Alcohol & Drug Counseling
(BS degree in Alcohol & Drug Counseling)

Student Practicum Manual

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I. Introduction:
The supervised practicum experience builds a bridge from academic coursework to practice working as an alcohol and drug counselor and is vital in the development of professional competence. It is a time for students to integrate, sharpen and apply the essential knowledge, skills, and attitudes in an actual clinical setting. Having the opportunity to apply what has been learned in the classroom under competent supervision allows the student to gain competence and confidence in their abilities to prepare for and meet minimum qualifications for an entry-level counselor position in chemical dependency treatment services.

The supervised practicum is intended to be a mutually beneficial experience in which the student pursues specific learning goals and gains on-the-job experience while providing valuable services for the practicum site as well.

The supervised practicum courses for alcohol and drug counseling students include the following three course sequence:

1. **Pre-Practicum Seminar (HSCD 320)**. This 1-credit course is designed to help students assess their readiness for practicum, evaluate and select suitable sites for practicum, and prepare for the practicum experience. The prerequisite for this course is the completion of 24 credits in alcohol & drug counseling coursework. **Note:** this course must be taken as a classroom course. There are not any alternative learning strategies offered (i.e. FDIS, SDIS, or Prior).

   **Note:** Student’s should plan to take “Pre-Practicum” (HSCD 320) the semester immediately before they plan to begin “Practicum I” (HSCD 380)

2. **Alcohol & Drug Counseling Group Practicum I (HSCD 380)**. This 4-credit course combines the first 440 hours of supervised practicum with class sessions which focus on important professional issues (e.g. counseling practice, diversity, and ethics) and continued development of counseling skills. The prerequisite for this course includes successful completion of the requirements for the Pre-Practicum Seminar (HSCD 320) and at least 32 credits of alcohol & drug counseling coursework.

3. **Alcohol & Drug Counseling Group Practicum II (HSCD 390)**. This 4-credit course combines the second 440 hours of supervised practicum with class sessions which continue to focus on important professional issues and continued development of counseling skills. The prerequisite for this course is successful completion of Practicum I (HSCD 380).
II. **Goals for the Supervised Practicum:**

1. Demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and attitudes related to the transdisciplinary foundations of alcohol and drug counseling, (i.e. understanding addiction, treatment knowledge, application to practice, and professional readiness)

2. Demonstrate proficiency in the provision of counseling services to people with alcohol and drug use problems, as defined by the 12 core functions or the 8 practice dimensions.

3. Demonstrate the ability to discuss and reflect upon the following professional practice issues:
   - a. How an agency functions
   - b. How to function as an intern
   - c. Ethics and professionalism
   - d. Cultural diversity
   - e. Counseling theory and practice
   - f. Journaling

4. Completion of at least 880-hours of clinical practicum in chemical dependency.
III. Eligibility Criteria for Practicum:

Admission to the University and successfully completing all the prerequisites for the supervised practicum does not guarantee a student entry into practicum. The Alcohol and Drug Counseling faculty may determine that a student is not ready for practicum in a given semester. In these instances, a conference will be held and the student may not be eligible for practicum until the problem in question has been adequately addressed.

Additionally, Site Supervisors at a chemical dependency treatment agency may reject a candidate at the application interview for reasons they determine would make the student inappropriate for placement in that agency at that time.

Students must comply with agency requirements for practicum placements. Some agencies may require students provide them with a criminal history background check prior to acceptance as an intern. This criminal background check maybe different from the one which is required to be completed in the Pre-Practicum (HSCD 320) course. Policies for what constitutes an acceptable history may also vary from agency to agency.

Eligibility to enroll in Alcohol & Drug Counseling Group Practicum I (HSCD 380) is subject to approval of the faculty. To obtain this approval, a student must meet the following requirements and minimum eligibility criteria:

1. Student in Good Standing:
   - Student has applied and been admitted to the University.
   - Student is not currently on academic probation.
   - Student does not have any current “I” grades.
   - Student has a completed degree plan for ADC major, i.e. is a declared ADC major.

2. Coursework Completion: Student has completed or will have successfully completed the following prerequisites for practicum. For students who have a degree plan completed after 1/1/08: 32 credits of alcohol and drug counseling coursework including all of the following nine courses:
   1. HSCD 300: Chemical Dependency Concepts (4)
   2. HSCD 200: Pharmacology of Drug Abuse (4)
   3. HSer 346: Counseling and Interviewing Skills (4)
   4. HSer 348: Group Counseling (4)
   5. HSCD 353: Case Management (4)
   6. HSCD 303: Cultural Aspects of Chemical Dependency (4)
   7. HSCD 309: Co-occurring Disorders (4)
   8. HSCD 302: Chemical Dependency Assessment (4)
   9. HSCD 320: Pre-Practicum Seminar (1)
(Note: HSCD 320 must be taken as a classroom course. There are not any alternative learning strategies offered, i.e. FDIS, SDIS, or Prior. This course should be taken the semester immediately before “Practicum I” (HSCD 380).

Student has met all prerequisites for practicum and has at least a 2.0 GPA, with no incomplete grades or unresolved failures.

3. **Successful completion** of all assignments in the Pre-Practicum Seminar (HSCD 320) including:
   - At least 2 Reference Forms which verify “freedom from substance abuse, physical and mental health problems.” (see criteria #5 below)
   - “Rule 11” Background check.
   - Preliminary goals for Practicum
   - Resume
   - Three interview reports (at least one culturally diverse site)
   - Learning Agreement

Failure to adhere to deadlines for these assignments may result in a student being denied access to Practicum.

4. **Background Check**: Students are required to submit to and successfully complete a “background check” prior to beginning any supervised practicum. The “background check will be completed in the Pre-Practicum course (HSCD 320)

Minnesota Statutes 245C (Human Services Background Studies Act) commonly referred to as “background checks” are required to be conducted on employees, volunteers, and intern who provide direct services to clients in facilities licensed by the Minnesota Department of Human Services. This applies to practicum at most sites for alcohol and drug counseling practicums (245C subp. 4). The purpose of background checks is to “disqualify” people who have committed specific crimes from providing direct services. Disqualification can be for 7, 10, 15 years or depending on the crime committed and could even be permanent.

Students who are disqualified as a result of their MN Department of Human Services background check (Rule 11) will **not** be allowed to enroll in an Alcohol & Drug Counseling practicum and thus unable to complete this major.

If student passes this initial background check, it does not mean they will pass it in the future. The background check conducted when someone applies for the full LADC license is more comprehensive than the one conducted for practicum in HSCD 320.

5. **Alcohol or other Drug Problems**: Students must be free from “alcohol and other drug abuse problems” (Rule 31) for at least **two years** prior to the date of practicum application. This means the student is either in recovery for at least two years or if not in recovery, has not experienced any substance abuse
problems during the past two years which would “impair their objectivity or effectiveness” in performing during their practicum (Rules of Professional Conduct, MN status 148F).

Note: according to MN Statues, Chapter 9530.6450 (Rule 31) …“counselors must be free of chemical use problems for at least two years immediately preceding their hiring and must sign a statement attesting to that fact.”

6. **Mental and Physical Health Problems**: The student has been free from any physical or mental health issues for at least two years, which would impair their “objectivity or effectiveness” in performing during their practicum.

In order to verify #5 and #6 above, the student will provide two Reference Forms from people who know the student and can verify they meet these requirements. Acceptable references for these forms are: job supervisors, self-help group sponsors, Psychologists, Probation Officers, Social Workers, or Physicians. Letters from family members, spouse, or significant others or other students in this course are not acceptable.
IV. **Practicum Policies:**

1. **Start Date:** A student may not officially begin their practicum before the first day of the semester. The practicum must be approved by the faculty and the student must registered for one of the practicum courses.

2. **Hours:** Each student is required to complete an 880 hour practicum experience for the BS degree in Alcohol and Drug Counseling. This meets the 880 hours of Alcohol and Drug Counseling practicum as required by MN Statutes, chapter 148C.04 “Requirements for licensure,” Subd. 4, “Licensing requirements after five years.”

3. **Problem Solving:** Most practicum related problems can be solved when they are attended to early on in the practicum experience. Interns are expected to demonstrate professional and ethical behavior. They must use good judgment in problem situations. Communicate clearly and regularly with Site Supervisor and Faculty Supervisor. They must notify their Faculty Supervisor of problems and concerns as soon as possible. See Student Intern Responsibilities, p. 11.

4. **Termination from the practicum:** We expect the Student Practicum experience to be positive; however we also understand problems may arise. We appreciate being informed of any problems as soon as possible, so they may be addressed. Most problems can be resolved by joint conversations or meetings with the Intern, Site Supervisor and Faculty Supervisor. However, there are some conditions which could result in termination from the practicum site. These include, but are not limited to:

   - Inappropriate use of alcohol or other drugs,
   - Unmanaged mental health issues,
   - Unmanaged physical health issues,
   - Violation of the code of ethics for alcohol and drug counselors (MN Statutes, Chapter 148F)
   - Violation of practicum site policies or procedures
   - Violation of the University Student Code of Conduct (University Policy #1020 & #1030)
   - Lack of good judgment or common sense in decision-making or problem-solving, especially if this results in harm to clients
   - Repeated attendance or punctuality problems
   - Failure to adequately comply with “Responsibilities of the Student Intern” (see pages 11-12)
   - Being terminated or discharged by the practicum site

If the intern is terminated from a practicum for any of the reasons stated above, they will be given a failing grade (F) for the group practicum class. Any hours accrued will not be counted as meeting the 880-hour requirement.

In order to be eligible for any additional practicum hours the student must wait a full 12 months before applying for an additional Alcohol and Drug Counseling practicum.
There may be some additional requirements determined by the Alcohol and Drug Counseling faculty.

To reapply for a practicum after 12 months has elapsed, the student must submit a letter in writing to the Alcohol and Drug Counseling faculty addressing what s/he has done to resolve the issues which led to the termination of their practicum.

A student who has been terminated or otherwise failed a practicum, may be required to retake the Pre-Practicum Seminar (HSCD 320) the semester before they plan to re-engage in a practicum.

5. **Extenuating circumstances which lead to stopping a practicum**: If the student is performing at least adequately at the practicum site, for example;
   - making progress on their “Practicum Learning Agreement” and
   - meeting the “Responsibilities of the Student” and
   - has no violations as listed above under “Grounds for Termination,”

   but s/he is experiencing extenuating circumstances (e.g. extended illness, personal family crisis, sudden change in employment, etc.)

   If the above occurs, DO NOT simply leave or walk away from the practicum site, this could result in a failing grade. Instead:

   a. Contact your Faculty Supervisor immediately.
   b. The Faculty Supervisor must receive an evaluation (in writing) from the practicum Site Supervisor before making any decision about how to proceed.
   c. The Faculty Supervisor may reassign the intern to an alternative site or assign a grade of “Incomplete” with a plan for later completion, depending upon the content of the evaluation from the Site Supervisor.

6. **Face to face counseling**: The practicum experience must primarily be “face-to-face” (in-person) interactions with clients. Rationale: this is the standard of practice in Alcohol and Drug Counseling as reflected in Rules 25 & 31.

7. **Getting credit for what you know**: Prior work experience might be counted toward practicum hours. A student who has prior work experience as a chemical dependency counselor may want to apply to the faculty for consideration in counting some of these hours toward the practicum requirement.

   A student needs to be able to document the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of work experience to receive credit. This is why the Practicum class is required for reflection about counseling theory and practice, ethics, and diversity.

   Credit for prior experience may be given only for clinical experience which meets the current Alcohol & Drug Counseling practicum requirements and in which the student carried a client caseload.
To qualify for credit, the work experience must have been within the past three years at a licensed chemical dependency facility (Rule 31), under supervision of an LADC, while conducting counselor work as defined by the 12 core functions. The student must also be eligible for practicum credit as per the policies and prerequisites for practicum listed in this manual.

A student may apply for this credit in the semester they take the HSCD 380 course. Pending successful completion of that course and if accepted by the faculty, the hours will be counted during HSCD 390. The maximum credit given is one hour for each four hours worked, limited to 220 hours. The criteria for determining how much time is given will be based upon:

- Counseling tasks performed
- Evaluation by the Site Supervisor
- Quality of supervision
- Length of time which has elapsed since the student performed the work described
- No counseling work will be counted prior to the past 3 years.

In order to apply for prior experience credit, the student must provide the following supporting evidence:

a. A copy of the program’s Rule 31 license (qualifies the program).
b. A copy of the supervisor’s resume and LADC license (qualifies the supervisor).
c. A letter from the program/supervisor which verifies:
   1. Dates of employment
   2. Major job duties, (a copy of job description)
   3. Hours worked, a total for each one of the 12 core functions.

8. **Grades:** A student must pass both portions of the group practicum course (HSCD 380 or HSCD 390) in order to receive a passing grade of “C”. That is, the assignments related to the classroom portion and the practicum portion of the course must both receive passing grades to receive credit for this course. If a student fails either of these two components, they will fail the entire course.
V. Practicum Site Requirements:

1. Site and Supervisor: The supervised practicum experience is required to be focused on Alcohol and Drug Counseling activities. MN Statutes 148F further define the focus of the practicum experience by the following:

- the student is supervised by a person either fully licensed (LADC, not temp.) by this chapter or exempt under its provisions, and
- the experience is in a program licensed (Rule 31) as a chemical dependency program, by the state of MN, and
- the experience is part of an accredited school or educational program of Alcohol and Drug Counseling. and
- the experience must contain a minimum of ten clock hours in each core function

2. Site Supervisor: In addition to the requirements listed under #1 above, the Site Supervisor must:

- have at least an AA/AS degree. BA/BS degree is preferred.
- have minimum of four years of post LADC (not temporary lic.) experience providing direct alcohol and drug counseling.
- provide a minimum of 50 minutes of individual supervision for every 40 hours the intern is on-site. (BBHT)
  - This supervision should be evenly distributed over the course of the student’s practicum.
  - At least 75% of this supervision is face-to-face.
  - At least 50% of this supervision is on an individual basis (one-to-one).
- is not currently under investigation or had disciplinary, non-disciplinary corrective, or legal action taken against the supervisor by any person, for civil, criminal, or professional misconduct. (BBHT)

3. Evidence-Based Practices: The practicum Program must utilize evidence-based treatment practices (see Nathan & Gorman, 2007; Miller & Hester, 2003) and Evidence-based therapeutic relationship approaches (see Norcross, 2002) (See Principle #1 for the BS degree in Alcohol & Drug Counseling, Student Handbook, 2013)

4. Model of Addiction: The practicum site must utilize a bio-psycho-social (Multivariate) conceptualization of chemical dependency. (See Principle #2 for the BS degree in Alcohol & Drug Counseling, Student Handbook, 2013)

5. Dual-Relationship (ethics): Due to the ethical issues related to dual relationships, under no circumstances can the student intern be a former client of the agency. In addition, the student intern cannot be related (e.g. a parent, sibling, uncle, aunt, cousin, in-law), or share residence with the agency Site Supervisor. (Metro State University Policy #2040)
6. **Do Practicum at two sites:** Students are encouraged to split their 880 hour practicum between two different practicum sites, i.e. 440 hours at each site. This provides students with a more diverse and broad experience.

A student may complete their entire practicum experience at only one practicum site, particularly if the student is already employed at the site. If a student plans to do this, they should discuss it with the Faculty Supervisor. Do not assume this will be approved.

There are some practicum sites which may provide a good experience for the student but are too narrow in focus (i.e. do not provide experience in all 12 core functions). In this case, a second practicum site is required. Examples of these are: detox, school chemical health programs, assessment & referral, or intervention programs.

7. **Cultural Diversity:** Students are strongly encouraged to perform at least one of their practicums in a site which is culturally different from the student’s background, i.e. race, culture, age, gender, or socio-economic status. This will provide the student with an opportunity to become more culturally competent in their practice and be better prepared for an increasingly diverse client population.

8. **Length of Practicum:** Each of the practicum courses (HSCD 380 or 390) may be spread over more than one semester.

9. **Out of State Practicum Sites:** Doing a practicum outside of MN is generally not approved. Please discuss potential exceptions with the Practicum Coordinator.

10. **Practicum in Hospital-Based Programs:** Hospital-based programs will likely have some additional requirements for students to complete (i.e. physical exam, other health testing, additional training, etc.) in order to a student to be permitted to perform a practicum. Ask the Practicum Coordinator for additional requirements found in the contract with the specific hospital program.

11. **Harassment:** Harassment on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or sexual orientation is prohibited. (MNSCU policy 1B.1)

A student intern who believes she or he has been or is being subjected to conduct prohibited by this policy is encouraged to report the incident(s) as soon as possible to their practicum instructor or the University Affirmative Action Officer.
12. **Discrimination**: No person shall be discriminated against in the terms and conditions of personnel practices or access to participation as a student intern on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, religion, age, national origin, disability, marital status, status with regard to public assistance or sexual orientation. (MNSCU policy 1B.1)

A student intern who believes she or he has been or is being subjected to conduct prohibited by this policy is encouraged to report the incident(s) as soon as possible to their practicum instructor or the University Affirmative Action Officer.
VI. Roles and Responsibilities:

1. Student Intern Responsibilities:
Although an intern is not an employee of practicum site, you are expected to be responsible and perform in a professional manner consistent with the University’s and organization’s policies and norms. Keep in mind the following:

A. Be ethical by adhering to the following:
   ▪ Ethical Standards for Alcohol and Drug Counselors (MN Statutes, Chapter 148F)
   ▪ University Code of Student Conduct (policy #1030 & #1020)
   ▪ Practicum Site Policies & Procedures related to ethics, professionalism, and operating standards of practice.
   ▪ Be responsible with your use of alcohol or other drugs.

B. Be professional by adhering to the following:
   ▪ Be punctual. If you are going to be late, ill, or will miss a day, notify your Site Supervisor and arrange to make up the time. It is your responsibility to see that your Site Supervisor gets your message.
   ▪ Dress appropriately for your work setting. The way you dress should reflect professionalism and the agency standards.
   ▪ Be respectful of the agency, their staff, your Site Supervisor and their clients.
   ▪ Inform your Site Supervisor and Faculty Supervisor of any changes or proposed changes in your practicum. Do not terminate the practicum on your own without first discussing this with your Site Supervisor and Faculty Supervisor. Doing this could result in failing grade.

C. Use supervision:
   ▪ Establish and maintain a positive professional relationship with your agency supervisor which is characterized by respect, cooperation, and a desire to learn.
   ▪ Communicate a positive attitude.
   ▪ Be introspective, open, and receptive to feedback or criticism. Be open to making appropriate changes in response to feedback.
   ▪ Follow the directions and suggestions given by your Site Supervisor.
   ▪ Discuss any problems as soon as they arise. Usually it is best to talk with your Site Supervisor first if the problem involves your work or co-workers.
   ▪ Keep your Faculty Supervisor informed about your activities, problems, issues and questions.

D. Be an active learner:
   ▪ Perform the responsibilities of the practicum as outlined in your learning contract, by the practicum site and the University.
   ▪ Assume responsibility and take the initiative for your practicum experience. For example: ask for what you need without being
demanding. Don’t expect anyone to read your mind if you lack information, are confused, or are bored. **It is your responsibility to keep your Site Supervisor and Faculty Supervisor informed of your progress.**

- Meet agreed upon deadlines. Manage your time well. If a proposed deadline seems unrealistic to you, discuss it with your Site Supervisor right away. Do not wait until the last minute.
- Use good judgment in deciding whether to act independently. When in doubt, ask for help.
- Complete practicum related assignments and other related responsibilities as specified in the course syllabus. Submit accurate time sheets and records of your practicum hours. **Keep copies for your records.**

The following is a list of “Hints” which can help you to have a successful practicum:

1. Integrate and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes from your coursework to enhance your competencies in the 12 core functions.
2. Practice basic counseling skills. Use Motivational Interviewing.
3. Express empathy and develop a therapeutic alliance with clients.
4. Conduct counseling sessions. Remember to document these sessions.
5. Formulate & implement individualized treatment plans.
6. Evaluate the progress and outcomes of the therapeutic interventions and treatment strategies used with clients.
7. Build case management skills.
8. Increase your knowledge of referral resources.
9. Maintain ethical standards
10. Network and develop relationships with other professionals.
11. Participate in evaluation review of your work by your supervisor.
12. Continue to enhance personal growth and development.


2. Faculty Supervisor Guidelines:

The Faculty Supervisor’s role is to represent the University and meet with the Student Intern and the on-Site Supervisor to monitor the student’s progress, identify problems and maintain a professional relationship with the Site Supervisor and practicum site. Specific functions include:

1. Represent the Alcohol & Drug Counseling major, Human Services Department, College of Professional Studies and the University in all official arrangements with the practicum agency.
   
   a. Oversee arrangements for and give final approval for all Student Practicum sites.
   
   b. Assist students in making decisions about practicum site selection.
   
   c. Work with practicum sites to develop an practicum consistent with the student’s goals.

2. Facilitate student learning, i.e. the integration of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

3. Monitor learning environment at the practicum sites.

4. Help students to evaluate achievement of learning consistent with goals and objectives.

5. Help make adjustments to the practicum learning process or goals as needed to insure successful student outcomes.

6. Monitor student progress and help resolve problems by making site visits and by periodic contacts with the Site Supervisor.

7. Communicate effectively and meet with Student Intern and Site Supervisor during the practicum placement.

8. Maintain ethical behavior appropriate for a Faculty Supervisor representing the University.

9. Cooperate with the practicum site in evaluating student progress during the practicum and to arrange for the termination or reassignment of a student who fails to adhere to the “Responsibilities of Students” (see page 11-12).

10. Assign a final grade to the Student Intern.
3. **Site Supervisor Guidelines:**

Since a successful practicum requires the good faith cooperation of the agency, Site Supervisor, the University Faculty Supervisor and the Student Intern, the following guidelines/responsibilities are explicitly stated in order to promote mutual understanding and cooperation in the hope the practicum experience between all parties is a highly productive and mutually satisfying experience. In order to help clarify our expectations for site or agency supervision, we offer the following guidelines:

A. **Orientation:**
   - Explain intern’s specific duties, responsibilities, and expected standards of performance.
   - Clarify work schedule, acceptable work attire, any pertinent deadlines or office procedures relevant to the practicum.
   - Offer the intern any brochures, newsletters, manuals, and reports which provide information about your agency mission, services, or policies.
   - Discuss the learning goals and objectives which the intern has proposed as per their learning contract. Suggest specific activities which may contribute to the accomplishment of these goals and objectives.
   - Help the intern to understand any issues which relate to the unique client population served by the agency.
   - Introduce them to administrators, other counselors and support staff.
   - Inform intern of any in-service education or other training opportunities to attend.

B. **Supervision:**
   - Support the intern by providing them with the opportunity to integrate academic knowledge with clinical practice by regular formal meeting times. Provide feedback, answer questions, offer guidance, and review assignments during these meetings.
   - Arrange for the intern to observe group and individual counseling, assessments, staffing and other clinical activities.
   - Provide a minimum of 50 minutes of individual supervision for every 40 hours the intern is on-site (BBHT) and informally whenever possible, discussing strengths and areas for improvement.
     - This supervision should be evenly distributed over the course of the student’s practicum.
     - At least 75% of this supervision is face-to-face.
     - At least 50% of this supervision is on an individual basis (one-to-one).
   - Increase the intern’s level of responsibility as they demonstrate competence; add new tasks, duties, or responsibilities.
   - Whenever possible, include intern in staff or other meetings appropriate to their practicum.
C. Ethics & Professional Competence:
   - Comply with the requirements of MN Statutes 148F regarding reporting obligations of violations of Rules of Professional Conduct to the Board of Behavioral Health and Therapy.
   - Keep current on alcohol and drug counseling evidence-based practices.

D. Liaison:
   - Act as a liaison representing the practicum agency in discussions with the Faculty Supervisor. For example; review and approve the student’s Practicum Learning agreement.
   - Cooperate with the University in evaluating the intern’s progress, including:
     - Being available for periodic meetings with the intern and Faculty Supervisor, as arranged.
     - Being available to communicate by telephone, e-mail, or letter with the Faculty Supervisor, as arranged.
     - Completing a final written evaluation of the intern on a form provided by the University on time. The student will not be able to receive a grade for the practicum until this evaluation is received.
     - Validate the number of hours of practicum competed by the student.
   - Report any problems with the intern to the Faculty Supervisor as soon as possible, should they arise.
VII. Practicum Procedures

When planning your practicum experience, it is essential that you work closely with the Faculty Supervisor. You must submit the practicum application by the stated deadline. You must also complete all of the prerequisite courses and fulfill the practicum eligibility criteria prior to the start of your practicum. You must immediately inform your faculty supervisor of any changes in your status.

The Faculty Supervisor will work with you to plan a practicum experience that meets both the objectives of the practicum as well as your individual training needs and professional goals. We strive to honor student preferences regarding both the type of placement and the geographic location; however, the primary goal is to insure your practicum placement provides the kind of training consistent with the stated goals of our practicum program. We are committed to placing students in agencies in which the on-Site Supervisors are dedicated and committed to providing a quality training experience.

You are responsible for working with the Faculty Supervisor to identify the type of setting and geographic location where you hope to be placed. You are also responsible for contacting potential sites and negotiating your placement. The process of establishing a placement often requires several steps and may take several weeks.

The following is a preparation check-list to assist you in preparing for Practicum:

I. Pre-Practicum (HSCD 320):

1. Read Practicum Manual _____

2. Consider potential practicum sites
   - Complete “Goals for Practicum” assignment _____
   - Review list of potential practicum sites _____
   - Review prior student reports on practicum sites _____

3. Prepare for initial practicum interviews
   - Complete resume _____
   - Prepare a list of interview questions, i.e. work performed, type of supervision needed, etc. _____

3. Complete interviews with prospective practicum sites _____

4. Complete “Practicum Application.” Be sure to address:
   - Student in good standing? _____
   - Coursework completed? _____
   - Other Required Documentation completed? _____
5. Complete draft of the “Learning Agreement” form along with required documentation, i.e. Site Rule 31 license Site Supervisor resume and copy of LADC license. 

   - Draft of “Learning Agreement” is reviewed by Pre-practicum seminar (HSCD 320) instructor. 
   - Is reviewed, edited and finalized after discussion with the Practicum Site Supervisor. 
   - The student is responsible to assure the practicum Site Supervisor has a final copy of this approved agreement. 
   - Practicum Learning Agreement. 
   - Meet with Faculty Practicum Coordinating committee to review that requirements have been met and for final approval to begin practicum. 

II. Alcohol and Drug Counseling Group Practicum I & II (HSCD 380 & 390)

   1. Provide signed Practicum Learning Agreement to the Faculty Supervisor by the first day of the semester. 
   2. Meet with Faculty and Site Supervisor during the first 440 hours of practicum.
VIII. The Initial Interview with a Prospective Practicum Site

In your initial interview at a prospective practicum site, it is important you are clear about your purpose: to gather sufficient information about the site to make an informed decision as to whether or not a particular site is an appropriate place for you to fulfill your needs and goals. At the same time, the site will be interviewing you in an attempt to assess your background, goals and needs in order to determine whether you will fit into their team.

In your initial interview, the following components should be present:

1. You should gain an overview of the agency and learn, for example, where clients come from (who refers them), what the agency’s goals for clients are, what is intended to happen to clients in that setting, etc. It may be important to discuss the theoretical basis for the work the agency does in order to ascertain whether you are willing to fit yourself into the agency’s ideological or theoretical frame.

2. It should be clear what the agency’s expectations of interns are and what your responsibilities will be. If the person interviewing you does not volunteer the necessary information, ASK. Knowing and understanding the agency’s expectations of you is your responsibility.

3. The issue of supervision is crucial. How will you be supervised? By whom? Is there a sequence by which you will gradually be given increased responsibility for clients? Is there a structure for supervision? Is there time allowed for supervision as opposed to you having to catch a harried counselor on the run to ask questions? Does the agency have a commitment to participating in the training of the next generation of counselors?

4. It is important for you to have an understanding of which of the Twelve Core Functions you will be able to perform in this placement.

5. It is essential that you communicate clearly what the Alcohol and Drug Counseling expectations are (for example that you receive 50 minutes of supervision for every 40 hours of clinical work). Although some sites may already know what expectations of its interns are, make no assumptions. It is your responsibility to inform them.

6. Go to the interview prepared! Students interviewing for their practicum placements have sometimes been puzzled about what to ask a prospective Site Supervisor. The following is a list of questions that have been suggested by former Student Interns. It is not expected that you would ask all of these questions; they are simply meant as a guide.

   a. What is your program like, please describe it.
   b. What is the program’s philosophy or treatment model?
c. Is there anything particularly unique or progressive about this program?
d. What is your client population? (race/culture, age, socio-economic, etc.)
e. How does your program utilize interns? For example, at what point in the internship will I be able to work directly with clients? Will I function more as an observer, assistant counselor or a full counselor?
d. Are there any non-counseling or non-direct service activities which I will be involved in? (i.e. staff in-service training, staff meetings, etc.)
e. Who will be my on-site supervisor? When can I meet this person?
f. What hours am I expected to be here? How flexible can the schedule be?
f. What limitations are placed on interns and what they cannot do?
g. Who do I go to for feedback and support?
h. How many of the 12 core functions will I be able to perform?
i. Do you ever hire interns? How often do you have job openings? What is the approximate starting pay for counselors here?