Non-Curriculum Based Sequencing Information for Counseling Psychology Students

Overview

This document helps students get quick information about program requirements that fall outside of the coursework (or work in tandem to coursework). Students should also review all other program documents and make additional notes on this form regarding timelines, deadlines, and sequences within the program. This is critical to ensure that students see all relevant program requirements.

Order of Completion of Evaluative Requirements

Courses are to be completed according to the sequence specified in program documents. Exceptions require approval from the faculty.

Plan of Study

Students must submit a plan of study to the Graduate School, typically in their 2nd or 3rd year. This helps ensure that they have sufficient time to narrow down their dissertation topic and identify committee members based on that topic and their particular academic needs (e.g., students may want to have an expert in a particular type of methodology on their committee). The committee must be selected prior to submitting the plan of study. The Graduate School may ask students to form their committee even sooner than this timeline.

Written Preliminary Exams

Students may take their written preliminary exams any time such exams are formally offered, beginning with the spring of their 2nd year. Because students must apply for internship no later than their 7th year, they must take the written exams no later than spring of their 6th year.

Psychotherapy Project

Students must defend their psychotherapy project within one year of first sitting for their written preliminary exams. This means they have one year starting the first date of the exams (exams are three days spread out over one week) to complete this project. The first date that a student may submit the project is the morning of the first day of their written exam and the latest date is one day short of one calendar year after that date. Students cannot use a session or outcome data from their first year of practicum for this project. Students must use a current client for the project and the project requires that students demonstrate competence to help an individual psychotherapy client get better. Students must provide evidence in the form of outcomes that their therapy is helping the client, and must produce a session of good therapy. The psychotherapy project is a formal evaluation similar to the written preliminary exams (but for the evaluation of students’ therapy skills).

Oral Exam

Students must pass the written preliminary exam and the psychotherapy project before they complete their oral exam. This includes the in-person psychotherapy project meeting and completing any changes made to the written project that were required by the faculty as a result of the in-person meeting. Students must also have filed a plan of study and formed an evaluation committee (also called the dissertation committee) prior to taking their oral exam. An oral exam cannot be completed prior to these requirements. Students are responsible for ensuring they are
eligible to complete the oral exam at the time it is scheduled. Failure to follow policies regarding the requirements for eligibility for the oral exam can result in remediation.

**Application for Internship**

Students apply for internship the fall before the year they intend to complete their pre-doctoral internship (typically a full-time, 12-month experience; see program policies for program requirements regarding qualifying pre-doctoral internships). The internship application process is complex and requires several months. Students must take COUN 8800 the fall term during which they are applying to internship. Students must pass their psychotherapy project and oral exam before they apply to internship. Students who entered the program after fall of 2012 must pass their dissertation proposal before applying for internship.

**Dissertation Proposal**

Students may theoretically propose their dissertation as early as they are able to produce it. Students who entered after the fall term of 2012 must propose prior to applying for internship. Because they must apply to internship no later than their 7th year, students must propose no later than Oct 31st of their 7th year. Students who propose very early should be aware of constraints around the timing of the dissertation defense, as the defense may be delayed by other program requirements.

**Dissertation Defense**

Students must defend their dissertation within 4 years of passing their oral exam. There must also be one semester between the oral exam and the dissertation defense. This means that the earliest the dissertation defense can occur is two semesters after the semester during which the student passed the oral exam (semesters include Fall, Spring, Summer).

**Graduation Check**

The Graduate School requires students who wish to graduate to complete a graduation check. This will ensure they have met all program requirements. This must be done before the semester in which the student will graduate. In other words, if a student wishes to graduate at the end of the summer term, the student must complete the graduation check no later than the spring term prior to that graduation.

**Pre-doctoral Internship**

All students will complete a pre-doctoral internship. At a minimum, the internship must be an APPIC member program. However, students are strongly encouraged to complete an APA-accredited internship. Students who wish to apply for an internship that is not APA-accredited must provide documentation to the faculty establishing the equivalence to APA-accreditation. The faculty will determine whether that internship will count. NOTE: APPIC policies prevent the completion of a second internship; therefore, a student cannot complete any internship that does not meet these requirements because the student will effectively be unable to complete the pre-doctoral internship program requirement. The pre-doctoral internship application process is long and complex. To assist students with this, all students are required to enroll in COUN 8800 the term in which they are applying to internship. They must complete the course to participate in the match. In addition, the faculty must approve the student as ready to apply to internship. This approval is contingent upon meeting program requirements for eligibility as described in program policies (some of which are listed above including the oral exam, the dissertation proposal for those
who entered during or after the Fall term of 2012, and enrollment in COUN 8800) and student skill in practicum that indicates readiness for internship.

The program has set requirements in several domains to prepare students for the internship application process. These requirements are seen as minimums, and typically students will exceed these requirements. Students should be aware that internship sites themselves may have additional, specific requirements (e.g., expecting more hours, expecting hours in specific areas such as assessment, or expecting the student to be nearly completed with the dissertation), such that completion of program requirements may not meet the requirements for any specific individual internship site. Students must also be aware that the internship application process is competitive, and that the program does not provide a pre-doctoral internship. Rather, the program, like the majority of APA-accredited programs, uses the match process in which students apply for internships that meet their professional and personal goals.

Students must complete all coursework prior to the start of their pre-doctoral internship. Students must also enroll in COUN 8930 each term while on internship and maintain contact with the program while on internship. Enrollment in COUN 8930 requires communication with the internship site to document progress sufficient to warrant the grade of Satisfactory each term before a grade can be assigned. In addition, students must submit a copy of the AAPI they used to apply to internship prior to enrolling in COUN 8930.
YEAR-BY-YEAR RECOMMENDATIONS

First Year

Students should focus on becoming involved in the program and their coursework. Involvement in the program includes seeking opportunities to assist with research, attendance at ACOPS, involvement in other program social activities, and involvement in campus opportunities.

Recommendations:
• take courses as outlined in documents on the web and communicated by the TD and your advisor
• work with your advisor to gain research experience
• if your advisor is not able to work with you on research, identify another faculty member or a more advanced graduate student and become involved in research by working on one of their projects
• attend program social functions and ACOPS
• seek out and meet with your advisor at least once a semester (preferably more often)
• perform well in your assistantship

Second Year

Students should focus on developing clinical skills, completing coursework, and enhancing their involvement in research while remaining active in the program. Students may elect to take their written preliminary exams.

Recommendations:
• complete practicum at the AU counseling center and take advantage of professional development opportunities
• take courses as outlined in documents on the web and communicated by the TD and your advisor
• work with your advisor to gain research experience
• if your advisor is not able to work with you on research, identify another faculty member or a more advanced graduate student and become involved in research by working on one of their projects
• identify and attend a conference
• attend program social functions and ACOPS
• seek out and meet with your advisor at least once a semester (preferably more often)
• perform well in your assistantship

Third Year

Students should continue to focus on developing their clinical skills, completing coursework, becoming involved in research, and identifying their own area of research while remaining active in the program. Students typically will file a plan of study and take their written preliminary exams. Students will typically complete their psychotherapy project if they intend to apply for internship the next year.

Recommendations:
• complete a second practicum
• complete most remaining courses (electives, COUN 8540, and COUN 8800 may be taken later than this year)
• begin working on your dissertation proposal
• continue involvement in other research
• submit research to present at a conference
• submit research for publication
• complete the written preliminary exam
• attend program social functions and ACOPS
• seek out and meet with your advisor at least once a semester (preferably more often)
• perform well in your assistantship

Fourth Year

Students should continue to focus on developing clinical skills that align with their career interests (which may include a focus on particular populations or other skills such as assessment), completing coursework, staying involved in research, and proposal of their dissertation. Students who have not completed their psychotherapy project, typically do so.

Recommendations:
• complete additional program-approved clinical experiences
• complete psychotherapy project if you have not already done so
• complete the oral exam
• complete most remaining courses (electives, COUN 8540, and COUN 8800; the latter if applying to internship)
• propose dissertation and begin conducting dissertation project
• apply to internship
• continue involvement in other research
• submit research to present at a conference
• submit research for publication
• attend program social functions and ACOPS
• seek out and meet with your advisor at least once a semester (preferably more often)
• perform well in your assistantship

Fifth Year – If not on Internship (and Sixth and Seventh year if not on internship)

Students should model this year much after the recommendations of the fourth year if they elect to apply for internship in their fifth year.

Recommendations:
• complete additional program-approved clinical experiences
• complete psychotherapy project if you have not already done so
• complete the oral exam
• complete most remaining courses (electives, COUN 8540, and COUN 8800; the latter if applying to internship)
• propose dissertation and begin conducting dissertation project
• apply to internship
• continue involvement in other research
• submit research to present at a conference
• submit research for publication
• attend program social functions and ACOPS
• seek out and meet with your advisor at least once a semester (preferably more often)
• perform well in your assistantship

**Internship Year**

Students should focus on their development in clinical skills that align with their career interests. In addition, students should continue their involvement in professional development activities outside of clinical work and involvement in research (at a minimum, completing their own dissertation).

**Recommendations:**

• complete internship
• complete dissertation
• attend conferences and trainings
• apply for jobs and post-doctoral fellowships

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