Field Experience Manual

School of Counseling

Counseling Masters’ Programs

MS in Addiction Counseling
MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling
MS in School Counseling
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College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
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Section 1. Introduction

This manual is designed to help students understand the requirements and policies for their required field experiences. Section 1 contains an introduction to field experiences within the counseling masters’ programs1 at Walden University, Section 2 provides information about securing appropriate field experience sites, Section 3 contains detailed information about the practicum and internship requirements, and Section 4 describes important policies related to field experiences.

All students are expected to read this manual in detail and adhere to the policies included within. All students must acknowledge that they have read and understand all the policies in this manual prior to applying for a field experience. This confirmation occurs in the New Student Orientation as well as at both academic residencies, and in the field experience application process. Failure to comply with the policies within this manual is considered a violation of Walden University’s Code of Conduct and Student Professional Conduct Policy and may result in formal sanctions, including, but not limited to, award of a failing course grade, Code of Conduct inquiry, and dismissal from the university. See the Walden University Student Handbook for details.

Information about all field experience procedures, including forms and manuals, is published on the School of Counseling Office of Field Experience (SOC-OFE) website.

School of Counseling

Mission

The School of Counseling prepares competent and confident masters’-level professional counselors and doctoral-level counselor educators and supervisors to address current counseling and educational needs of diverse and multicultural populations across environments and to provide prevention and intervention strategies for maintaining current and future mental health and wellness. Faculty and administrators are committed to preparing adult learners to be scholar-practitioners, advocates, and leaders who promote positive social change worldwide on both the individual and systemic level. Students are mentored in a technologically advanced milieu by a global faculty community of doctoral-level scholars with a breadth of personal and professional experiences and expertise. Graduates will be equipped with knowledge of contextually and culturally relevant applications and skills that enhance their abilities to ethically practice in a myriad of settings.

Vision

The School of Counseling uses technology and innovation to give people who aspire to change the world access to a quality counselor education. The School of Counseling has adopted a

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1 Walden University’s MS in Addictions Counseling; MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling; MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling; and MS in School Counseling will be collectively referred to as the “counseling masters’ programs” throughout this manual.
A conceptual framework to represent the anticipated outcomes related to student learning and skills.

Figure 1 identifies that the school is working to develop confident and competent counseling professionals who will be self-aware individuals, agents of social change, scholar-practitioners, and professional ambassadors. Students and graduates will be able to demonstrate their ability to be lifelong learners in the field as well as to be culturally adaptive and ethical in their practice.

Figure 1. School of Counseling Conceptual Model
What Is Field Experience?

According to the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), field experience (or professional practice) provides for the application of theory and the development of counseling skills and professional identity under direct supervision. These experiences provide opportunities for students to counsel clients who represent the cultural and contextual diversity of their community. Field experience consists of a practicum (one term) and a consecutive internship (two terms) experience.

Practicum

The practicum is the first experiential training component of field experience. Practicum is defined by CACREP as a “distinctly defined, supervised clinical experience in which the student develops basic counseling skills and integrates professional knowledge.” The intention of practicum is to provide an opportunity for students to orient themselves to professional practice and begin working directly with clients while under the supervision of a licensed practitioner.

Internship

The internship field experience is completed after the student has fulfilled the practicum requirements. According to CACREP, internship is “a distinctly defined, post-practicum, supervised ‘capstone’ clinical experience in which the student refines and enhances basic counseling or student development knowledge and skills, and integrates and authenticates professional knowledge and skills appropriate to his or her program and initial postgraduate professional placement.” The intention of internship is to build on the foundational experience of the practicum and synthesize knowledge, skills, and dispositions as a competent and confident counseling professional.

Supervision

Supervision is a tutorial and mentoring form of instruction in which a supervisor monitors the students’ activities during the practicum and internship and facilitates the learning and skill development experiences associated with them. The supervisor monitors and evaluates the clinical work of students while monitoring the quality of services offered to clients. The types of required supervision are as follows:

- **Individual Supervision**—a tutorial and mentoring relationship between a member of the counseling profession (supervisor) and a counseling student.
- **Triadic Supervision**—a tutorial and mentoring relationship between a member of the counseling profession (supervisor) and two counseling students.
- **Group Supervision**—a tutorial and mentoring relationship between a member of the counseling profession (supervisor) and more than two counseling students.

To learn more terms used to describe field experiences, see Appendix A.
School of Counseling Office of Field Experience

Mission
In alignment with the missions of Walden University, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Central Office of Field Experience, the School of Counseling Office of Field Experience (SOC-OFE) serves all counseling programs by working with adult learners to apply their developing skills as scholar-practitioners in culturally and contextually diverse opportunities. The SOC-OFE additionally supports adult learners in the development of their identities as agents of social change and as competent and confident counseling professionals.

Vision
In alignment with the visions of Walden University, the College of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Central Office of Field Experience, the SOC-OFE directs diverse opportunities for adult learners to demonstrate their skills of inquiry, discovery, and professional practice. The SOC-OFE is motivated to assure peak educational quality, integrity, and customer service as well as leading the capstone processes. The SOC-OFE envisions a global scope of practice resulting in competent and confident counseling professionals being agents of social change upon graduation.

Personnel
The SOC-OFE consists of an academic team (field experience academic coordinators) as well as an operations team (field experience operations director and coordinators, based in Walden’s Minneapolis office—often referred to collectively as “the field office”). The director of field experience oversees both SOC-OFE teams.

Director of Field Experience
The director of field experience is a full-time administrator for the School of Counseling. This individual is responsible for all field experience curriculum development (i.e., practicum and internship courses) and all the administrative duties of the SOC-OFE for the counseling programs. The director of field experience is responsible for overseeing all policy and procedural changes in the SOC-OFE; supervising the field experience operations director, field experience operations coordinators, and field experience academic coordinators; scheduling site supervisor and student orientations; and facilitating the remediation process for field experience issues. The director of field experience also collaborates with program, school, college, and university leadership for all counseling programs and interfaces with Walden’s Central Office of Field Experience, which includes providing routine reporting and data collection.

Field Experience Academic Coordinator
Field experience academic coordinators are Walden faculty members who support the faculty supervisors and student application processes for the counseling programs. Field experience academic coordinators work with the director of field experience to develop and implement field experience policies and procedures for the counseling programs, are responsible for approving students’ field experience site and site supervisor selections, and serve as the primary course leads for the practicum and internship courses.
Field Experience Operations Director

The field experience operations director, working closely with the director of field experience, is responsible for the operations of the SOC-OFE in Minneapolis. This individual provides guidance and supervision to the field experience operations coordinators, implementing and assuring compliance with policy and procedural changes in the SOC-OFE, and maintaining Web-based and written materials. The field experience operations director collaborates with departments across the university, including academic advising, the Registrar’s Office, and Walden’s Central Office of Field Experience, ensuring the SOC-OFE complies with university policies and procedures, and providing routine reporting and data collection.

Field Experience Operations Coordinator

Field experience operations coordinators are Walden staff members who act as the main point of contact for students on matters related to the field experience. The field experience operations coordinators work with the director of field experience, field experience operations director, and field experience academic coordinators to assist students in the field experience process.

Communicating With the SOC-OFE

The field experience operations coordinators handle the first line of communication for the SOC-OFE. Field experience operations coordinators are available via e-mail or by telephone appointment. Current contact information for the field experience operations coordinators is available on the SOC-OFE website. Communication is responded to in the order in which it is received; students should expect to receive a response to e-mail and voicemail communication within 2 business days. Students can schedule individual telephone/video appointments with the field experience operations coordinators on the SOC-OFE website.

Students should be mindful of the Code of Conduct and other conduct policies when communicating with the SOC-OFE, as with all parties within the university. Violation of these policies (i.e., inappropriate or excessive communication, lack of response to communications from the SOC-OFE) may warrant a Code of Conduct inquiry, which can result in sanctions (see “Student Conduct and Responsibilities” in the Walden University Student Handbook for details).

Meditrek

Meditrek, a product of HSoft Corporation, is a user-friendly online tool that is used by the SOC-OFE for the documentation of field experiences. Students, faculty, and site supervisors are provided with login credentials and are required to use Meditrek throughout the field experience process. See the SOC-OFE website for detailed information about Meditrek.
Section 2. Securing Field Experiences

Walden University uses its best effort to assist students in locating appropriate field experience sites. As students are in the best position to identify an appropriate field experience site that meets their particular learning objectives and location, students are responsible for locating and securing any required field placements. In the event students have difficulty in securing an appropriate field site, the SoC-OFE has supports available to assist you. Please review the support process at http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/fieldexperience/soc/site.

Students are required to complete their field experience in their country of citizenship or in a country that they are legally permitted to work. Walden University is not authorized by the USCIS to process student visas for non-U.S. citizens to complete field experiences in the United States. Non-U.S. citizens may not enter the United States for purposes of completing a Walden University field experience in any other visa category such as visitor or on business. Non-U.S. citizens currently in the United States on an H, L, or other non-immigrant work visa should consult their immigration attorney to determine whether their visa category permits them to work at an internship site. Hours of work performed in an improper status will not be counted toward the field site hour requirements.

All counseling students are required to complete a practicum and an internship consisting of a supervised practice in a setting appropriate for their program of study. Students are encouraged to complete their practicum and internship field experiences at the same site and/or within the same organization when possible. Students are expected to begin searching for field experiences at least 12 months before the expected start of the field experience and apply 6 months prior to enrollment in the practicum or internship.

When selecting a field experience site, it is imperative that students schedule a face-to-face appointment or at least participate in a telephone interview with potential site supervisors to ensure that the site and site supervisor fit the needs of their program. Students should discuss the type of counseling experience they can expect to receive at the site (e.g., client population served, supervision policies and procedures, how clients are assigned) and ensure that the site supervisor will meet the field experience requirements.

**Important note:** Students, especially those participating in field experiences in the winter or summer quarters, need to be mindful of site schedules, as there are often periods of time when sites are closed (for vacations, holidays, etc.). CACREP requires full participation in every week of enrollment in each field experience. Vacations and “breaks” are not permitted to be scheduled during active enrollment in a field experience.

Field Experience at Place of Employment

According to CACREP, students are allowed to complete a field experience (practicum and/or internship) in their current place of employment. However, the counseling masters’ programs
require students to provide appropriate documentation to indicate that their practicum/internship duties are distinguished and significantly different from their current employment duties. Field experience students are required to document the distinction between field experience duties, responsibilities, and duration of time completing field experience tasks versus their occupational requirements.

When students plan to complete their field experience at their place of employment, evidence of adhering to the following requirements must be included in their application:

- The field experience duties and tasks must be clearly focused on providing a new learning experience for the student.
- The duties and tasks must be significantly different from current or previous employment activities performed by the student at the site.
- The work space for the field experience must be located in a different department/unit from where the student currently works or has previously worked.
- The site supervisor must not be the same person who supervises the student in any other situation either currently or in the past.

The student and the site supervisor are responsible for outlining the role of the student as a practicum student/intern as it differs from the student as an employee of the organization.

For additional details on the procedures for applying for field experiences with the student’s place of employment, see the SOC-OFE website.

**Field Experience at Multiple Sites**

Requests to work with multiple field sites concurrently are subject to approval at the university’s discretion. Students who plan to work with more than one site concurrently for a field experience must include this request as part of their application submission, in compliance with all deadlines and other field experience policies.

Students requesting to work with multiple field sites are required to include the following in their application:

- Provide the rationale for working with multiple sites.
- Describe the specific activities that will take place at each site.
- Confirm that they will receive at least 1 hour of continuous weekly supervision by an approved site supervisor at each site.

For additional details on the procedures for applying for field experiences with multiple sites, see the SOC-OFE website.

**In-Home, Off-Site, andClient Transportation Policy**

Walden University students are prohibited from participating in private in-home or community-based counseling. Students can be approved to work off-site—at sites that are directly and contractually affiliated with the approved site (e.g., prisons, schools, satellite offices)—as long as the approved site supervisor is on-site at all times when the student is seeing clients and the
counseling services are provided in a professional office setting. Walden University students are prohibited from transporting clients.

**Assistance With Securing a Field Experience Site**

Students are required to secure practicum and internship field sites within their communities that meet the requirements for their respective counseling program. The same application submission, review, and approval process is required of every student. Resources to help students search for field sites are available in the “Securing a Site” section of the SOC-OFE website, including checklists, websites, and a list of field sites previously used by Walden students.

If students have utilized all resources provided on the SOC-OFE website, have searched for sites within at least a 50-mile radius of their home zip code, have tracked the site responses to their inquiries, and have still not been able to secure a field site, additional targeted support is available. Students who have completed all these tasks and need help securing a site may contact the SOC-OFE (socmasfieldexperience@waldenu.edu) for assistance. Students are required to complete the Field Experience Site Contact Record (available on the SOC-OFE website) to demonstrate their outreach efforts. Students are expected to have record of contacting at least 15 sites prior to contacting the SOC-OFE to request additional support in securing a field site.

**Important note:** Inability to locate an appropriate site and/or site supervisor will not result in an alteration or extension of any university deadlines.

**On-Site Supervision**

**Site Supervisor Credentials and Requirements**

Site supervisors for all counseling masters’ students must possess the following qualifications:

- A minimum of a master’s degree, preferably in counseling or a related profession.
- Relevant certifications and/or licenses for independent practice in the state, district, or province where the student is completing the field experience.
- A minimum of 2 years of pertinent professional experience post licensure in the program area in which the student is enrolled.2
- Knowledge of the program’s expectations, requirements, and evaluation procedures for students.

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2 It is preferred that students enrolled in the MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling program work with licensed mental health counselors/licensed professional counselors who specialize in couples and family counseling. Licensed marriage, couple, and family therapists, licensed clinical social workers, or licensed clinical or counseling psychologists may also be approved at the discretion of the field experience academic coordinator; however, the emphasis in clinical experience must reflect work with couples and/or families. It is preferred that students enrolled in the MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program work with licensed mental health counselors/licensed professional counselors. Licensed clinical social workers, licensed marriage and family therapists, or licensed clinical or counseling psychologists may also be approved at the discretion of the director of field experience.
• Relevant training in counseling supervision and, when applicable, holds the required supervisory credentials in the state, district, or province where the student is completing the field experience.\(^3\)

• Site supervisors are employed by the field site (full-time, part-time, contractor, etc.).

• Site supervisors remain on site at all times the student is seeing clients.\(^4\)

### Site Supervisor Responsibilities

Site supervisors are responsible for the following:

• Providing a mentoring relationship and an educational opportunity to assist counseling work as well as orient the student into the profession.

• Providing at least 1 consecutive hour of individual or triadic supervision each week (a maximum of one additional student). Group supervision cannot be substituted for the individual or triadic on-site supervision requirement.

• Completing a **site supervisor orientation prior** to the start of the student’s field experience.

• Reviewing the required audio or video recordings and associated transcripts or fulfilling an alternative observation method, as determined by the director of field experience.

• Completing evaluations of the student in the required systems by the designated deadlines and assisting with the completion of other program documentation (e.g., Individual Field Experience Plan and time log).

• Attending a midquarter teleconference “site visit.”

• Corresponding with the university instructor in biweekly communication (if applicable) or as needed to coordinate supervision efforts to support the student.

• Remaining on-site at all times the student is seeing clients, for the safety and welfare of the clients and students.

• Agreeing and signing a supervision contract for submission with the student’s application packet.

#### Important notes:

• On-site supervision must be either individual or triadic.

• Counseling masters’ students must not pay the site supervisor for supervision.

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\(^3\) Site supervisors who do not have training in counseling supervision are able to complete the Site Supervisor Orientation and Training to meet this requirement. See the [SOC-OFE website](#) for detailed information.

\(^4\) This is a program requirement to assure the safety and welfare of clients and students.
Family members and friends cannot serve as the site supervisor. The site supervisor should also not be someone with whom the student has worked closely in the past. See Multiple Role Relationships in the Field Experience Policies section of this manual.

Field Site Affiliation Agreements

The Field Site Affiliation Agreement is an agreement between the university and the field site that addresses the responsibilities of the student, the field site, and the university with regard to a field experience. A fully executed affiliation agreement must be on file with a field site before students will be enrolled to begin a field experience at the site.

Important note: If a current affiliation agreement exists between Walden and a given site that covers the student’s specific program, a new Field Site Affiliation Agreement will not be necessary. Students can check with the SOC-OFE (socmasfieldexperience@waldenu.edu) to find out if Walden has an applicable agreement on file with a given field site.

Because the affiliation agreement is a legal document, it is imperative that the appropriate individual sign it. The appropriate signatory is determined by the site (an individual with authority to bind the field site, such as an agency director). It may be appropriate for a site supervisor who is also the agency owner or director to sign the form; however, in most cases, the site supervisor will not have the legal authority to sign on behalf of the agency or site. Students must ensure that the appropriate party is identified by the site to complete this legal document prior to submission to the SOC-OFE. The signed Field Site Affiliation Agreement should be included in the application packet and submitted within the field experience application window, unless the student has confirmed with the SOC-OFE that there is already a valid Field Site Affiliation Agreement on file with the proposed field site.

Some sites need to make revisions to Walden’s standard agreement or have their own agreements that they prefer to use instead of signing Walden’s Field Site Affiliation Agreement. In these cases, students should contact the SOC-OFE as soon as possible so that the office can facilitate review of the document by Walden’s contract administrators in the Central Office of Field Experience (COFE). This review process can be lengthy, so it is in the student’s best interest to start this process as soon as possible. (At minimum, the proposed agreement must be submitted to the SOC-OFE within the field experience application windows posted on the SOC-OFE website.) COFE establishes non-negotiable internal deadlines for submitting affiliation agreements; therefore, compliance with submission deadlines is paramount.

The following information is required by COFE to facilitate the negotiation of an agreement by Walden’s contract administrators:

- Copy of the revised or alternative agreement.
- Contact information (name, title, phone number, e-mail address) of the person at the site with whom changes to the agreement should be negotiated.
- Student’s name.
• Intended start date of the field experience.

The signed Field Site Affiliation Agreement should be submitted with the other application materials within the application submission window. Students who have an agreement in review by COFE are required to submit the other application materials within the published field experience application window so that they can be reviewed by the SOC-OFE while the Field Site Affiliation Agreement is being finalized.

See the “Forms and Instructions” page within the “Application Process” section of the SOC-OFE website for Walden’s standard Field Site Affiliation Agreement as well as detailed information about procedures related to affiliation agreements.

### Applying for Field Experiences

Field site and supervisor approval are required before students will be enrolled in the practicum or internship. The field experience academic coordinator is responsible for reviewing and approving all field sites and site supervisors prior to the start of the field experience. Students are required to submit applications for field experiences within the application window which closes **6-12 months prior to the desired quarter start date** depending on the student’s program of study (students are responsible for reviewing application windows and procedures for submitting applications on the SOC-OFE website). Applications will not be accepted after the published deadlines. Field experiences are a requirement of the program of study, and failure to meet the necessary deadlines may delay a student’s degree conferral and graduation.

Field experience application materials, instructions, and application submission windows are available on the SOC-OFE website. Field experience applications must be submitted in accordance with the policies and procedures described on the website. Students are responsible for reviewing all deadlines and procedures for submitting applications. Failure to comply with policies and procedures may result in rejection of the application, delay of the field experience, postponement of degree conferment, and/or Code of Conduct inquiry. Students are also expected to review the Walden University Student Handbook, including all student conduct policies.

### Application Review Process

1. Students must submit the complete practicum application within the published application submission window by complying with the detailed procedures listed on the SOC-OFE website. Students will receive a response from the SOC-OFE via e-mail within 2 business days of submission confirming receipt of the application. If this response is not received, it is imperative that students follow up with the SOC-OFE to ensure that their application has been received.

2. The field experience operations coordinators will perform an initial review of each application to ensure that it is complete. The field experience operations coordinators will notify the student via their Walden e-mail account if additional information is required.

3. Once the application is complete, the field experience operations coordinator will forward it to the field experience academic coordinator for review of the proposed field experience. The
field experience academic coordinator will reach out to the student via their Walden e-mail account if there are questions or to request additional information.

4. Students will be notified of the approval decision via Walden e-mail approximately 3 weeks before the start of the quarter.

**Important note:** Students are required to monitor their Walden e-mail accounts closely during the application review period so they can promptly respond to requests for additional information.

### Application Submission Window Petitions

The SOC-OFE adheres strictly to application submission windows. In rare instances, students may encounter extenuating circumstances beyond their control that preclude them from completing the field experience application materials within the published submission window. In these instances, students may submit a Field Experience Petition form (available on the “Exceptions to SOC-OFE Policies” page in the “Field Experience Policies and Procedures” section of the SOC-OFE website) to request an extension to the application submission window.

**Important notes:**

- Students must have a field site secured before they petition for a field experience application submission window extension. Petitions will not be approved to allow more time to search for a field site.
- Students are informed of application submission windows at numerous points throughout the program, so unawareness of the field experience application submission window is not sufficient reason for granting an extension.
- Submitting a petition is not a guarantee of acceptance of an application. It is not uncommon for a petition to be denied based on timing.
- Submission of the application does not guarantee acceptance or approval of the application.
- New affiliation agreements must be submitted to Walden’s Central Office of Field Experience (COFE) no less than 4 weeks prior to the start of the quarter; petitions requiring submission of an agreement beyond this point cannot be approved. If review of the agreement is required by COFE, the field experience may be delayed (see Field Site Affiliation Agreements and the SOC-OFE website for details).
- All prerequisite coursework and program requirements must be completed prior to enrollment in the field experience. This includes satisfactory completion of student development plans, skills plans, and clinical work samples. Incomplete requirements will delay the start of the field experience.

### Securing Professional Liability Insurance

CACREP requires all graduate counseling students to obtain professional liability insurance prior to beginning a field experience. Students are required to maintain active professional liability
insurance throughout the duration of the field experiences. Walden University requires all field experience students to secure coverage limits of at least $1 million per incident and $3 million aggregate. Students must obtain their own professional liability insurance policy, even if they are covered by their site’s insurance policy. For further information, see the SOC-OFE website.
Section 3. Field Experience Requirements

General Readiness and Requirements

Field Experience Readiness

To be eligible to participate in field experience, students must:

- Be actively enrolled in the university and in good academic standing.
- Have completed all core coursework, in accordance with the appropriate program of study (students must complete practicum prior to internship).\(^5\)
- Have satisfactorily completed Residency 1 and Residency 2.
- Have a formal evaluation of counseling skills completed by program faculty within 1 year of the start of the field experience.\(^6\)
- Have satisfactorily completed any skills or student development plan(s), when applicable.\(^7\)
- Receive a formal approval letter from the SOC-OFE for the current field experience.
- Attend the student orientation teleconference at the start of the term.
- Carry individual professional liability insurance for the duration of enrollment in field experience.
- Participate on-site and in the field experience course throughout the entire length of the field experience course, regardless of when hourly requirements are complete.
- Be able to commit fully to the requirements of the field experience.
- Confirm that the site supervisor has completed the site supervisor orientation.

To be eligible to participate in field experience, students must not:

- Drop or withdraw from prerequisite coursework immediately prior to enrollment in a field experience course.

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\(^5\) An audit of the student’s record will be completed during the first week of enrollment in the practicum. If all prerequisites are not complete, the student will be dropped from the practicum course.

\(^6\) Skills are formally evaluated at Academic Residencies, in the Techniques of Counseling course, Field Experience courses, and/or with Clinical Work Samples.

\(^7\) Faculty members and program leadership reserve the right to postpone practicum clinical instruction to evaluate and establish student competency. Please refer to Section 4, Appendix B, and the Counseling Student Program Guide for more details on the issue of student competency.
• Earn a U or I grade in prerequisite coursework immediately prior to enrollment in a field experience course.
• Plan time off for vacations or other commitments during enrollment in field experience.
• Make any changes to field experience plans (including site and/or site supervisor) without approval of the SOC-OFE.

Clinical Work Samples
Clinical work samples are required of any student who has not satisfactorily completed an academic practice experience (residency or field experience course) in 2 years or longer. The current American Counseling Association’s (ACA) Code of Ethics mandates that all counselor educators evaluate students’ academic and professional development continuously throughout the program. Please refer to the current ACA Code of Ethics for further information. Detailed instructions for submission of clinical work samples are available on the SOC-OFE website.

Field Experience Requirements
The current CACREP standards require that field experiences (both practicum and internship) abide by the following:
• Students are covered by individual professional counseling liability insurance policies while enrolled in practicum and internship (see Securing Professional Liability Insurance).
• Supervision of practicum and internship students includes program-appropriate audio/video recordings and/or live supervision of students’ interactions with clients (see Video/Audio Recording and Alternative Assignment Policy).
• Formative and summative evaluations of the students’ counseling performance and ability to integrate and apply knowledge are conducted as part of the students’ practicum and internship.
• Students have the opportunity to become familiar with a variety of professional activities and resources, including technological resources, during their practicum and internship.
• In addition to the development of individual counseling skills, students must lead a counseling or psychoeducational group during either the practicum or internship (the counseling masters’ programs require at least 10 hours of group counseling during internship).

Completion of Field Experience Hours
• All direct client contact hours must be completed at the approved site, and the approved site supervisor must be on-site at all times that the student is seeing clients. Walden students will not be approved to participate in private in-home or community-based counseling or at sites where transportation of clients is required (see policy in Section 4).
• Direct client contact hours can include counseling over the phone (e.g., supportive counseling until the client can be seen in person); however, telephone counseling cannot be the primary source of counseling hours. Students who are making phone calls to clients for nontherapeutic purposes cannot count these hours as direct client contact hours.
• Case management, strict behavioral modification, and crisis counseling do not align with the training and curriculum of Walden’s counseling programs and will only count toward less
than half of the direct hourly requirements for any program. Substance abuse counseling will count toward less than half of the direct client hours except for the MS in Addiction Counseling program. Academic advising will not count toward direct client hours for any program other than the MS in School Counseling program.

- Students cannot start the field experience prior to the start of the quarter. They must enroll in an additional quarter of the course if hours need to be completed after the end of the quarter (see Field Experience Extensions).
- Students can continue to work with clients at their sites between quarters as long as they continue to receive weekly on-site supervision from their approved site supervisor. However, hours completed between practicum and the first internship term and any excess practicum hours accumulated while in the practicum course cannot be counted toward the hourly requirements for internship. All requisite hours must be earned by the end of the academic quarter. Students should inform their instructors about continuing their work at the field site (see Continuing Field Experience Between Quarters) so arrangements can be made for faculty supervision during this time.

**Successful Completion of Practicum**

Successful completion of the practicum includes passing both coursework and fieldwork requirements. The final grades are either Satisfactory (S) or Unsatisfactory (U). A deficiency in any item listed below will result in a U grade for the course and require the student to repeat the field experience course before moving on in the program. Students who receive two U grades in practicum will be academically dismissed from the university.

To complete practicum satisfactorily, students must achieve **ALL** of the following:

1. Successful completion of all course work assignments with a cumulative score of 80% or above.
2. Attendance and active participation in all group supervision videoconferences (minimum of 15 hours).
3. Completion of site visit in week four, five, six, or seven.
4. Completion of the hourly requirements for the field experience.
5. Satisfactory evaluation at a minimum of an intermediate level (rating of 2 or above) and endorsement for progression provided by site supervisor.
6. No concerns or reservations regarding a student’s ability to continue with professional practice curriculum expressed by the course and/or group supervision faculty member; satisfactory evaluation at a minimum of an intermediate level (rating of 2 or above) and endorsement for progression provided by faculty supervisor(s).
7. No concerns expressed by the field experience coordinators or director upon review of the site supervisor and faculty information concerning the training experience.

8. Adherence to all SOC-OFE policies outline in the Field Experience Manual, as well as site and university policies, the ACA code of ethics, and all state regulations for counseling professionals.

**Important note:** All requirements, including completion of hours, must be achieved for a Satisfactory (S) grade for the practicum course, even if the student will be extending the practicum to an additional quarter.

### Practicum Requirements

#### General Practicum Requirements

The academic term consists of 11 weeks. Participation in practicum begins in Week 1 and is expected through the full duration of Week 11, regardless of the accumulation of hours or completion of other course requirements. Students must participate weekly at the practicum site throughout the entire term in which they are enrolled. Students may not plan to complete the practicum in less than 11 weeks, and they should not plan time off during the field experience for vacations or other professional or personal obligations. If the bulk of required hours are completed early, students must continue to see one or two clients per week throughout the duration of the term to ensure that they are able to meet coursework and weekly supervision requirements.

In addition to the requirements listed under the General Readiness and Requirements, the current CACREP standards require that students completing practicum experiences do the following:

- Complete supervised counseling practicum experiences that total a minimum of 100 hours over a full academic term that is a minimum of 10 weeks
- Complete at least 40 hours of direct service with actual clients that contributes to the development of counseling skills (see Program-Specific Hourly Requirements)
- Complete at least 15 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and
- Complete at least 11 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor

#### Program-Specific Practicum Hourly Requirements

**MS in Addiction Counseling**

The MS in Addiction Counseling practicum consists of 100 hours of clinical field experience, including at least 40 hours of direct addiction and substance abuse counseling. At least 21 of the direct client contact hours must be devoted to individual addiction counseling. Students may engage in supervised couple, family, and/or group addiction counseling as part of the practicum, as long as the 21 direct individual addiction counseling hours are satisfied. Students must also
earn a minimum of 15 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and 11 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor.

**MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling**
The MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling practicum consists of 100 hours of clinical field experience, including at least 40 hours of direct marriage, couple, and family counseling. At least 21 of the direct client contact hours must be devoted to marriage, couple, and/or family counseling using a systemic approach. Students may engage in supervised individual and/or group counseling as part of the practicum, as long as the 21 direct marriage, couple, and/or family counseling hours are satisfied. Students must also earn a minimum of 15 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and 11 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor.

**MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**
The MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling practicum consists of 100 hours of clinical field experience, including at least 40 hours of direct mental health counseling. At least 21 of the direct client contact hours must be devoted to individual mental health counseling. Students may engage in supervised couple, family, and/or group mental health counseling as part of the practicum, as long as the 21 direct individual mental health counseling hours are satisfied. Students must also earn a minimum of 15 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and 11 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor.

**MS in School Counseling**
The MS in School Counseling practicum consists of 100 hours of clinical field experience, including 40 hours of direct face-to-face counseling, consultation, and classroom guidance. Students must also earn a minimum of 15 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and 11 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor.

**Internship Requirements**

**General Internship Requirements**
The internship takes place over a **minimum of** two 11-week quarters. Participation in each section of internship begins in Week 1 and is expected through the full duration of Week 11, regardless of the accumulation of hours or completion of other course requirements. Students must participate weekly at the internship site throughout the entire terms in which they are enrolled. Students may not plan to complete the internship in less than the two 11-week quarters, and they should not plan time off during the field experience for vacations or other professional or personal obligations. If the bulk of required hours are completed early, students must continue to see one or two clients per week throughout the duration of the term to ensure that they are able to meet coursework and weekly supervision requirements.
In addition to the requirements listed under the General Field Experience Requirements, the current CACREP standards require that students completing internship experiences do the following:

- After successful completion of practicum, complete 600 hours of supervised counseling internship in roles and settings with clients relevant to their specialty area.
- Complete at least 240 hours of direct service (see Program-Specific Internship Hourly Requirements).
- Complete at least 30 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and
- Complete at least 22 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor

**Important note:** Students are prohibited from “banking” extra practicum hours for internship. CACREP standards do not allow for excess hours accumulated during the practicum to be counted toward the 600-hour internship. CACREP states, “The duration of a student’s supervised practicum experience is to extend across a full academic term to allow for the development of basic counseling skills and the integration of knowledge. Practicum is completed prior to internship.”

**Program-Specific Internship Hourly Requirements**

**MS in Addiction Counseling**
The MS in Addiction Counseling internship consists of 600 hours of clinical field experience, including 240 hours of direct addiction and substance abuse counseling. At least 10 of these direct hours must be accumulated in facilitation or co-facilitation of group addiction counseling. At least 121 direct client contact hours must be devoted to individual addiction counseling. Students may engage in supervised couple and/or family counseling, as well as group counseling beyond the required 10 hours, as long as the requisite 121 of program-specific hours are met. Students must also earn a minimum of 30 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and 22 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor.

**MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling**
The MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling internship consists of 600 hours of clinical field experience, including 240 hours of direct marriage, couple, and family counseling. At least 10 of these direct hours must be accumulated in facilitation or co-facilitation of group marriage, couple, and/or family counseling. At least 121 direct client contact hours must be devoted to (non-group) marriage, couple, and/or family counseling. Students may engage in supervised individual counseling, as well as group counseling beyond the required 10 hours, as long as the requisite 121 direct marriage, couple, and family counseling hours are met. Students must also earn a minimum of 30 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and 22 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor.
MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling
The MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling internship consists of 600 hours of clinical field experience, including 240 hours of direct mental health counseling. At least 10 of these direct hours must be accumulated in facilitation or co-facilitation of group mental health counseling. At least 121 direct client contact hours must be devoted to individual mental health counseling. Students may engage in supervised couple and/or family counseling, as well as in group counseling beyond the required 10 hours, as long as the requisite 121 direct individual mental health counseling hours are met. Students must also earn a minimum of 30 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and 22 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor.

MS in School Counseling
The MS in School Counseling internship consists of 600 hours of clinical field experience, including 240 hours of direct face-to-face counseling, consultation, and classroom guidance. At least 10 of these direct hours must be accumulated in facilitation or co-facilitation of group counseling. Students may engage in additional supervised group counseling beyond the required 10 hours, but these hours cannot be the majority of client contact hours. Students must also earn a minimum of 30 hours of group supervision from their faculty supervisor and 22 hours of individual or triadic supervision from their site supervisor.

Successful Completion of Internship
Successful completion of Internship includes passing both coursework as well as fieldwork requirements. A deficiency in either area will result in an Unsatisfactory (U) grade for the course and the need for the student to repeat the internship course before moving on in the program. Students who receive two U grades in internship will result in academic dismissal from the university.

To complete internship satisfactorily, students must achieve ALL of the following:

1. Successful completion of all course work assignments with a cumulative score of 80% or above.
2. Attendance and active participation in all group supervision videoconferences (minimum of 15 hours).
3. Completion of site visit in week four, five, six, or seven.
4. Completion of the hourly requirements for the field experience (by the end of Internship II).
5. Satisfactory evaluation at a minimum of an intermediate level (rating of 2 or above) and endorsement for progression provided by site supervisor.
6. No concerns or reservations regarding a student’s ability to continue with professional practice curriculum expressed by the course and/or group supervision faculty member; satisfactory evaluation at a minimum of an intermediate level (rating of 2 or above) and endorsement for progression provided by faculty supervisor(s).

7. No concerns expressed by the field experience coordinators or director upon review of the site supervisor and faculty information concerning the training experience.

8. Adherence to all SOC-OFE policies outline in the Field Experience Manual, as well as site and university policies, the ACA code of ethics, and all state regulations for counseling professionals.

**Important note:** All requirements, including completion of hours, must be achieved for a Satisfactory (S) grade for the Internship II course, even if the student will be extending the internship to an additional quarter.

## Supervision Requirements

### On-Site Supervision Requirements

Students are required to participate in at least 1 consecutive hour of individual or triadic on-site supervision (a maximum of one additional student) each week throughout each field experience. On-site supervision must occur weekly beginning in Week 1 and proceeding through Week 11. It is strongly recommended that supervision be scheduled for the same day and time each week.

- A minimum of 11 hours is required for each quarter of enrollment in a field experience course.

The approved site supervisor must perform the weekly supervision in order for the hours to count toward the required supervision hours.

### Faculty Supervision Requirements

Students are also required to participate in 1¾ hours of group supervision each week within the field experience courses. Group supervision consists of a scheduled weekly videoconference call with the student’s classmates and faculty supervisor beginning in Week 2 of the term and proceeding through Week 11.

- A minimum of 15 hours of faculty supervision is required for each quarter of enrollment in a field experience course.

Students are required to attend faculty supervision via both telephone and webcam at the designated time. Attendance at all faculty supervision conference calls is mandatory to satisfactorily complete the field experience course. University registration deadlines do not allow for section changes if students are unable to attend their section’s scheduled group supervision
times. Students are required to adjust their schedules to accommodate the faculty supervision videoconference call.

**Important note:** Submission of a fully signed *Faculty Supervision Contract* is required for students to participate in faculty group supervision.

### Video/Audio Recording and Alternative Assignment Policy

Field experience students are required to submit recordings of two full-length client sessions and complete the appropriate transcription form for each recording (accessible on the [SOC-OFE website](https://soc-ofe.walden.edu)) at designated points in the quarter. Each recording has specific requirements, and students should refer to the classroom instructions for guidance and associated due dates. It is recommended that students print the recording due dates and requirements at the start of the term and make this information available to their site supervisors, to ensure completion of these required assignments.

The client session recordings and transcription forms should be reviewed in the student’s weekly on-site supervision sessions. This approach allows students to identify areas of progress and areas of needed improvement in a timely manner, as well as receive instruction from their site supervisors to assist with the counseling process. The client session recordings and transcription forms must be submitted in the classroom by the due dates indicated on the syllabus so the course instructor can provide additional feedback.

Students who are at sites where recording is not possible or where submission of recordings cannot be made to the Walden University classroom are required to submit a *Field Experience Petition* form, prior to the initial field experience application submission, to request approval of possible alternative options by the director of field experience (see [Exceptions to Field Experience Policies](https://soc-ofe.walden.edu)). Students should be knowledgeable of the recording requirements and inform sites of the recording requirements as part of the interview process. Failure to complete the recording requirements or adhere to an approved alternative assignment will result in an *Unsatisfactory* grade for the field experience course.

Detailed instructions regarding this policy are provided in the field experience classroom.

Recording informed consent documents are available to students on the [SOC-OFE website](https://soc-ofe.walden.edu) and must be completed for all session recordings. Site-based recording informed consent documents can be used in lieu of the Walden-provided documents with the instructor’s approval.

**Important note:** Recording informed consent forms should not be submitted in the field experience classroom. They are for use at the site only and should not be viewed by Walden faculty members.
Documentation of Field Experience (Final Documents)

To receive final grades and move on to the next phase of field experience or graduation, all final documents (as listed below) must be completed, signed by the necessary parties, and submitted by the published deadlines of each quarter of enrollment in field experience. All final documents are housed in the Internet-based Meditrek system. More information about using Meditrek is found on the SOC-OFE website.

The final documents include the following forms:

- **Time Log**
- **Student Evaluation of Field Experience**
- **End of Quarter Evaluation of Student**

See the [SOC-OFE website](#) for detailed information about submission of the required forms.

**Important notes:**

- If completed final documents are not submitted by the deadline, students will receive an *Unsatisfactory* grade for the field experience course and will be halted and delayed from moving on to the next phase of field experience or graduation.
- Students must maintain copies of all field experience documentation, as it may be needed for verification of field experience for licensure. Walden does not maintain student documents for this purpose. Back-up copies should be kept by the student in case of technical or natural disaster. It is the students’ responsibility to ensure that they have copies of all field experience documentation.

Field Experiences Not Completed

Field Experience Extensions

Students may require enrollment in a field experience course beyond the initial required one quarter of practicum or two quarters of internship for various reasons, including non-completion of program hourly requirements and state licensure requirements.

To ensure students are making progress through their program, the number of field experience extensions allowed is limited:

- Practicum students are permitted up to two extensions to fulfill the requirement. This provides the student a maximum of three quarters to complete the 100-hour practicum.
- Internship students are permitted up to three extensions to fulfill the requirement. This provides a maximum of five quarters for students to complete the 600-hour internship.

Each extension requires participation in an additional full 11-week field experience course, including all coursework, supervision, and evaluations. Students enrolled in a field experience
extension course will be responsible for completing all associated coursework and fieldwork requirements for the entire quarter, regardless of when final hours are achieved, and should communicate this policy to the site supervisor. Students must attempt course assignments with new perspectives and new case presentations in order to maximize their continued learning experience. Students who are able to complete their extension hours prior to the end of the term must remain active at the field site (maintaining a one- or two-client caseload) and remain in weekly supervision through the end of the extension term.

**Important note:** Submitting any work for course assignments that has already been submitted for prior courses is considered plagiarism and will result in an academic integrity violation.

**Reasons for an Extension**

**Non-completion of Program’s Hourly Requirements**

Students who do not complete the field experience hours required by their program within the initial one (practicum) or two (internship) quarters may request a field experience extension.

Students who are completing a field experience extension to complete the program’s hourly requirements will be allowed to count all hours endorsed by the site and faculty supervisors at the end of the last term of enrollment in field experience.

Students who are completing an extension to complete the program’s hourly requirements will have an *Unsatisfactory* (U) grade recorded for their initial attempt at the field experience course. Upon successful completion of the extension, the grade for the initial attempt at the field experience course will be changed to *Satisfactory* (S).

**State Licensure Requirements**

Students may require enrollment in an additional term of a field experience course to meet state enrollment or hourly requirements for licensure. For example, some states may require more than the 700 hours (100 for practicum and 600 for internship) required by Walden for the completion of the field experience. While students are welcome to complete more than the required hours in one academic term, some students may need additional time to complete hours beyond program requirements that are required by the licensure board. Alternatively, some states may require enrollment in more than one academic quarter of a practicum course, regardless of the number of hours completed in the quarter. Students should consult their state licensure boards to ensure that they fully understand the licensure requirements.

Students who are completing a field experience extension to complete state licensure requirements will be allowed to count all hours endorsed by the site and faculty supervisors at the end of the last term of enrollment in field experience.

Students who are completing an extension to meet state licensure requirements will have an *Unsatisfactory* (U) grade recorded for their initial attempt at the field experience course. Upon successful completion of the extension, the grade for the initial attempt at the field experience course will be changed to *Satisfactory* (S).
Nonsatisfactory Completion of Course Requirements: Repeating a Field Experience Course

Students who do not complete a field experience course successfully upon the first attempt—due to withdrawal prior to the end of the term, unsatisfactory completion of course requirements (other than noncompletion of program hourly requirements), or termination from a site due to student performance and/or professionalism—will need to request re-enrollment in the course to earn a passing grade.

Hours accrued during a term in which a student drops, withdraws, or earns an Unsatisfactory (U) grade in a field experience course will be forfeited. Only hours earned during terms of field experience that are successfully completed will be counted toward the total hourly requirements of the program.

In unique circumstances, students who elect to withdraw prior to the end of a field experience term or who receive a U for a particular field experience course due to unsatisfactory completion of field experience requirements (other than noncompletion of program hourly requirements) may be eligible to retain all or part of the hours accrued in their initial attempt. Endorsement by all site and faculty supervisors and the director of field experience are required for this option. Students may submit a Field Experience Petition form to make this request (see the SOC-OFE Petition Policy for further information).

Withdrawal From a Field Experience Course

Students who do not complete a field experience course due to withdrawal from the course prior to the end of the term will need to request permission from their site and site supervisor to complete an additional quarter of field experience with the site in order to meet the requirements and submit the appropriate documentation to the SOC-OFE to request re-enrollment in the field experience course.

Unsatisfactory Completion of Course Requirements (other than for noncompletion of program hourly requirements)

Students who earn an Unsatisfactory (U) for a field experience course for reasons other than noncompletion of program hourly requirements will be required to retake the course to satisfactorily complete the course requirements. Students who earn a U due to an unsatisfactory evaluation and who have a resulting Student Support Plan will also be required to submit verification of completion of the Student Support Plan. Students will work with the director of field experience and the appropriate student support team to complete the support plan prior to enrollment in the next field experience attempt.

Termination From a Field Experience Site

Students who are terminated from a field experience site due to poor student performance, lack of counseling skills ability, poor professional behavior, or other reasons identified by the site will automatically earn an Unsatisfactory grade in the course and will be required to participate in a remediation plan prior to re-enrolling in field experience. Students whose experience is terminated will be assessed individually. All remediation plans will be designed to support the
individual student’s needs. The purpose of this policy is to support students’ academic and professional growth.

**Requesting Reenrollment in a Field Experience Course**

To request registration for an additional term of a field experience course, students must submit the appropriate documentation to the SOC-OFE prior to the first day of the term that the student intends to attempt the field experience course again. See the [SOC-OFE website](#) for instructions.

Students completing the next field experience attempt with a new site and/or site supervisor are required to submit a complete application within the regular application windows posted on the [SOC-OFE website](#). All changes to sites and site supervisors must be in compliance with the published application submission windows.

The director of field experience must approve reenrollment in field experience.
Section 4. Field Experience Policies

International Students

International students enrolled in the counseling masters’ programs will be required to meet all the same field site and site supervisor requirements, including the requirements for supervisor education level and license/certification. Because international certification and licensure varies, opportunities for international placements will be limited to those placements where it can be ensured the field experiences and site supervisor requirements can be met. Inquiries regarding appropriateness of fit for either the international field site or proposed site supervisor can be directed to the director of field experience. At a minimum, a site supervisor must hold a master’s degree in counseling or closely related field and have a minimum of two years of post-degree clinical experience.

International students will be required to submit their proposed field site and site supervisor information to the director of field experience for a preliminary review and approval by the end of the first quarter of their program.

Like all students in field experiences, international students are required to participate in weekly videoconference group supervision. They will need to plan accordingly for any time zone differences.

Important note: Students are required to complete their field experience in their country of citizenship or in a country that they are legally permitted to work. Walden University is not authorized by the USCIS to process student visas for non-U.S. citizens to complete field experiences in the United States. Non-U.S. citizens may not enter the United States for purposes of completing a Walden University field experience in any other visa category such as visitor or on business. Non-U.S. citizens currently in the United States on an H, L, or other non-immigrant work visa should consult their immigration attorney to determine whether their visa category permits them to work at an internship site. Hours of work performed in an improper status will not be counted toward the field site hour requirements.

Evaluating Student Competency

Faculty members and the director of field experience reserve the right to postpone clinical instruction to evaluate and establish a student’s competency. Issues of student competency before and during the field experience will be discussed with the program director, as appropriate.

Students determined to have a significant gap in time (i.e., 2 years or longer) between residency and field experience or in between field experience terms may be required to submit a skills assessment video (clinical work sample) for assessment by the skills coordinator before being approved to begin or resume field experience.
Students enrolled in the field experience courses are regularly assessed for skill and professional development to ensure that they are progressing in a developmentally appropriate way. The assessment process includes both formal assessments completed by site supervisors (i.e., Midquarter Evaluation form and End of Quarter Evaluation of Student form) and faculty members (i.e., Student Developmental Assessment—practicum only) as well as regular, informal assessment of skills and professionalism (e.g., supervision videoconference calls, audio/video recordings, live observations, work samples, classroom engagement).

When it is determined that a field experience student is demonstrating a skill-based need or a comportment concern, a formal skills plan or development plan will be instituted to support the student. Student development plans and skills plans are developed in consultation with the student development coordinator and skills coordinator for the counseling programs, as well as the student’s program director, if warranted.

- Students needing a skills and/or development plan will meet with their instructor of record, the director of field experience, and the appropriate student support coordinator (skills and/or development) to determine the needs and create the formal support plan.

- After this meeting, students will work directly with the appropriate coordinator(s) to complete the identified plan assignments.

- Progression to future field experience courses or graduation is contingent upon successful completion of the required support plan(s). Students will be halted in their progression of field experience until the support plan(s) can be completed.

For additional information regarding the role of the skills development and student development processes in field experience, see Appendix B.

**Multiple Role Relationships**

Multiple role relationships occur when a counselor or site supervisor is in a professional role with a person and at the same time is in another role with the same person. It is essential for counselors to refrain from entering into multiple role relationships. The establishment of clear role boundaries between site supervisor and student increases the likelihood of objective and appropriate supervision. The counseling masters’ programs adhere to the American Counseling Association (ACA) standards and best practices regarding multiple role relationships. The current ACA Code of Ethics requires that one avoid supervising close relatives, romantic partners, and friends.

**Continuing Field Experience Between Quarters**

Students must have supervision while participating in the field experience. Students can remain active at their field experience sites between quarters as long as they continue to have weekly supervision with their approved site supervisor and contact with their practicum and/or internship course instructor or appropriate university designee.
Students who wish to continue the field experience during the break weeks should request supervision from their site supervisor. Students must also communicate with the course instructor that they will continue working at their site during the break weeks. Students are expected to contact the field experience academic coordinator if any concerns arise during those weeks.

Students who are extending their practicum/internship or who are in between quarters of internship can count hours between quarters toward the next quarter of field experience. However, practicum students cannot begin counting internship hours until the start of the internship quarter.

**Provision of Counseling Services**

**In-home, Off-site, and Client Transportation Policy**

Walden University students will not be approved to participate in in-home or off-site counseling or at sites where transportation of clients is required. Students can be approved to work at sites that are directly and contractually affiliated with the approved site (e.g., prisons, schools, satellite offices).

**Site and/or Supervisor Changes**

In rare circumstances it may be necessary for students to switch site supervisors or field experience sites after an application deadline. In the event that a field site and/or site supervisor change is required after the application deadline, the changes must be approved by the director of field experience or designee. Students will be required to submit a rationale for why the site or site supervisor change is warranted, and a determination for approval and timing of the change will be made by the SOC-OFE. Depending on the timing of the change and the ability of the SOC-OFE to accommodate the review, students may be required to wait until the next quarter to start with the new site and/or site supervisor.

Approval of the new site and/or site supervisor, as well as completion of the site supervisor orientation, will be required before students are able to proceed with or resume work at the field site. Refer to the SOC-OFE website for detailed information about site and/or supervisor change procedures.

**Important note:** Any and all changes to field sites and site supervisor arrangements must be approved by the director of field experience before students can continue with the field experience.

**Temporary Supervision Coverage**

Students needing short-term supervision coverage (2 weeks or less) at their field site are permitted to identify a replacement supervisor who can meet all the supervision requirements while the approved site supervisor is absent. The temporary site supervisor must meet all the site supervisor credentials and duties listed in this manual.
Students are required to notify the SOC-OFE (socmasfieldexperience@waldenu.edu) as well as their faculty supervisor of the need for the short-term coverage and provide the contact information and credentials for the temporary site supervisor. Detailed information about procedures surrounding approval of a temporary site supervisor is available on the SOC-OFE website.

If temporary supervision is needed for longer than 2 weeks, a formal site supervisor change will be required.

**Social Media**

Social media (e.g., personal Facebook pages, personal Twitter accounts, LinkedIn) are widely used, appropriate, and efficient for various settings; however, their use between faculty members and students and between student counselors and their clients is prohibited. This policy is designed to promote ethical and fair treatment with clear and sound boundaries among students, clients, and faculty members.

**Alcohol and Drug Policy**

Walden University maintains a drug-free university. Students, instructors, and staff are strictly prohibited from misusing controlled substances, intoxicants, alcohol, and prescription drugs while working, participating in the online classroom, or attending residencies or other university-sponsored activities, including field experiences.

**Criminal Background Checks**

The counseling masters’ programs do not require students to submit a criminal background check. However, criminal background checks may be required by the organizations where students are seeking to fulfill their field experience hours. Students should be prepared to address any issues regarding a criminal background check with the site supervisor.

**State Licensure and Accreditation**

The counseling masters’ programs were designed to meet the current CACREP standards. (Note: Only the MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling programs are CACREP accredited.) The programs may meet or exceed requirements for licensure in most states where licensure or certification is available; however, not all the counseling programs are license-eligible, and states have varying requirements for licensure and certification for each program.

Students seeking licensure or certification in their state are responsible for ensuring that their program meets the necessary requirements. Additionally, students are responsible for checking with their state licensure board throughout their programs for updates to program and field experience requirements for licensure or certification. If students find that their state requires additional courses or experiences to be academically eligible for licensure, they can request to
add the State Education specialization. More information on the State Education specialization is found on the SOC-OFE website.

Students needing post-graduate verification of practicum and internship hours on licensure application forms should submit those requests to the field experience operations director (see Verification of Field Experience Hours for Licensure). All other licensure-related inquiries should be submitted to counlicensure@waldenu.edu.

**MS in Addiction Counseling**

Walden University’s MS in Addiction Counseling program is not accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), which is a requirement to practice addiction counseling in some states. The MS in Addiction Counseling program is designed to prepare graduates to qualify to sit for national and state addiction counseling certification exams, to sit for counseling licensure exams, and to practice as addiction counselors. Because no program can guarantee licensure or certification upon graduation, we encourage students to consult the appropriate agency to determine specific requirements. However, each state board responsible for regulating the practice of addiction counseling has its own academic, licensure, and certification requirements and issues its own credential for an individual to practice as an addiction counselor in that state.

Walden enrollment advisors can provide information relating to national and state certification exams and guidance relating to the state-by-state requirements for counseling licensure and practice as an addiction counselor; however, it remains the individual’s responsibility to understand, evaluate, and comply with all requirements relating to certification exams and licensing requirements for the state in which he or she intends to practice. Walden makes no representations or guarantee that completion of its coursework or programs will permit an individual to obtain certification or to obtain state licensure, authorization, endorsement, or other state credential.

Students who are pursuing state licensure as a licensed professional counselor (LPC) or a state substance abuse counseling certification must verify individual state laws to determine if this program meets eligibility requirements for licensure and/or certification in the state in which they intend to practice. Designation as a master addictions counselor requires the successful completion of the Examination for Master Counselors (EMAC), in addition to other requirements.

**MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling**

The MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling is accredited by CACREP as a mental health counseling program under the 2001 standards. CACREP is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and CACREP accreditation is a requirement for licensure in many states.

The MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling program is designed to prepare graduates to qualify to sit for licensing exams and to meet the academic licensure requirements of many state counseling boards. Walden enrollment advisors can provide guidance on licensure issues; however, it remains the individual’s responsibility to understand and comply with all state
licensure requirements. Walden University makes no representations or guarantee that
completion of Walden coursework or programs will permit an individual to obtain state
licensure.

**MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling**

Walden’s MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling is accredited by the Council for
Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), a specialized
accrediting body recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA).
CACREP accreditation is a requirement for licensure in many states. The M.S. in Marriage,
Couple, and Family Counseling program is not accredited by the Commission on Accreditation
for Marriage and Family Therapy Education (COAMFTE) and will not lead to licensure as a
Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist (LMFT).

The MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling program is designed to prepare graduates
to qualify to sit for licensing exams and to meet the academic licensure requirements of many
state counseling boards. Walden enrollment advisors can provide guidance on licensure issues;
however, it remains the individual’s responsibility to understand and comply with all state
licensure requirements. Walden makes no representations or guarantee that completion of
Walden coursework or programs will permit an individual to obtain state licensure or
endorsement.

**MS in School Counseling**

The MS in School Counseling program is offered by Walden University, an institution accredited
by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), which is a
requirement to practice as a school counselor in some states. The MS in School Counseling
program is not accredited by the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related
Educational Programs (CACREP), a specialized accrediting body recognized by the Council for
Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), which may also be a requirement to practice as a
school counselor in some states.

The MS in School Counseling program is designed to prepare graduates to qualify to apply for
licensure or certification to practice as school counselors. However, each state board responsible
for regulating the practice of school counseling has its own academic, licensure, and certification
requirements and issues its own credential for an individual to practice as a school counselor in
that state. Walden enrollment advisors can provide general information relating to the state-by-
state requirements for school counseling licensure or certification; however, it remains the
individual’s responsibility to understand, evaluate, and comply with all requirements relating to
licensing or certification for the state in which he or she intends to practice. Walden makes no
representations or guarantee that completion of its coursework or programs will permit an
individual to obtain certification or to obtain state licensure, authorization, endorsement, or other
state credential.
Noted Program Exceptions

The following list includes some state licensure requirements that exceed current program requirements. This list is not intended to be exhaustive and does not replace the responsibility of students in determining license or certification requirements for their state:

For the professional counselor license (MS in Clinical Mental Health Counseling and MS in Marriage, Couple, and Family Counseling):

- Some states (such as Ohio) require that site supervisors have a supervision credential to be approved to supervise practicum and internship students.
- Students may be required to register with the board before beginning their practicum or internship in some states (such as Ohio).
- Some states (such as Florida, Indiana, and Vermont) require more practicum and/or internship hours than are required by Walden University. Students can complete the hours during the required terms of practicum and/or internship, or they can extend the practicum or internship if needed to complete the hours.
- Some states (such as Rhode Island and Hawaii) require more credit hours of field experience than Walden requires. Students can extend the practicum and/or internship to meet the credit-hour requirement of these state boards.
- Some states (such as Indiana) require more face-to-face supervision than Walden requires. Students can arrange with their sites to increase the number of weekly on-site supervision hours during field experience.
- Students may be required to complete the field experience over an extended time frame in some states (such as in New Mexico and Nevada). Students can extend the practicum and/or internship to meet the length of experience requirement for these boards.

For the addiction counselor license or certification (MS in Addiction Counseling):

- Students may be required to register with the board before beginning their practicum or internship in some states (such as Florida, Delaware, and Louisiana).

It’s each student’s responsibility to assure that all the educational requirements for licensure are met prior to graduation.

Verification of Field Experience Hours for Licensure

Some licensure boards require that Walden faculty or staff members verify field experience hours prior to licensure. Students should send these requests to the field experience operations director. Requests should be submitted as early as possible, as some forms may take considerable time to complete, depending on the information and signatures required.

Some forms will require signatures from multiple parties (e.g., student, site supervisor, director of field experience). Licensure boards will likely require that all signatures are original (not scanned). If the licensure board requires documents with multiple signatures, the required signatures should be first obtained from parties other than Walden University. Students should
get at least two copies of the forms signed so that one original can be mailed to Walden and another can be maintained in their records. These forms should be mailed to the following address:

Walden University  
Attn: Field Experience Operations Director—School of Counseling  
100 Washington Avenue South, Suite 900  
Minneapolis, MN 55401

Students should request copies of final documents signed by faculty members at the end of each quarter of practicum and internship. Students must also keep copies of all forms related to practicum and internship, including time logs, evaluations, and documents sent to the state licensure board.

**Important Note:** Students must maintain copies of all field experience documentation, as it may be needed for verification of field experience for licensure. Walden does not maintain student documents for this purpose. Back-up copies should be kept by the student in case of technical or natural disaster. It is the students’ responsibility to ensure that they have copies of all field experience documentation.

**Sharing of Sensitive Information**

Site supervisors do not have access to the academic records of field experience students. Site supervisors are encouraged to maintain a copy of all documents completed by students and themselves for their records as well as for the field site. Students are asked to sign a FERPA Release form with their practicum and internship applications in case it is necessary for Walden to share FERPA-protected information with the field site. The sharing of protected information is done on a limited, as-needed basis only.

Field experience students are required to share counseling experiences in the practicum and internship courses. When sharing their experiences with other students, students must not share names or other identifying information about the clients they serve. Students can share some demographic information, such as sex, age, diagnosis, and race/ethnicity.

Site supervisors can discuss issues regarding students’ progress with the instructors of the practicum/internship courses. The site supervisor, course instructor, and director of field experience or designee may talk about a student’s work with a specific client (e.g., the site supervisor may converse with the instructor to discuss a student’s skills and/or professional development) but not about any details of the client’s name, address, and/or demographic information that may lead to the specific identification of the client.

**Conflicts During Field Experience**

Field experience students are required to contact their practicum/internship course instructor if they experience an issue or problem during the field experience. The instructor will contact the site supervisor to discuss the matter and attempt to resolve the problem. Upon resolution, the
instructor will document the problem and the resolution. The instructor will also document the procedures for resolution of the problem, and the site supervisor, student, and instructor should sign the document acknowledging that each understands and agrees to the procedures for resolution. Each individual should keep a copy of the signed document. A copy of the document will also be forwarded to the SOC-OFE. Upon completion of the field experience, the site supervisor and the instructor will complete the appropriate documentation indicating that all requirements for addressing the problem have been fulfilled.

If the problem or issue is unable to be resolved in this manner, the course instructor should consult with the field experience academic coordinators and director, for direction on next steps. Documentation of meetings, incident reports, and supporting materials will be maintained by all involved parties.

The director of field experience reserves the right to remove a student from a site or otherwise rescind approval of a site or site supervisor if it is determined that the student is unable to meet the program requirements or if personal and/or professional conflicts at the site warrant this action.

Conflicts With Code of Ethics

The counseling masters’ programs require students to adhere to the highest professional ethical standards identified by the American Counseling Association. If an ethical dilemma should arise at the field experience site, students should contact their practicum/internship course instructor. The instructor will work with the student to determine how to address the dilemma. The instructor, student, and director of field experience or designee will discuss the proposed strategy to address the ethical dilemma and communicate with the site supervisor. Upon resolving the dilemma, the strategy should be documented in writing.

A Strike Situation at the Field Experience Site

In the event a strike situation occurs at a field experience site, students are required to contact their practicum/internship course instructor as soon as possible. If the strike continues for longer than 1 week, students should discuss the course requirements and the attainment of supervised hours as well as the possible continuation or discontinuation of the field experience with their instructor and/or field experience academic coordinator. The instructor or coordinator will help students determine the best strategy to fulfill the program requirements.

Nondiscrimination and Nonharassment Policies

Walden University maintains the following nondiscrimination and nonharassment policies.

Nondiscrimination

Walden University does not discriminate or tolerate discrimination by or against members of the university community on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, mental or physical disability, veteran status, marital status, or other protected
characteristics in the admission to, access to, or treatment or employment in any of its programs or activities.

**Nonharassment**

Walden University is committed to maintaining an environment that is free of unwelcome and disrespectful conduct and communication and in which university members feel safe and comfortable. As such, it is a violation of this policy for any Walden employee, instructor, or student to engage in harassing conduct or communication directed toward another employee, instructor, student, or any other person affiliated with the university.

**Sexual Harassment**

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 prohibits sexual discrimination in educational settings. Walden’s Sexual Misconduct policy, which includes policies related to sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual violence may be found in the Walden Student Handbook and by visiting [https://www.waldenu.edu/experience/support-services/student-safety-title-ix](https://www.waldenu.edu/experience/support-services/student-safety-title-ix).

If you have been a victim of any form of sexual violence, harassment, or discrimination (or know someone who has), whether at a Walden-sponsored event or at your field experience site, your first priority is your own personal safety. After you are safe, please contact either your field experience coordinator or Walden’s Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for receiving and processing, in a timely manner, reports from students, faculty, staff, and administrators regarding rights and responsibilities concerning Sexual Misconduct in violation of Title IX. Any questions or complaints regarding Title IX may be referred to the Walden University Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Title IX Coordinator or to the Office of Civil Rights.

**Walden University’s Title IX Coordinator**
Title IX Coordinator Gina Dyson, Director, Student Affairs  
Phone: 443-220-7016  
E-mail: gina.dyson@waldenu.edu

Title IX Deputy Coordinator Julie K. Ogren, Associate Director, Student Affairs  
Phone: 612-312-2376  
E-mail: julie.ogren@waldenu.edu

Title IX Deputy Coordinator, Academic Residencies  
RoChelle Gilbert, EdD, Associate Director, Academic Residencies  
Phone: 612-308-9254  
E-mail: rochelle.gilbert@waldenu.edu
Exceptions to Field Experience Policies

Students who feel they have valid reason outside of their control to request an exception to a field experience policy (e.g., extension to the application deadline, recording policy, acceptance of hours accrued during a term of field experience not successfully completed) may submit a petition.

SOC-OFE Petition Policy

1. All exceptions to field experience policy must be formally petitioned using the Field Experience Petition form except:
   - Grade appeal: For information on petitions for a change of grade, see the student handbook.
   - Transfer of credit: For information on a transfer of credit petition, see the student handbook.
   - Professional liability insurance: A waiver of the professional liability insurance requirement would need to be approved by the Central Office of Field Experience. Contact the SOC-OFE to initiate this request.

2. Petitions should include all relevant documentation, such as e-mail correspondence. It is the student’s responsibility to submit all documentation for the petition.

3. Once the petition is received, a field experience operations coordinator will review and verify the submitted documentation and information, contacting any of the parties named in the petition as needed. The field experience operations coordinator will determine whether or not the petition falls into the category of an exception to university policy. If it is determined that the petition is an exception to policy, it is then forwarded to the director of field experience or a designee for review.

4. The director of field experience (or designee) will make the final decision.

5. Once a decision has been made, the petition will be returned to the student with the decision and signature of the director of field experience (or designee).

The following are considered when reviewing each petition:

- Does the student truly have an unexpected, unavoidable, beyond-control extenuating circumstance, or is the student simply trying to get out of a bind?
- Does approving this petition give this student an unfair advantage over other students?
- Does approving this petition change any primary components of the degree?
- Would approval set a precedent for future petitions? How will this affect policy and procedure? Is the policy worth enforcing?
- Does the petition, and the circumstances leading to it, provide cause to review policies or procedures? If so, which ones?
Student Appeals and Grievances

Students who wish to appeal a decision related to Code of Conduct violations are advised to first pursue less formal channels for conflict resolution before filing a formal written appeal or grievance.

- Students with concerns involving academic decisions related to professional conduct or academic dismissal may pursue an academic appeal through the appeals process.

- Students with concerns involving the university’s nondiscrimination, nonharassment, or educational access policies are encouraged to first report their concerns to their dean/executive director or their designees to allow for appropriate review and investigation of the concerns. If this process does not adequately resolve the issue, students can then proceed with filing a formal written grievance under the grievance process. Often these types of concerns can be resolved without pursuing the formal grievance process.

- Students with concerns involving cases of alleged sexual discrimination should contact the Title IX Coordinator.

- Decisions of the dean/executive director or their designees related to academic integrity violations (other than academic dismissal), change of grade, program of study, or other decisions related specifically to the program, specialization, or concentration curriculum cannot be appealed.

Appeals Process

Students with concerns involving academic decisions related to professional conduct or academic dismissal may pursue an academic appeal to the chief academic officer through this appeals process.

To appeal, the student must submit the electronic Student Academic Appeal form. The form requires a statement of the decision that constitutes the subject matter of the appeal, the grounds on which it is being challenged, and the reasons the student believes that the decision was improperly made. The submission must also include a description of the remedy sought and the informal efforts taken to date to resolve the matter. The appeal must include an allegation of any adverse effects on the student, known to her or him at the time of filing.

This appeal must specifically address the following:

- Were the proper facts and criteria brought to bear on the decision?

- Were improper or extraneous facts or criteria brought to bear that substantially affected the decision to the detriment of the student?

- Were there any procedural irregularities that substantially affected the outcome of the matter to the detriment of the student?

- Given the proper facts, criteria, and procedures, was the decision one that a person in the position of the decision-maker might reasonably have made?
This appeal may not be made on the basis of general dissatisfaction with the decision of the dean/executive director or their designees.

The appeal must be submitted to the chief academic officer of the university. An appeal and all related materials or documents must be submitted electronically within 30 calendar days of the last day of classes of the academic term in which the adverse decision occurred or should reasonably have been discovered. A delay in filing an appeal may, taking all circumstances into account, constitute grounds for its rejection.

The chief academic officer may remand the matter for further consideration to a lower administrative level (including the level at which the original appeal arose), to the coordinator for student academic integrity and conduct review, or to the university ombudsperson, unless the ombudsperson has been previously involved in addressing the issue that gave rise to the appeal. The chief academic officer may attempt to resolve the matter informally, provide a decision on the appeal, or refer the appeal, or any issue therein, to a three-person panel consisting of individuals not associated with the academic unit in which the original appeal was filed. This panel shall consider the matter and report to the chief academic officer as the latter directs.

Should the chief academic officer resolve the matter informally or decide the appeal, he or she shall notify the student (and the party against whose decision the appeal has been filed) in writing of the disposition made of the appeal. Should the chief academic officer refer the appeal, he or she shall inform the student (and the party against whose decision the appeal has been filed) in writing of any referral of the matter and shall specify the matters referred and the directions to the committee or person to whom the referral is made (including the time frame within which the committee or person is to report back to the chief academic officer).

Normally no more than 45 calendar days should elapse between the filing of the appeal and the disposition by the chief academic officer. If, because of absence of key persons from the university or other exigencies, the chief academic officer judges that prompt disposition is not possible, he or she shall inform the student (and the party against whose decision the appeal has been filed) of this fact in writing, and provide an estimate of when a disposition can be expected. The disposition of the appeal, as reported by the chief academic officer, shall be final and not subject to further appeal.

**Grievance Process**

A student alleging discrimination, harassment, or failure of educational access may contact his or her dean/executive director or their designees, for immediate reporting, counseling, and investigation of the concerns. The formal complaint must be submitted via e-mail to the dean/executive director or their designees. After attempting this method of resolution, a student may file a grievance according to the grievance procedure set forth in this section. There shall be no retaliation against anyone who files a grievance or otherwise reports discrimination or harassment. Filing of a grievance may, however, initiate reassignment of one or more of the involved parties for a reasonable period to allow for an appropriate investigation of the situation.

The right to confidentiality, both of the complainant and of the accused, will be respected to the extent possible insofar as it does not interfere with the institution’s legal obligation or ability to
investigate allegations of misconduct brought to the university’s attention or to take corrective action when it is found that misconduct has occurred.

A formal grievance must be identified as such in writing and directed to the chief academic officer using the electronic Student Academic Appeal Form. The grievance normally should originate no more than 30 calendar days following a resolution decision by the dean/executive director or their designees concerning the complaint or conduct that gave rise to the grievance.

The chief academic officer initially reviews the case to determine appropriate action, which can include referring the matter to an appropriate university office for review. If the conflict is resolved at this stage, no further action is necessary. If the conflict cannot be resolved in this way, the chief academic officer appoints a hearing committee to review the allegations.

A written decision from the committee will be delivered in as timely a manner as possible while allowing for appropriate investigation and consideration, not to exceed 60 calendar days from the date the complaint is filed with the chief academic officer, unless the committee notifies the parties of the need for an extension in order to properly complete the process. The written records are confidential but available for on-site review by the person(s) directly involved.

The decision of the chief academic officer or committee is, in all cases, final, and not subject to appeal.

**Note to Arizona Residents**
The Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education requires all institutions to have a published grievance procedure that includes reference to a student’s right to file a complaint with the Arizona state board. In the event a complaint from an Arizona student cannot be resolved after exhausting the institution’s grievance procedure, the student may file a complaint with the Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education. The student must contact the state board for further details. Arizona State Board for Private Postsecondary Education, 1400 W. Washington Street, Room 260, Phoenix, AZ 85007; 1-602-542-5709; [http://azppse.state.az.us](http://azppse.state.az.us).

**Note to Tennessee Residents**
The Tennessee Higher Education Commission requires that all students know of their rights in a grievance situation, including contacting the Tennessee Higher Education Commission, Nashville, TN 37243-0830, 1-615-741-5293, if grievances are not resolved at the institutional level.

**Note to South Carolina Residents**
If the complaint cannot be resolved at the school level through its complaint procedure, students may file a complaint with the South Carolina Commission on Higher Education.

**Students With Disabilities**
The counseling masters’ programs are in compliance with Walden University’s policy concerning disabilities.
Requesting Accommodations

The counseling masters’ programs at Walden University will not discriminate on the basis of disability and are committed to providing all qualified students with disabilities equal access to programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

In postsecondary education, it is the student’s responsibility to self-identify disability status and register with disability services prior to requesting accommodations. To register with Walden’s Office of Disability Services, students should submit documentation of their disability along with Walden University’s Accommodation Request form to disability@waldenu.edu. The request form, policies, and processes are available on the Office of Disability Services website.

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations to access field experiences such as practicum and internship should register with disability services prior to registering for those field experiences and clarify their specific accommodation needs. In most cases, field experience sites have their own systems for ensuring equal access for individuals with disabilities. Walden’s disability services office will help address any gaps in those systems.
Appendix A. Field Experience Terms

Certification—The process by which an agency or association grants recognition to a person who has met predetermined qualifications specified by that agency or association.

Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP)—An independent agency recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) to accredit master’s degree programs in addiction counseling; career counseling; clinical mental health counseling; marriage, couple, and family counseling; school counseling; student affairs and college counseling; and doctoral degree programs in counselor education and supervision. It is the counseling equivalent of the Council on Social Work Education, the American Psychological Association Commission on Accreditation, and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

Direct Client Contact—Interaction with clients that includes the application of counseling, consultation, or human development skills. In the context of field experience, the term is used to refer to time spent by practicum or internship students working directly with clients.

Internship—A distinctly defined, post-practicum, supervised “capstone” clinical experience in which the student refines and enhances basic counseling or student development knowledge and skills, and integrates and authenticates professional knowledge and skills appropriate to the student’s program and initial post-graduate professional placement.

Licensure—The process by which a state agency or government grants permission to an individual to engage in a given profession and to use the designated title of that profession after the applicant has attained the minimal degree of competency necessary to ensure that the public health, safety, and welfare are reasonably well-protected.

National Certified Counselor (NCC)—A voluntary professional credential. It is not required for practice, but it attests to an individual’s commitment to the importance of a national credentialing standard developed for counselors by counselors. Currently, more than 80,000 professionals hold the NCC credential. Applying for the NCC credential involves an application process independent of the state credentialing processes. When students apply for national certification, they do not automatically become state-credentialed, and when they become state-credentialed, they are not automatically considered an NCC.

Practicum—A distinctly defined, supervised clinical experience in which the student develops basic counseling skills and integrates professional knowledge. The practicum is completed prior to internship.

Professional Clinical Counselor—In some states (for instance, Ohio), this license is an independent license. People with this license are able to independently practice therapy, independently diagnose mental conditions, and provide supervision.
**Professional Counselor**—A counselor who has received a master’s degree or higher from an entry-level program in counselor education matching the standards outlined by CACREP. A professional counselor remains active in the counseling profession by participating in professional development and seeking appropriate licensure and certification.

**Site Supervisor**—A qualified individual within a setting who is responsible for supervising a student’s work at that setting.

**Standard**—A minimal criterion that must be met.

**Supervision**—A tutorial and mentoring form of instruction in which a supervisor monitors a student’s activities in practicum and internship and facilitates the associated learning and skill development experiences. The supervisor monitors and evaluates the clinical work of the student while monitoring the quality of services offered to clients.

- **Individual Supervision**—A tutorial and mentoring relationship between a member of the counseling profession and a counseling student.
- **Triadic Supervision**—A tutorial and mentoring relationship between a member of the counseling profession and two counseling students.
- **Group Supervision**—A tutorial and mentoring relationship between a member of the counseling profession and more than two counseling students.
Appendix B. Skills and Student Development FAQs

Skills Support and Development

*What is skills development?*
Delivery of facilitative communication skills is one of the primary tasks of counselors. As such, the Walden counseling programs embrace the task of making sure students are able to identify, define, and execute foundational and advanced counseling skills. Skills of focus in the curriculum include, but are not limited to, opening and closing counseling sessions, rapport building, feeling identification, case conceptualization, information gathering, and documentation.

*What is the role of the skills development office?*
The Skills Committee, which is composed of the skills development coordinator and a group of counseling faculty members, works to support students who have specific skill needs that may not have been sufficiently addressed in the online or residency classrooms.

*What happens if my field experience course instructor or the director of field experience notifies me that I need to work with the skills coordinator?*
If a student is referred to the skills development office, a teleconference meeting will be held with the student, course instructor, director, and skills coordinator. During this meeting, the instructor will address the noted areas of concern, and the student will be provided the opportunity to present additional context and perspective. Based upon the identified needs noted by the student, instructor, and/or site supervisor, the skills coordinator will work with the student to develop a skills plan that targets the specific needs, and a timeline will be established for the completion of the skills plan. Following the meeting, the skills coordinator will submit the formal skills plan and assignment timeline to the student, and the student will work with the skills coordinator or Skills Committee member to complete the skills plan. The skills coordinator will provide the director of field experience regular updates on the student’s progress completing the plan. The student will not be permitted to continue in their field experience until they have satisfactorily completed the skills plan. Upon successful completion of the plan, the student will be eligible to resume field experience coursework and fieldwork. Should additional skills concerns be identified during the skills support process and/or successful completion not be made on the initial skills plan, further support will be required prior to resuming field experience.

*What is a skills plan?*
A skills plan is an opportunity for students to demonstrate that they have strengthened their overall skills competencies. It typically identifies a few specific skills that need particular attention. Skills plans—whether for residency, field experience, or online classroom support—include several steps, which may include all or some of the following assignments:

1. Review their previously submitted work product.
2. Review counseling video and transcripts available in the Walden Library.
3. Compare/contrast their work with the Walden resources.

4. Produce a video and transcription of a mock counseling session.
   - Within the transcription, students will identify the time at which the required skills (as provided to them via a specific skills rubric) are evidenced in the video and submit all the skills plan work products to a location identified by the Skills Committee member working with the student.

The Skills Committee member assigned to work with the student and the skills coordinator will make themselves available to respond to any questions the student may have.

**How are my skills plan assignments evaluated?**
The skills coordinator and Skills Committee member review and evaluate a student’s work products based on a skills rubric. Results of a skills plan are usually shared with a student within 2 weeks of evaluation.

**Student Support and Development**

**What is student development?**
There are a number of professional skills and characteristics that are important for students who provide services to children, adolescents, and adults, as well as to professional organizations, in a variety of settings. These interpersonal/professional skills include, but are not limited to, adherence to the 2014 American Counseling Association (ACA) *Code of Ethics*, professional deportment, sensitivity to client issues, and appropriate use of supervision. Walden University students and graduates are not expected to be at the pinnacle of expertise but rather are willing and able to demonstrate competent knowledge, skill, and professional dispositions across the curriculum. Accordingly, *student development* is the on-going process of examining one’s beliefs, attitudes, values, skills, and behaviors with the goal of forming a counseling professional identity that consistently demonstrates the professional dispositions of responsibility, fitness, maturity, and integrity.

**What are professional dispositions?**
The commitments, characteristics, values, beliefs, interpersonal functioning, and behaviors that influence the counselor’s professional growth and interactions with clients and colleagues characterize *professional dispositions* (see 2016 CACREP Standards, p. 43). Based upon current counseling ethical guidelines (2014 ACA Code of Ethics), current counseling accreditation criteria (2016 CACREP Standards), and current counseling published literature, the School of Counseling requires all students to consistently demonstrate each of the following professional dispositions:

**RESPONSIBILITY**
1. **Engagement:** Student punctually attends scheduled meetings, actively contributes in required academic settings, and promotes other students’ learning.
2. **Accountability:** Student accepts personal contributions to academic, skills, and comportment deficiencies and acts responsibly to enhance professional effectiveness.

**FITNESS**
3. **Relationships:** Student interacts with others in a professional manner and effectively navigates interpersonal differences.
4. **Sensitivity:** Student attends to the feelings, experiences, and perceptions of others and consistently honors their autonomy.
5. **Impartiality**: Student displays contextual and cultural competency by valuing the fundamental rights, dignity, and worth of all people – including respect for age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, sexual orientation, marital/partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, veteran status, immigration status, or any basis proscribed by law or as defined by potential clients’ experience.

**Maturity**

6. **Discipline**: Student exhibits ability to control personal stress, self-disclosure, and excessive emotional reactions that interfere with professional functioning.

7. **Awareness**: Student manifests alertness of how personal beliefs, attitudes, values, and behaviors affect others and uses sound judgment to properly assess situations.

8. **Growth**: Student exhibits willingness to engage in self-examination, challenge assumptions, and integrate feedback to reach an acceptable level of competency.

**Integrity**

9. **Communication**: Student displays respectful tone and uses open, honest, and accurate statements in dealing with others.

10. **Congruence**: Student demonstrates ability to acquire and integrate ethical codes, accreditation standards, and institutional policy into one’s repertoire of professional behavior in all settings.

**What is the Professional Practice Assessment (PPA)?**

Administered during practicum and each internship course, the Professional Practice Assessment (PPA) contains 20 questions focused on the 10 key professional dispositions described in the previous section. These questions have students evaluate their opportunities to demonstrate each disposition during supervised field experiences so they can take steps to improve their professional and interpersonal competencies. In accordance with the 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, this self-assessment helps students and supervisees continually 1) monitor their effectiveness and take steps to improve when necessary; 2) monitor client welfare and professional development; and 3) monitor themselves for signs of impairment from their own physical, mental, or emotional problems (see sections F.1.a. Client Welfare and F.5.b. Impairment). School of Counseling students use the following rating scale to describe their actions in each of the 10 key professional dispositions:

- 0 = I have not yet had the opportunity to develop or engage in this professional disposition
- 1 = Strongly Disagree
- 2 = Disagree
- 3 = Agree
- 4 = Strongly Agree

Students and supervisees are reminded that they have a responsibility to understand and follow the ACA Code of Ethics and that they have the same obligation to clients as those required of professional counselors (see 2014 ACA Code of Ethics, Section F.5.a. Ethical Responsibilities). Therefore, students are expected to discuss their PPA responses with their faculty supervisor and their site supervisor so as to facilitate completion of their required academic and program training and to qualify for post-graduate professional endorsement.

**What is the role of the Student Development Coordinator?**

Counseling students who exhibit behaviors that are outside of these ethical codes, that violate university Code of Conduct, that reflect diminished capacity to perform professional functions, or that risk harm to a client or others will be referred to the School of Counseling’s Student Development Coordinator. The goal of this referral is to help students address personal concerns that have the potential to affect professional competency by offering remediation, feedback, and further training and supervision. The Student Development Coordinator discusses the identified behaviors with the student and then seeks professional consultation with leading counselor education faculty to
ensure the student receives timely and personalized support, or to assist the student in securing remedial assistance when needed—such as through a Student Development Plan (SDP). Examples of behaviors that require completion of a SDP to resume field experience include, but are not limited to, problematic interdisciplinary team work; imposing values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors onto others; inaccurate or dishonest advertising; behavior that compromises the training experience or grades assigned; inaccurate representation of credentials or educational degrees; improper use of public social media; deficient ethical decision making; improper client referral/termination; unapproved use of developing or innovative techniques/procedures/modalities; inappropriate diagnosis; practicing outside boundaries of competence; neglected professional disclosure; insufficient informed consent; or inadequate records and documentation.

**What is a student development plan (SDP)?**
The SDP is a collaborative process between the student and the School of Counseling’s Student Development Committee, academic leadership, and university offices. The purpose of the SDP is student retention and remediation by facilitating student self-growth (self-examination and challenging of assumptions to enhance professional effectiveness) and development of key professional dispositions—especially engagement, accountability, relationships, sensitivity, impartiality, discipline, awareness, growth, communication, and congruence. Please read Section 3: Expectation of Students (pages 13-29) in the current School of Counseling Student Program Guide (http://academicguides.waldenu.edu/fieldexperience/soc/masters/programresources/studentguide) for a complete description of the student development process, including SDP Levels and Dynamics, SDP Consultation and Creation, SDP Implementation and Procedures, SDP Completion and Outcomes, and Transition and Dismissal of Students.

**How do I contact the Student Development Coordinator?**
Please email socstudentdevelopment@waldenu.edu