

Oral Examination

The Oral Examination is designed to be a final assessment of student knowledge of fundamental elements of clinical mental health practice that have been the core of the clinical training received in the Counseling Program. The format for the exam will be a thorough case study and presentation that includes the following:

- client conceptualization including a basic assessment (gleaned from client history, social location, family, and other psycho-social factors), a diagnosis, and an assessment of harm;
- a coherent and relevant articulation and application of a theoretical framework that is used to understand the client and client issues in the case study;
- an articulation of the most salient ethical issues that are relevant to the case;
- a clear articulation of the counseling theory as well as goals and strategies that are or were used with this client; and
- a 20 minute video presentation of counseling work with a specific client that is consistent with assessment, the counseling theory, goals, and strategies articulated in the case study.

These requirements are outlined more specifically in the *Oral Examination Case Study Guidelines and Directions* which can be found on our website (see Handbook & Forms page).

During the semester in which the Orals will be taken, the student and advisor identify potential Orals committee members that will include the student's advisor, another regular faculty member in the Counseling Program, and a professional who is familiar with the student's counseling work (i.e., an internship site supervisor). The student's advisor must approve the Orals committee members *before* the student contacts them.

After meeting with the advisor, the student will contact potential committee members personally to inquire into their willingness to be on their Orals committee. When the committee is formed with three members, the student schedules Orals according to committee members' availability.

When a time and date are identified for the Oral Examination, the student must contact Program administrative support staff to schedule a room for the Orals, and should arrange with the administrative support staff (well in advance of the Orals date) for a parking pass for the outside committee member.

Two weeks prior to the scheduled Oral Examination, the student must distribute an Oral Examination Case Study (following the *Oral Examination Case Study Guidelines*) to each committee member and to the Program administrative support staff member.

On the day/at the time of the Oral Examination, students should plan to greet their outside committee member at the door, help them locate the specific location of the Oral Examination, etc.

During the Oral Examination, the student will first be asked to respond to clarifying

questions regarding the Oral Examination Case Study submitted to committee members in advance and then the student will present a 20 minute video presentation of their work with the client described in the case study. Evaluators will be assessing student's ability to clearly articulate their thinking about the client as well as their ability to put theory into practice.

It is important for students and Orals committee members to understand that students will be evaluated based on the quality of their Oral Examination Case Study and video presentation during this exam. Prior experiences of the student in classes and at the internship are not part of the Oral Examination evaluation process.