REGENT UNIVERSITY | School of Psychology & Counseling

Group Experience Requirement

What Every MA Counseling Student Needs to Know

WHAT IS IT?

CACREP Standard 3.F.10 requires that all counseling students engage in a direct experience as a participant, not just an observer, in a small group activity, for a minimum of 10 clock hours. This is an experiential requirement: it asks you to spend real time inside a group, in the seat of a group member.

WHY IT MATTERS FOR YOUR FORMATION

Each small group is facilitated by a licensed professional and offers a safe, confidential space for students to:

- Experience group process and dynamics firsthand, from the seat of a group member
- Practice vulnerability, trust, and self-disclosure in a supportive environment
- Observe how a group develops and moves through stages over time
- Build the self-awareness and empathy that will shape you as a future group facilitator

This experience is foundational to your formation as a counselor-in-training. You cannot fully understand what it feels like for your clients to be in a group until you have been in one.

HOW THE REQUIREMENT IS FULFILLED IN OUR PROGRAM

Online Students

Completed during Residency B (COUN 596B)

- Occurs during your second year, within the one-week, face-to-face Residency
- 2.5 hours per day over 4 days, totaling 10 hours
- Built directly into the Residency schedule; no separate scheduling needed

Campus Students

Completed during COUN 554 Group Counseling

- Occurs during the Fall semester of your second year
- Approximately 1.5 hours across 7 pre-scheduled, biweekly sessions
- Held during already-scheduled class time; no extra time required outside class

IMPORTANT POLICIES TO KNOW

- Attendance at every session is mandatory. The MA Programs attendance policy does not apply to the Group Experience.
- The 10 hours must be completed within a single semester
- Campus students who miss a session must repeat the entire experience. The next opportunity is during the following Residency B, alongside our Online students.
- Online students who miss any portion of Residency B must repeat the entire Residency, including the small group experience.
- This is a graduation requirement and must be completed before a student may enroll in Practicum.
- This requirement is separate from your Group Counseling coursework (e.g., the group facilitation assignment). Completing one does not fulfill the other.
- Students making significant changes to their ADP, such as switching from Campus to Online enrollment or vice versa, risk creating a gap that results in missing the group experience requirement. Please be sure to consult your Faculty Mentor for any changes to how and when you take a course.

Questions? Reach out to your Faculty Mentor or the MA Programs Director.