Online Supervision of School Counseling Interns:
Addressing Technical Issues While Maintaining Professional Standards

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Abstract: This Best Practices session described the issues involved in supervising graduate interns in an online school counseling Masters program. A challenge for the online university instructor is to provide opportunities for counseling students to both collaborate with fellow students and the university supervisor. Unlike in a face-to-face program in which the students intern in close proximity to the degree granting university, online programs often have students hundreds of miles away. In this case it is impossible for the university instructor to observe the intern onsite or to meet the onsite supervisor. While the online format can create distance between intern and university supervisor, it can also be used to bridge this distance. Distance supervision also introduces technical, logistical, ethical, and legal issues for the supervisor. This session introduced possible solutions to these challenges and outlined one instructor’s approach to overcoming these obstacles. Each assignment is designed to hone the students’ counseling skills and to encourage collaboration and engagement with other students and the professor. Student reactions and future plans for improving the course were also discussed.