



Photo by Maria Corvallis

At the DeBusk Center graduate students get real-world experience under strict supervision counseling clients from the community who have been referred to the center.

Counselors learn real trade at campus DeBusk Center

By Frale de Guzman
Of the Emerald

Each year at the DeBusk Counseling Center, 40 graduate students gain experience counseling real clients through a rigorous 72-hour practicum program, said John Loughary, director of the center.

"It's a place where students and faculty from the counseling fields can come together and work in a practicum setting," Loughary said.

The participants are full-time graduate students who will undergo one term of coursework and first level practicum study and two terms of field work, Loughary said.

The graduate students are chosen from among 200 applicants from the counseling psychology department.

Student counselors work under intense supervision, Loughary said. Every counseling session is videotaped, and each counselor's technique is evaluated by both the student and the supervisor.

Many clients schedule appointments with counselors to help them cope with loneliness, relationship problems, or depression.

Counselors are assigned three clients who are normally refer-

red to the center by outside agencies. These agencies include the Lane County Mental Health Division, Children's Services and private practitioners.

The clients' problems are assessed during an intake interview before they are assigned to a student counselor, said Loughary. Clients suffering from long-term alcohol or drug abuse problems or psychological problems are often referred to outside agencies.

"Two things always happen," Loughary said. "Either we take the client or we make sure that the client has someplace else to go that we think is more appropriate."

"We want to provide good service but our primary purpose is training for beginning counselors," Loughary added.

Along with the hour-long sessions with their clients, student counselors also attend weekly supervisory meetings and practicum seminars conducted by faculty members.

At the end of every counseling session, student counselors evaluate themselves and also receive a progress evaluation from their supervisor and a separate evaluation from the

client.

Having sessions videotaped is a good training tool, said Isa Jennings, counseling psychology counselor.

Clients pay \$15 per term for the service, but this fee is waived for college students.

For more information about the Debusk Counseling Center contact John Loughary, director, at 686-3418.



John Loughary



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