Marketing Yourself for Counseling Field Experience Opportunities
The Walden Career Services Center aspires to be a cutting edge, global career services center preparing our learners to navigate career transition over a lifetime. To achieve this vision, we educate, coach, and advise our learners to proactively manage their careers.
Kristi B. Cannon, Ph.D.
Field Experience Director
School of Counseling
Agenda

• Define the purpose of Field Experience
• Provide strategies on how to conduct a proactive search
• Market yourself and Walden University
• Create tailored application materials that highlight your unique qualifications
• Develop a step-by-step plan to land your Field Experience site
Purpose of Field Experience

• Fulfillment of program requirements
• Preparation for licensure (if applicable to program of study)
• Development of counseling skills
• Exposure to the counseling field
• Networking, mentoring, and references
• Building marketability
Know Your Target
Know Your Target: Site Requirements

• Program of Study:
  – M.S. in Addiction Counseling
  – M.S. in Career Counseling
  – M.S. in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling
  – M.S. in Mental Health Counseling
  – M.S. in School Counseling
  – Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision

• Masters’ programs:
  – Approved site supervisor must be on site at all times you are seeing clients
  – Requirement for 10-hours of leading or co-leading group counseling in internship
Know Your Target: The Site

What are some ways to research a potential Field Experience site?
Know Your Target: Site Supervisor Requirements

• Counseling Masters’ Programs:
  – A master’s degree in counseling or a related profession with equivalent qualifications; appropriate certifications and/or licenses
  – Certified or licensed in the state, district or province the student resides in
  – A minimum of two years of pertinent professional experience in the program area
  – Relevant training in counseling supervision

• Ph.D. in CES (practicum):
  – Same as above
  – Certified or licensed as a supervisor or otherwise meets the requirements of a state-approved supervisor

• Consult state licensure requirements
How well do you know your professional brand?
Define Your Brand

• What is unique about YOU?
  • Interests/skills/personality/values
  • Academic achievements
  • Related volunteer/work experience
  • Professional contributions
  • Community involvement
  • Specialized knowledge
Market Walden University

- CACREP accredited- MHC Program
  - All other programs are designed to meet or exceed CACREP standards
- Regional accreditation
- Social change mission
- Qualified faculty
- Diverse global perspective
- National (and international) student population
- Residency experience
- Rigorous curriculum
What is the most common method used by a site supervisor to fill a Field Experience position?
Is There a FIT?

• What values and contributions can you bring to the site?
• What knowledge and skills will be most useful?
• Do your qualifications match their needs?
• Will you fit in with the people/culture?
• Does the site afford you the opportunities you need to complete program requirements?
Winning Application Materials
Why a Career Portfolio?

A career portfolio:

• Sets you apart from other applicants
• Leaves a lasting impression
• Allows the site to learn more about you
• Includes accomplishments and achievements to reference during an interview
Creating Your Career Portfolio

- Cover letter
- Curriculum vita (CV)
- Walden-specific items:
  - Walden University Information
  - Counseling Program Information (requirements and course descriptions)
  - Application Papers and Assignments (your materials only)
  - Letters of recommendation
  - Copy of the *Field Experience Manual*
OptimalResume – Portfolio Builder

Welcome to Walden University’s OptimalResume system!

We are excited to offer OptimalResume, a career management system offering self-guided tools to help you:

- Create high-impact materials including resumes and cover letters based on your career goals
- Present your materials online — with our easy-to-use website builder
- Download your materials in a number of formats
- Manage an unlimited number of career documents from one central location
- Share your credentials across your network and extend their reach to social networking sites

To get started, Create New Account using your Walden University email and password. To have any career materials reviewed, please schedule an appointment through your myWalden University Portal.

The Walden University Career Services Center hopes you find this resource useful as you build your career!

https://waldenu.optimalresume.com
May 12, 2011

Jack Stevens, LPC
Lawrence Mental Health Facility
XXX Raymond Avenue
Detroit, MI 48201

Dear Mr. Stevens:

Jacqueline C. Thompson
XXXX State Street
Detroit, MI  48201
(XXX) XXX-XXXX
JacquelineC2@waldenu.edu
Cover Letter: Highlighting Your Brand

This serves as my letter of intent for a Practicum and/or Internship at your training site in order to complete my M.S. Counseling professional practice requirements. I am impressed with your reputation as a leading provider of mental health services in the Detroit area since 1978.

I am currently enrolled in a CACREP-accredited M.S. in Mental Health Counseling program at Walden University, a regionally accredited institution committed to counselor excellence. Faculty at Walden University are scholar-practitioners with credentials from top national universities. I have achieved a 4.0 GPA and completed coursework in Group Process and Dynamics, Techniques in Counseling, Diagnosis and Assessment, and Ethics and Legal Issues in Counseling.
I bring knowledge of individual counseling, group counseling, interviewing, observation, psychotherapy, diagnosis, assessment, and multicultural counseling. I have volunteered at a domestic crisis center for over a year and I am certified in domestic violence advocacy. My technology, organizational and communication skills acquired during ten years of prior administrative experience will also help me contribute to your team of mental health professionals.

As I approach the end of my graduate program, I am eager and ready to apply theory to practice. Enclosed you will find my career portfolio which includes a curriculum vita, a detailed description of the Master of Science in Mental Health Counseling program at Walden University, and Field Experience requirements.
Cover Letter: Portfolio and Program

I greatly appreciate your consideration of my application. If you have additional questions regarding requirements for the Practicum or Internship, Walden University, or the Mental Health Counseling program, you may contact the Field Experience Director, Dr. Kristi Cannon, at Kristi.Cannon@waldenu.edu. I’m looking forward to further discussing internship and/or practicum opportunities at your facility.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline C. Thompson
Curriculum Vita (CV)

- A biographical description of a person’s educational and work background

- Highlights academic-related qualifications

- Typically longer in length than a resume

- Curriculum Vita Guide available on Career Services Center site, ‘Resumes’ Tab: http://careercenter.waldenu.edu/resumes.htm

(Jackson and Beckes, 1998)
Suggested Sections of CV

Contact Information
Education
Relevant Professional Experience
Other Experience
Community Service
Licenses and Certifications
Publications
Professional Presentations and Papers
Honors and Awards
Professional Affiliations
Grants
References

(Walden University CV Guide available on Career Center website – ‘Resumes’ tab)
Additional CV Sections

Career Objective
Summary of Qualifications
Research Interests
Research Experience
Teaching Interests
Teaching Experience
Relevant Coursework
Memberships
Scholarships
Fellowships
Committees

Workshops Presented
Conferences Attended
Publications In Progress
Projects
Volunteer Experience
Study Abroad
International Experience
Specialized Skills
Language Skills
Computer Skills
Technical Skills
Share Your CART Stories

- Challenge – What was the problem?
- Action – What did you do? Did you initiate it?
- Result – Who or what was impacted and how?
- Tie-In – How does this apply to your future role?
• In 2007, I volunteered at Lawrence House, a facility for mentally ill and chemically dependent adults. During my time there, I recruited 10 patients to plant a permanent vegetable garden at the facility. My initiative helped promote physical activity, healthy eating, and sustainability, thereby improving both the physical and mental well-being of patients. As an intern at your facility, I hope to practice counseling techniques under supervision and further help mentally ill adults take initiative in their daily lives.
Other Considerations
# Top 5 Search Methods

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job Search</th>
<th>Field Experience Search</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 Take inventory on what you have to offer and what you’re looking for</td>
<td>Take a holistic approach to your search (identify interests/skills, goals, environments, sites, people, marketing your brand, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 Working with others, identify subjects or fields of interest to you</td>
<td>Build network of counseling professionals and ask for their input</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3 By yourself, identify and contact organizations via phone or site visit</td>
<td>Research sites and contact via phone or site visit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4 Knock on door whether there is a vacancy or not</td>
<td>Reach out to any site that interests you</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5 Ask your network for leads</td>
<td>Ask counseling professionals in your network about field experience openings</td>
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</tbody>
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(Bolles, 2009)
Gear Up for Your Search

• Create a powerful introduction:  
  http://www.internships.com/student/resources/prep/videointro/video-example

• Practice CART stories

• Strengthen your online presence:  www.linkedin.com

• Build field experience search skills:  
  http://www.quintcareers.com/internship_tutorial/

*Don’t wait too long to start your search!*
Informational Meetings: Making the Initial Contact

Hi __________, my name is ___________________ and I’m a graduate student pursuing a master’s degree in ________________ counseling at Walden University. I received your name from ________________. I understand that you’re engaged in counseling clients with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia. I am wondering if we could meet for 20 to 30 minutes to discuss your insights into your specialty and the possibility of my completing a field experience at your site.
Approaching Field Experience Sites: A Step-by-Step Plan

• Contact site supervisor directly (phone or in-person)
• Arrange an informational meeting
  – Face to face
  – Phone
  – Skype
• Dress professionally
• Provide targeted application materials
Approaching Field Experience Sites: A Step-by-Step Plan

• Meet with site supervisor (share stories, ask questions, bring articles, express interest)
• Leave career portfolio
• Follow up (thank you letter, email, phone)
• Land the practicum/internship!
Still Need Ideas?

• Tell everyone you know you are searching
• Join special interest groups related to your field
• Connect with potential site supervisors through social media
• Ask experts for advice
• Expand your search
• Be open to new settings and populations
• Improve your professional image
• Practice, practice, practice!
Field Experience Office Assistance

• Reach out to the field experience office if you find you need additional consultation
  – mhcfieldtraining@waldenu.edu
  – cesfieldtraining@waldenu.edu
Career Services Center

Quick Answers
Type your question in the search box, and click Go.

Looking to advance in your career? Transitioning to a new job? Enhancing your professional development and network? We're here to help you navigate your career journey! We encourage you to set goals and assume active stewardship of your career progress from the very start of your academic program.

The Career Services Center offers
- paths to self-knowledge;
- resources for job opportunities and career information;
- resume and curriculum vita tips;
- guidance on networking and branding;
- strategies to help you prepare for interviews and land the job

Career Services Website Tour

http://careercenter.waldenu.edu
Over 50 Career Services
Archived Webinars

OptimalResume Webinar Series
Part 1: Resume Builder
9/12/13
Andrea Obrycki

Part 2: Letter Builder
9/19/13
Andrea Obrycki

Part 3: Build an Online Portfolio
9/26/13
Andrea Obrycki

Creating Your Curriculum Vita: A Build Block to Your Future
6/26/12
Dr. Kelley Jo Walters
Dina Bergren

Crafting Effective Resumes
10/21/10
Nicolle Skalski

Tapping Into the Hidden Job Market
10/5/11
Nicolle Skalski

Mid-Life Job Search Strategies
1/25/12
Lisa Cook
Denise Pranke

Building Your Professional Brand
7/25/2012
Andrea Obrycki

Using LinkedIn to Build Your Professional Network
1/24/13
Andrea Obrycki
Nicolle Skalski
Denise Pranke
Get Connected!

Join our Career Services LinkedIn Group

Follow us on Twitter

Read Walden student successes on our blog

Check out OptimalResume

Access everything from the CS website: http://careercenter.waldenu.edu
Email: careerservices@waldenu.edu
Questions?
References

360Reach is a site that includes a professional branding assessment:  http://www.reachcc.com/360reach

Bolles, R. N.  (2009).  The job-hunter’s survival guide:  How to find hope and rewarding work, even when “there are no jobs.”  United States:  Ten Speed Press.

Internships.com is a site for students seeking internship advice:  http://www.internships.com/student


Thank You for Participating!