

Counselling & Clinical
Services



COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY
MASTER'S PRACTICUM
PROGRAM

2024-2025

SUB 2-600
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta T6G
2J7 780.492.5205
<http://uab.ca/ccs>



The University of Alberta respectfully acknowledges that we are located on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional gathering place for diverse Indigenous peoples including the Cree, Blackfoot, Metis, Nakota Sioux, Iroquois, Dene, Ojibway/Saulteaux/Anishinaabe, Inuit, and many others whose histories, languages, and cultures continue to influence our vibrant community.

COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY MASTER'S PRACTICUM PROGRAM

Counselling & Clinical Services (CCS) offers two master's-level practicum positions each academic year (September – April). The practicum program provides new clinicians experience providing individual therapy to adults. These positions are supervised by Registered Psychologists. Students will rotate through two supervisors to maximize exposure and learning. Students also receive supplemental supervision from doctoral interns.

SERVICE DESCRIPTION

CCS is a branch of the Office of the Dean of Students within the University of Alberta. CCS is a multidisciplinary professional agency staffed by 11, 1.0 FTE Registered Psychologists, approximately three to six psychologists-in-training who are supervised by senior staff, eight part-time psychiatrists, three, 1.0 FTE Mental Health Consultants (MHCs), and 3.0 FTE administrative support staff. Our services are available to all students who pay student services fees, and individual counselling sessions are available at no additional cost to the student. Students are seen primarily for individual and group counselling; we also provide couples counseling, workshops for students or staff, consultation and, less frequently, vocational testing. Presently CCS serves a student body of approximately 40,100 students from 156 countries.



Figure 1. Organizational Structure of Counselling & Clinical Services

PRACTICUM DESCRIPTION

PROGRAM HISTORY & RATIONALE

In 2018, CCS reopened the master's practicum program and for the first time, began accepting applicants from schools outside of the University of Alberta. To date, we have welcomed students from all over Alberta, including those from the University of Lethbridge, the University of Calgary, Yorkville University, Athabasca University, City University, and Gonzaga University. We appreciate the diversity of experience all students bring and welcome applications from most Counselling Psychology programs.

In collaboration with the objectives set by students' home institutions, CCS strives to provide students a safe and supportive learning environment to develop their counselling skills. We recognize that many students come to CCS having never conducted a therapy session before. We work diligently to meet students where they are at in their learning and scaffold their experiences appropriately.

The amount of time spent at CCS is flexible and generally dictated by the number of required hours mandated by the home institution. Generally, practicum students spend two to three, eight-hour days at CCS in order to complete their practicum in a timely manner. Ample supervision is provided during this time, as described below.

CCS offers practicum students the chance to develop skills in conducting individual counselling with young adults and adults. We currently do not offer experience in group / couple / family therapy or assessment.

Our training goals for practicum students are as follows:

PRACTICUM GOALS:

Rotation 1 (September-December):

- To help students learn how to develop rapport with clients through the effective use of basic counselling skills, including reflective listening and effective questioning.
- To assist students in developing a personalized model for initial sessions with clients that allows for effective information gathering to inform appropriate care.
- To aide student in developing ethical mindedness and cultural competence in their approach to clinical care.

Rotation 2 (January-April):

- To assist students in finding therapeutic orientations of interest and to help navigate interventions from within these orientations.
- To help students begin effective development and articulation of effective case conceptualization.
- To help student begin the initial development of treatment planning skills.

PRACTICUM CURRICULUM

To accomplish the aforementioned goals, practicum students at CCS work through the following curriculum during the tenure of the practicum. In addition to their clinical work, these key topics are discussed during supervision. Supplemental readings and handouts are provided to support students' learning via self-directed study.

Month	Key Topic(s)
Orientation & September/October	Documentation / Case Notes
	Risk Assessment
	The Therapeutic Process & Stages of Change
	Structuring a First Session & Establishing Goals
	Telehealth
November/December	Common Factors
	The Working Alliance
	Terminations
January/February	Culturally Competent Practice & Working with Marginalized Populations
	Case Conceptualization
March/April	Counsellor Identity Development
	Identifying Theoretical Orientation
	Treatment Planning

Table 1. Practicum program curriculum topics.

SERVICE ACTIVITIES

Practicum students are under the supervision of master's or doctoral level psychologists who have a minimum of five years of clinical experience. Depending on the number of days spent in the clinic, students typically engage in the following activities:

	Approximate Hours per Week
Clinical Time	
Individual Counselling	7-12
Supervision with Individual Supervisor (Registered Psychologist)	2
Supervision with Doctoral Intern	1
Non-Clinical Time	
Administration & Other <ul style="list-style-type: none">Case Notes / Case Prep / Case Management	4-6

Table 2. Typical service activities of master's practicum students.

CLINICAL TIME

Intervention

Individual Counselling

Depending on the numbers of days in the clinic, the practicum student will have 7-12 hours of direct client contact per week. Most clients come in for individual counselling with a wide range of presenting issues. Common issues that practicum students work with include:

- Depression, anxiety, panic, stress-management
- Loneliness, isolation, self-esteem, life transitions, grief
- Academic performance concerns, perfectionism
- Relationship difficulties, social skill development, social anxiety
- Identity related issues including sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, racial and cultural identities, and their intersectionality

Supervision

Individual Supervision

Practicum students will meet with their supervisor for two hours of individual supervision per week. One hour will be spent doing live supervision, video review, or engaging in co-therapy. The other hour will be used to discuss clinical cases and general therapeutic, professional, and ethical issues.

Supervisors are all Registered Psychologists in Alberta who have been registered and practicing for a minimum of five years. Students have two supervision rotations. The first rotation is from September to December and the second rotation is from January to April.

Supervision with Doctoral Residents

Each year CCS has three, full time doctoral interns in the clinic. Part of their training requires that they provide supervision. As a result, in addition to your primary supervision, you will be supervised by all three interns as they rotate through the year.

Your intern supervisor will meet with you for one hour a week. The focus will be on supporting your professional and therapeutic development, which includes honing a therapeutic orientation, case conceptualization, general assessment and treatment planning. The intern supervisor is always secondary to the primary supervisor in terms of guidance on cases.

NON-CLINICAL TIME

Administration & Other Activities

Case Notes, Management & Preparation

Practicum students will have approximately 4-6 hours per week to complete a variety of administrative duties, including:

- Writing case notes
- Completing referral requests
- Completing other documentation for the files (i.e., closing files, client communication)
- Writing letters of support for students in the case of examination deferrals or appeals
- Reading, consulting, conducting literature searches, or reviewing case files
- Reviewing curriculum self-study materials, as desired

POSITION INFORMATION

REMUNERATION

The practicum position does not include pay or benefits. However, all supervision is free.

TRAINING RESOURCES

Practicum students will have their own office, which will be used by other students when the practicum student is not in the clinic. Students also have access to a large group room, a one-way mirror observation room, video recording equipment and classrooms as needed. CCS is staffed by 3.0 FTE receptionist positions.

CCS is located in the Students' Union Building along with all of the other University student services (i.e., Academic Success Centre, University of Alberta Career Centre, First Peoples' House, Accessibility Resources, Sexual Assault Centre, Office of the Student Ombuds, University Health Centre and the Office of the Dean of Students).

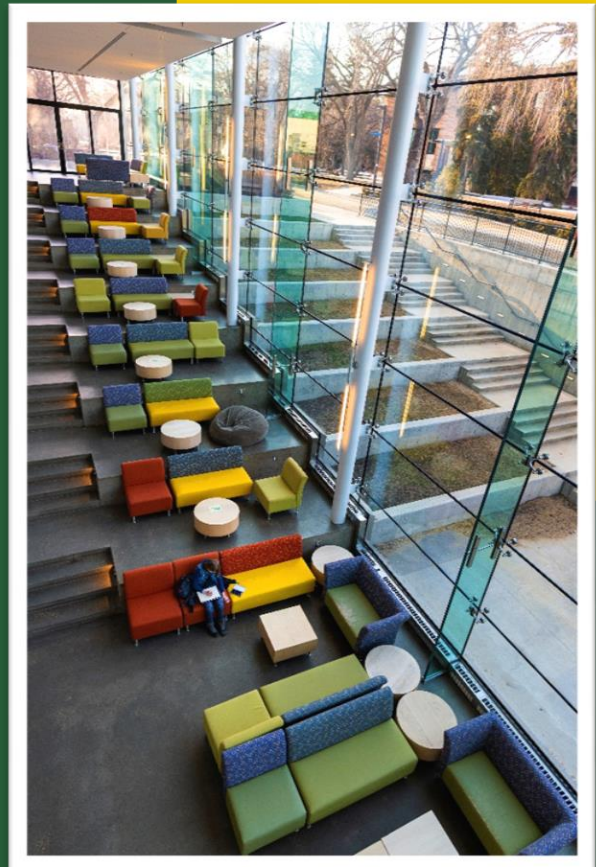
VIDEO RECORDING

CCS has video recording equipment available as we understand many institutions need to see video of therapy sessions. All equipment is shared. CCS has specific consent forms that must be used, even if the student's institution provides their own. Videos can only include the therapist on screen, not the client; however, the client will be audible.

All videos are reviewed in fully by their supervisor and/or the Training Director to ensure all identifying information is removed. All information can only be shared for educational purposes.

Students are required to purchase a lockable transportation device for video.

Videos are stored on site for one year.



ORIENTATION

A three-day orientation is provided in the first week of September. Students will be oriented to the clinic, staff, policies and procedures as well software.

CCS staff will provide general guidelines and expectations for counselling sessions. They will also review documentation standards and provide seminar readings for review. There will be a review of risk assessment, although formal training is recommended if not already complete.

COVID-19 PROGRAM MODIFICATIONS

As of March 2022, the University of Alberta returned to an in-person delivery model for all academic courses. As such, in the 2023-2024 year, it is anticipated that practicum students will work near exclusively on-site, providing both virtual and in-person services. We expect that individual and group counselling will be delivered in a hybrid model and the majority of meetings held in person. CCS will continue to be responsive to all public health and University guidelines and make decisions about the practicum that prioritize student training as well as student and staff health and safety. Institutional updates pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic are made available [online](#).

EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Evaluation will be based on what is requested by the student's home institution. No additional formal evaluation is completed. However, informal evaluation is ongoing throughout supervision.

EXPECTATIONS OF ACADEMIC INSTITUTION

In order for the practicum to function at an optimal threshold, CCS requests that the academic counselling psychology program responsible for the student clinician adhere to the following expectations:

- To bring to the attention of CCS any known disciplinary actions taken against the student related to the student's interactions with vulnerable individuals while in a helping role that has the potential to impact their performance at CCS. *Note: this does not necessarily exclude the student from being able to complete a practicum at CCS but could result in the modification of the practicum student clinician's placement.*
- To bring to the attention of CCS, with the consent of the practicum student, any known and relevant accommodation(s) required by the practicum student to ensure their full engagement and success in the CCS practicum placement.

- When sought, to collaborate with the CCS Clinical Staff when concerns arise regarding the practicum student's performance, to develop and implement an effective remediation plan.
- When sought, to collaborate with the CCS Clinical Staff to establish a reasonable response when concerns arise regarding the student's health and well-being that are impacting the practicum student's performance and/or care for their clients.
- When sought, to collaborate with the CCS Clinical Staff to aid the practicum student in finding a reasonable alternative for program completion if the practicum student is deemed incapable of completing the practicum by way of unacceptable performance.

REMEDICATION & APPEAL

CCS is committed to protecting the interests of students and has comprehensive procedures for addressing Remediation and Appeal. These policies and procedures can be provided at the request of an applicant and are reviewed with students at the outset of practicum. Where appropriate, the policies of the student's home institution are also reviewed and considered. CCS will consult with the student's home institution when concerns arise.

PRACTICUM STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

It is vital to the interests of the University community that students who access CCS are able to trust and rely upon the staff. In order to meet and maintain that trust, practicum students are required to comply with the following conditions for the term of their appointment:

1. To self-report to their supervisor and the Director of CCS any conduct or unusual incident which may give rise to a complaint against them or otherwise may become the subject of investigation. The Dean of Students may suspend their appointment pending the outcome of any investigation.
2. To comply with all regulations and policies of the University of Alberta and CCS as may be amended from time to time.

Counselling & Clinical Services hold the right to terminate the practicum at any time prior to the expiry of the designated term where just cause exists, without notice.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

Any inquires about the practicum program can be directed to:

Dr. Karon Dragon, R.Psych.
Interim Director of Training
kdragon@ualberta.ca
780-492-5205

We welcome applications from students from most Counselling Psychology master's programs and encourage all who are interested to apply.

The University of Alberta is committed to an equitable, diverse, and inclusive workforce. We welcome applications from all qualified persons. We encourage women; First Nations, Métis and Inuit persons; members of visible minority groups; persons with disabilities; persons of any sexual orientation or gender identity and expression; and all those who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas and the University to apply.

All applications are to be emailed to Dr. Karon Dragon, R.Psych. The deadline for applications is December 10 in any given year. Applications are to include:

- A detailed cover letter stating interest
- A CV

In-person or video-conferencing interviews are completed in the second week of January. Interviews are one hour in duration. Interviews are conducted by at least two psychologists and will include a clinic tour, if desired (for virtual interviews, a pre-made video tour is provided). Final decisions are made by January 31st of each year and all candidates are informed whether or not they were successful.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)

What is the work environment like at CCS?

- CCS is a fun and light-hearted work environment where collegial respect is paramount. The staff at CCS work from different orientations and there is no privileging of approaches to therapy. We enjoy laughing, celebrating important events, and developing professional and personal relationships with each other. We take our work as clinicians seriously and believe that ethical and empirically-informed practice is essential. We enjoy learning from each other and from our students and we are always looking to strengthen our work as clinicians and supervisors.

What style do your supervisors take?

- Each supervisor comes to CCS with a unique orientation and skill set. However, our supervisory team is universally focused on building strong relationships with our supervisees and creating an environment where supervisees feel safe, respected, and open to share their triumphs and challenges equally. We seek to create a culture of openness and unconditional support and strive to foster clinical curiosity and ongoing professional growth with our students.

How would clients be assigned to me?

- CCS is accessed by more clients than we have capacity to serve. For this reason, fulfilling your hours at CCS will never be a challenge as CCS is a very busy clinic. Clients access CCS by first completing an Initial Consultation with a psychologist, psychology resident or Mental Health Consultant. Clients are triaged during Initial Consultation and are then assigned to a clinician that has appropriate training to work with the presenting concern. Master's practicum students typically see clients triaged as the second of five levels, with the fifth level being the most acute.

How would my supervisor be assigned to me?

- Supervisors are assigned based on level of education, mutual fit, theoretical orientation, staff workload, supervisor availability, and other clinical demands. We try our best to ensure that students are matched with supervisors where optimal learning can be fostered.

CLINICAL STAFF

1. **Jasmine Bajwa, Ph.D.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS, Edmonton Remand Centre, and Private Practice.
2. **Brittany Budzan, M.Ed.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice.
3. **Karon Dragon, Ph.D.** (University of Alberta, Educational / School & Child Clinical Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice.
4. **Steve Knish, Ph.D.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice; Adjunct Academic Staff, Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta. Registered Yoga Teacher – 200.
5. **Maddalena Genovese, M.Ed.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice.

6. **Kenneth Murdoch, M.Ed.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice.
7. **Jason Murray, M.Ed.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist & Director, CCS.
8. **Jasmine Nathoo, M.Ed.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice.
9. **Rebecca Ponting, M.Ed.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS.
10. **Jenny Ann Phillips, M.A.** (McGill University, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice.
11. **Sauna Rosiechuk, M.Ed.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS.
12. **Kimberly Shelley, M.Ed.** (University of Lethbridge, Counselling Psychology); Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice.
13. **Suman Varghese, M.A., M.Ed.** (University of Alberta, Counselling Psychology) Registered Psychologist (Alberta); Psychologist, CCS and Private Practice.

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