### Expectations for Practicum

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is a supervised clinical music therapy experience at an assigned placement in the immediate or nearby area.

**II. RATIONALE**

This course is designed for music therapy students – graduate and undergraduate – to implement music therapy treatment in clinical settings in the local community. Field experience in Illinois State University’s music therapy department has been structured to simultaneously meet the requirements of the University and the American Music Therapy Association (AMTA). Group support is a major component of the practicum as well as development of session planning and implementation skills.

**III. COURSE OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES**

1. Students will acquire skills in music therapy assessment and session planning, emphasizing a response to client needs and goals.
2. Students will acquire skills in music therapy session implementation, including preparedness, music skills, presentation skills, and confidence building.
3. Students will acquire skills in spontaneous adaptation during music therapy sessions, understanding when to adhere to the session plan and when to follow client leading, making revisions and adaptations as needed based on client need/ability.
4. Students will acquire information from assigned readings and classroom activities in current diagnosis, behaviors, treatment goals and objectives for the client(s) with whom the student is working.

**IV. ON-SITE WORK**

The student is expected to observe and/or lead sessions at his/her assigned practicum site at least once per week – with a **minimum of 50 minutes per session**. Occasionally, a student will be assigned a practicum site with two sessions per week – with a minimum of 30 minutes per session.

If, for whatever reason, the student is unable to attend a weekly session, both the site supervisor and the university supervisor must be informed **prior** to the scheduled practicum time. **Failure to report to both supervisors prior to the scheduled practicum experience may result in unsuccessful completion of the**
practicum. Multiple absences, excused or unexcused, may result in unsuccessful completion of the practicum.

Ethically, university supervisors are responsible for the treatment that each client receives in student music therapy sessions. Therefore, the student must have an approved session plan prior to the onset of each session. The supervisor reserves the right to suspend or reschedule a session if there is no approved plan in place.

V. CLASS ATTENDANCE
The student is expected to attend practicum class once per week. Supervisors will assign the student to a Tuesday or Thursday section in which to participate. The content of Tuesday and Thursday groups may be different, depending on the make-up of each group. The student will be expected to attend the assigned class. Do not ask to make up a class on an alternate day.

PAGERS & CELL PHONES & IPODS:
Out of courtesy for all those participating in the learning experience, all cell phones and pagers must be turned off before entering any classroom, lab, or formal academic or performance event. Students should also refrain from using their phones to send and receive text messages during class. The use of iPods/mp3 players at any point during class is strictly forbidden.

VI. OBSERVATIONS
A university supervisor, or a designee, will do a graded observation of each student’s work at least three (3) times per semester. Additional observations may be scheduled at the supervisor’s discretion. The student is then expected to schedule a conference with the university supervisor or designee to review the evaluation together.

VII. MATERIALS
Each student is required to have the following materials for this course:
- 3 – ring binder and purchased dividers
- a hand-held tape recorder

Each student is recommended to have the following materials for this course:
- 5 rhythm instruments – student’s choice (it is encouraged that the student purchase 5 new instruments for each practicum to begin to build the student’s personal inventory of instruments)
- 1 drum – type is student’s choice

VIII. PRACTICUM NOTEBOOK
Each student is expected to maintain a practicum notebook. The notebook must be kept up-to-date, with all loose papers filed, and available for review by your university supervisor at any time. A university supervisor will request the notebook without advance notice several times during the semester – it is necessary to bring the notebook to each practicum class session. The notebook is worth 20 pts. each time it is graded. The number of times the notebook is graded throughout the semester is at the supervisor’s discretion and may begin as early as week 2.

The notebook MUST be a 3-ring binder with purchased dividers for easy access and clear organization. A 1-inch binder should be sufficient. Sections in the notebook must be clearly labeled on the tabs as follows:

- readings
- music skill goal
- session plans
- class handouts/notes
- music/additional materials
More details regarding these sections will be provided in class.

**IX. READINGS**

The student will be assigned 5 readings related to his/her clients during the semester. Questions for reflection will accompany each reading and will be assigned at various points during the semester. Each reading is worth 10 pts. each and will be graded on content, APA format, and adherence to deadlines.

**X. MUSIC SKILL GOALS**

Each student will have a music skill goal on which to focus during the semester. Student music skills will be assessed at the beginning of the semester and an appropriate music goal will be assigned. The student and supervisor will together develop an accompanying objective. The student will create a data collection sheet to track progress on the objective on a daily/weekly basis throughout the semester. Each week, the student is to write a personal reflection focusing on how the skill is developing and how progress is subsequently being demonstrated in the practicum setting. The student is graded on the documented work as part of the notebook grade – not whether the goal is achieved.

The student will also be asked to complete a music therapy competency self-evaluation at the beginning of the semester. This is to assist in identifying personal strengths and areas of needed growth as the student progresses through the music therapy program.

**XI. SESSION PLANS**

All session plans are to be completed in the manner specified by the supervisor. Due dates will be assigned by the supervisor working with the student.

Session Plan cover sheet must include:

- Name
- Date practicum session is to be presented (not the date the session is turned in)
- Site
- Session #
- List of interventions, in order, (with name of person presenting if working with a partner), expected amount of time. These times should match intervention plan times.

Intervention Plan – must include:

- **1pt.** Title, Source, Population
- **4 pts.** Multiple goals
- **4 pts.** Multiple objectives
- **1 pt.** Materials needed
- **1 pt.** Reason intervention was chosen
- **3 pts.** Brief explanation of intervention
- **1 pt.** Verbal directions (How you will present the intervention to the cognitive level of the client prior to the intervention. Be specific.)
- **2 pts.** How you will proceed if intervention steps are met
- **2 pts.** How you will proceed if intervention steps are not met
- **1 pt.** Estimated time for intervention

Double space between each section.

Session plans will be graded and returned. No re-writes will be allowed, unless specified by a university supervisor. Exceptions may be granted for plans that are deemed inappropriate or unsafe.

**XII. SESSION NOTES**
Session notes are to be uploaded to Blackboard within 24 hours of completion of the session.
Session notes are to be written after each session and they should reflect items of significance that occurred during the session. Each session note is worth 5 pts. and should be no more than 4 or 5 sentences. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT YOU WRITE THIS SHORTLY AFTER THE SESSION TO MAXIMIZE YOUR MEMORY. When you are in a work or internship setting, session notes/progress notes are the notes that other professionals and insurance personnel will be reading to look at the progress your clients are making toward identified goals. Be clear, be specific, be logical, and don’t use music jargon.

DO:
- do write in professional language
- do be very specific when referring to behaviors and/or occurrences
- do report any items that are unusual, or very significant (i.e. affect, participation, inappropriate behaviors, client statements or behavior of significance)

DO NOT:
- do not use “I”, “we”, “us” – instead refer to yourself as “the music therapist”
- do not use complete names of clients – first names or first initial only
- do not state that the client(s) achieved the objective – the reader does not know the objective
- do not use words like “some”, “several”, “most” when referring to a group of clients – be specific

XIII. PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Personal reflections are to be uploaded to Blackboard within 24 hours of completion of the session. Personal reflections are to be written after each session and they should reflect the music therapy student’s reactions to any part of the week’s session. Each personal reflection is worth 5 pts. and should be at least 8 or 9 sentences in a paragraph or two. Focus on your feelings and reactions to experiences in the session. Be open about what you are experiencing, how you are growing as a therapist, what is frustrating, where you need help, what surprised you, what is exhilarating, etc.

Personal reflections provide an opportunity for the student to share openly with the university supervisor about his/her own development as a student music therapist. Professional supervision can be used to acquire awareness of personal strengths and limitations and issues that may interfere with the student’s work. Because the ability to form therapeutic relationships with clients is critical, this is an opportunity to examine the impact of the student as a person on the therapy process.

XIV. AUDIOTAPING

Audiotaping is intended to be a personal learning experience for the student. It is believed that by hearing one’s self interacting with a client in a therapeutic environment, the student can better enhance personal therapeutic skills. It is essential that you receive written permission from your on-site supervisor to audiotape clients.

1. Audiotape the entire session.
2. Listen to the tape and reflect on what you hear.
3. Write about your reactions to what you hear: things you did well, changes you may need to make, issues you may need to address, surprises or things that occurred of which you were unaware, etc.

This needs to be at least a half a page. This may be your weekly personal reflection writing for the session. YOU MUST IDENTIFY THIS REFLECTION AS AN AUDIOTAPE REFLECTION.

4. Possible areas to be commented upon:
   a. motor/speech mannerisms – motor or speech responses that detract from effectiveness of treatment delivery (adjusting clothing, saying “mmm, you know, you guys”, etc.)
   b. music proficiency skills – speed, volume, voice expressiveness
   c. frequency and specificity of reinforcement – requested responses were reinforced, specific reinforcements using name and behavior were employed
   d. reinforcement of other behaviors
e. use of props/equipment and effectiveness  
f. use of musical instruments, songs, and their effectiveness  
g. off-task behavior of client(s)  
h. client responses to music/nonmusic directives  

5. The student is to audiotape three times during the semester – sessions 5, 8, and 11.  

6. If the student feels additional audiotaping is beneficial, the student is encouraged to continue the practice with the permission of the on-site supervisor  

XV. DRESS AND APPEARANCE  
The student is to wear professional attire at all times during on-site work. Remember that what is currently in fashion is not necessarily professional dress. No jeans, bare midriffs, low-cut tops, or low-rise pants are permitted – even if your on-site supervisor allows it. No clothing with logos or writing is permitted. Shoes are to be worn at all times – do not remove during the session. Each site may have specific expectations regarding dress and appearance – please be mindful of these and follow them carefully. Be certain to ask about the use of jewelry, piercings and the display of tattoos. Always think through the interventions you will be doing as you dress (i.e. Will I be on the floor? Will I be bending over or reaching up? Are my shoes appropriate for moving smoothly through the group? Are there persons in my group that might be aroused or offended by what I am wearing?)  

A good rule of thumb – if you are questioning whether or not something is appropriate, don’t wear it. Do not allow anything in your dress or personal appearance to stand in the way of a healthy therapeutic relationship with you, your client, or your on-site supervisor.  

XVI. HANDLING ISSUES THAT ARISE DURING PRACTICUM  
The key to handling issues that arise during practicum is COMMUNICATION. The university supervisors are here to assist the student as appropriate. If there are problems occurring, it is best to address them as soon as possible.  

Examples:  
1. I am having problems with my on-site supervisor.  
2. I am having problems with my university supervisor.  
3. My partner refuses to meet with me during the week.  
4. My partner is not fulfilling his/her part of the session.  
5. Behavior management issues.  
6. Suggestions for dealing with specific activity/session plan issues. (This does not mean that it is appropriate for you to come to your university supervisor one or two days before your session plan is due and say “I don’t have any ideas for activities. What should I do?”)  

If the student is working with a partner, the university supervisor may frequently ask how the relationship is working. This is intended as a way of identifying problems early and working at solutions so that the remainder of the semester is optimally productive for both students. Do not wait until your final conference with the supervisor during finals week to identify problems with a partner.  

XVII. GRADING PROCEDURES  
Attendance, preparedness, openness to supportive critique and growth – these are keys to success in your practicum experience.  

Number of minutes tardy for class will be added throughout the semester. Fifty tardy minutes will count as one class absence. Assignments are considered on time if they are handed in at the requested time on the due date. They are considered 1 day late if they are turned in anytime after the requested time on the due date and will, therefore, drop one point. Assignments will continue to drop for each additional day they are late. (Example: The requested time is noon on Monday. The plan is submitted at 2:30 on Wednesday. Point loss is 3 pts.)
Weekly attendance in class is expected. If you have more than three unexcused absences during the semester, your participation grade will be affected and this may result in a lowered course grade. Official university business, such as ensemble tours, must be documented in advance in writing in order to be excused. If you must be absent from class because of a university activity or for a personal reason, it is important that you notify your teacher of this in advance. This will enable you to stay informed about class assignments. Personal illness is not an excused absence.

Be in class on time. It is discourteous to your professor and your fellow students if you arrive late. Excessive tardiness will not be tolerated. If you have special circumstances which prevent your being on time, discuss this with your professor in the first week of classes.

**Students must earn a C or better in this course to obtain credit for this course.**

There are still a few graduate students under an earlier catalog who will receive an actual grade for this course. These students must earn a C or better in this course for it to count toward their degree.

Grades will be figured by averaging letter grades earned in the following three areas.

**Interventions** – 20 pts. each – all session plans are averaged together – 1/3 of final grade

- **A** = 17 – 20
- **B** = 15 – 16.9
- **C** = 13 – 14.9
- **D** = 12 – 12.9
- **F** = below 12

**Observations** – 10 pts. each – three observations are averaged together – 1/3 of final grade

- **A** = 8 – 10
- **B** = 7 – 7.9
- **C** = 6 – 6.9
- **D** = 5 – 5.9
- **F** = below 5

**Notebook and Assignments** – notebook and assignment grades will be averaged together – 1/3 of final grade

- **A** = 90 – 100%
- **B** = 80 – 89%
- **C** = 70 – 79%
- **D** = 60 – 69%
- **F** = below 60%
Practicum Semester Schedule

8/19
welcome
complete schedules, insurance forms
review syllabus
musical skills assessment information
Assignments: get notebook set up and bring to meeting with university supervisor next week; complete self-assessment and bring to musical skills assessment; schedule musical skills assessment THIS week; verify Blackboard access for practicum – notify supervisor immediately if there is a problem

8/21
Blackboard – location to be announced

8/26
handout music skills assessment data and recommendations
discuss music skill goals and data sheets
instrument check-out policies
Assignment: meet with university supervisor privately – bring prepared notebook to this meeting
DUE: music skill data sheets – bring these to your supervision meeting

8/26
practicum class at 12:00 in CW 313
receive practicum site assignments; complete professional practice worksheets
receive class day assignment (Tuesday or Thursday)
Assignments: SCHEDULE FIRST MEETING AT PRACTICUM SITE with site supervisor and faculty supervisor; observe clients at practicum site; complete Site Information Sheet; obtain signature from on-site supervisor regarding audiotaping
DUE: session plan for first practicum session

9/2
client activities
Assignments: begin practicum sessions

9/9 – 11
class activities

9/16 – 18
class activities

9/23 – 25
class activities

9/30 – 10/2
class activities
Assignment: meet with on site supervisor for mid-term evaluation

10/7 – 10/9
class activities
Session # 5 – audio tape session, listen to it, and respond in personal reflection for the week

10/14 – 16
class activities
Assignment: schedule a mid-term evaluation with the on-site
supervisor

10/21 – 23  class activities

10/28 – 30  class activities  
Assignment: Session # 8 – audio tape session, listen to it, and respond in personal reflection for the week

11/4 – 6  class activities

11/11 – 13  class activities  
Assignment: speak with on-site supervisor regarding completing final practicum evaluation

11/18  class activities  
Session # 11 – audio tape session, listen to it, and respond in personal reflection for the week

11/25 – 27  THANKSGIVING BREAK

12/2  class activities; complete course evaluations  
Assignments: hand in notebook; schedule conference with university supervisor during finals week

I reserve the right to make changes in the syllabus during the semester as circumstances and opportunities warrant it.

Any student needing to arrange a reasonable accommodation for a documented disability should contact Disability Concerns at 350 Fell Hall, 438-5853 (voice), 438-8620 (TTY).