

APPENDIX VII

Description of the 60-credit Pastoral Counseling program for Potential Supervisors

The Pastoral Counseling Program at the Fordham University Graduate School of Religion and Religious Education (GRE) is a 60 credit Masters Program which provides the professional education requirement needed for licensure as a *mental health counselor* in New York State. In addition to academic coursework emphasizing counseling theory, psychosocial assessment, diagnosis, and clinical intervention, students also take courses that prepare them to work with the spiritual concerns of their clients. A professionally supervised internship is an especially integral part of the professional education requirement.

Our students are required to complete 600 hours of clinical internship under the supervision of a licensed mental health professional. A licensed social worker, psychiatrist, psychologist, guidance counselor, marriage and family counselor, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner, are among those who may provide clinical supervision consistent with the requirements for licensure preparation. Additionally, supervisors should have had at least three years of full time (or the part time equivalent) professional experience in mental health care.

It is expected that supervision will be around assessment, planning, and treatment of assigned clients. Supervisors are to provide at least one hour per week, or two hours every other week, of individual or group supervision. The 600 hours of required field experience may be scheduled to accommodate the needs of student and agency, and are most commonly completed within four academic semesters. At least 240 hours of the required 600 hours should be in direct service, with opportunities for both individual and group experience. An evaluation of student progress is required toward the end of each semester the student is in placement, as is regular contact between the site supervisor and the Clinical Director of Field Placement.

While many of our students may wish to eventually provide mental health counseling within a religious or pastoral agency, a fully secular mental health agency is a perfectly appropriate placement setting. It should be emphasized that our students, who come from diverse religious backgrounds, understand that it is not appropriate for them to advocate on behalf of any religious or spiritual tradition in their role as a mental health intern. As students in the Pastoral Counseling Program, however, we expect that our students will help their clients to explore and articulate their spiritual concerns and values, where such focus might contribute to the client's overall growth and development.

Please do not hesitate to contact Fordham University's Pastoral Counseling Program for additional information. Questions or comments can be directed to the Clinical Director.

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