

## **XII. PROFESSIONAL, ETHICAL, & LEGAL CONDUCT**

Students are responsible for behaving in a professional, ethical, and legal manner in their practicum classes and sites. To fulfill this requirement, students are expected to be familiar with the professional guidelines established in the field, as well as the ethical and legal guidelines as set forth by the BBS, ACA, and CAMFT.

Students are expected to exhibit professional behavior at all times, both inside and outside of class. Unprofessional behavior includes but is not limited to: using electronics during class time, except for taking lecture notes; arriving late to class; returning late from break; missing classes for non-medical reasons; and turning in assignments late (even one minute late).

Students are also expected to be professional in both written and verbal communication with each other, the department/university staff members, faculty members, and all practicum site personnel while in practicum. Students are advised to demonstrate sensitivity to all people from diverse cultural or political backgrounds, even with personal social media; one's social media presence can be observed by others and therefore impact them.

In cases where a student fails to exhibit professional behavior, faculty members will document in their student file the date, class, specific behavior, and any reasoning the student provided for engaging in these behaviors. A single incident over the course of a year may not be a concern, depending on its severity. However, students who engage in patterns of unprofessional behavior may be subject to disciplinary action. Professional behavior is evaluated as part of each student's continuation in the program, advancement to practicum, and eligibility for graduation.

Students may not engage in any unprofessional, unethical, or illegal practices at their placements even if such practices are condoned, expected, or encouraged by site supervisors and/or staff. Students must promptly notify their supervisors of any such practices that they observe at the site by staff or other trainees. The Practicum Instructor and the Clinical Training Director must also be notified immediately regarding these issues. In cases where the supervisor is suspected of unprofessional, unethical, or illegal practices, the student must directly notify the Clinical Training Director immediately.

Students who feel they would be in jeopardy or punished for reporting unprofessional, unethical, or illegal behavior to the site itself, must report these concerns to the Clinical Training Director immediately.

Students who engage in unprofessional, unethical, and/or illegal conduct may be removed from their practicum site, and in some cases, placed on departmental notice or dismissed from the Counseling Program (see **Section XIII**).

In addition, students are expected to maintain a professional and responsible demeanor at their training sites, including appropriate dress, good grooming, and courtesy. Students are expected to arrive on time for scheduled counseling appointments and other duties at their sites (e.g., staff meetings or trainings), and to familiarize themselves with the ACA <https://www.counseling.org/knowledge-center/ethics> and CAMFT Code of Ethics: <https://www.camft.org/Membership/About-Us/Association-Documents/Code-of-Ethics>

### **Characteristics of a Counselor**

According to Schneider-Corey and Corey (2010) and Kottler, (2010) there are certain qualities, traits, attitudes, values, and convictions that are critical for counselors to possess:

- Sensitivity
- Personal presence
- Compassion and empathy
- Flexibility
- Integrity
- Ability to model functional human behavior and coping processes
- Insight
- Growth orientation for self and others
- Responsibility

**NOTE:** Professionalism, personal growth, and the development of these qualities must be demonstrated, both in the classroom and out in the field, for a successful practicum experience year.