to postpone your internship.

*What happens if I do not pass the test?*
No exceptions or waivers are available to this rule. Thus, you will need to postpone your internship.

*How/when will the university know if I have passed?*
You have the option to have your test scores sent to your university; it is highly recommended that you select this option. Test scores will be reported to the university on the scheduled date for your specific test date. The certification officer at your university will update faculty with score information as soon as it is available. You will also need to upload a copy of your score report to your Tk20 internship application.

*Do I have to pass this exam before I take Practicum?*
No, this law does NOT pertain to Practicum. However, you do need to pass the TAP or ACT+Writing before you can apply for practicum.

*Do I have to pass this exam before I can teach CAHC 211?*
No, at this time, teaching 211 is not a part of this state requirement.