

# From spreadsheets to scale: How National University centralized field placements for 400+ counseling students

**400+**

students tracked in real time

**Time reclaimed**

from manual tasks

**1**

single source of truth  
across all programs

## Product:

Experiential Learning Cloud

## Industry /

## Department:

Counseling / Clinical Training

## Introduction:

National University is a private, nonprofit institution offering more than 150 degree programs, with a strong emphasis on serving working adults. Within its School of Psychology and Social Sciences, the university offers an extensive suite of clinical training programs, including clinical mental health counseling, social work, marriage and family therapy, and psychology, designed to meet students where they are, both geographically and professionally.

What makes National University distinct is its commitment to students it calls ANDERS: students who are also parents, employees, caregivers, and employers. Most programs operate with an online or hybrid format, and many use an individual-start model in which students can begin their training nearly any Monday of the year. This flexibility is central to the university's mission—but it also creates extraordinary complexity in managing clinical field placements across hundreds of students at every stage of the training process simultaneously.

## The challenge:

Before Experiential Learning Cloud, National University's clinical training programs relied on a patchwork of manual tools. Spreadsheets that only one person could edit at a time sat alongside separate email threads, disconnected tracking documents, and siloed data stores—one for this, another for that, and no unified view of the whole.

For faculty, this meant operating with a significant blind spot. There was no single place to look up a student's placement, check their hours, or review their history without first tracking down who had the information and waiting for it to be shared. Coordination across the team felt disjointed and time-consuming, and the administrative burden fell heavily on staff who were spending hours just assembling the minimum picture of where things stood.

"Things were pretty disconnected. It was really a challenge to see the full picture of what was going on with our students—and that's a blind spot we needed to rectify," said Dr. Cassandra Lettenberger-Klein, Senior Director of Clinical Training.

With over four hundred students at different stages of their training at any given moment, and with students and faculty alike juggling professional and personal obligations outside of traditional business hours, the need for a flexible, always-accessible, centralized system was urgent.



## The solution:

Experiential Learning Cloud gave National University the infrastructure it needed to bring everything into one place—and to serve a student population whose lives demanded flexibility at every turn.

For faculty, the shift was immediate. Instead of waiting to receive information from someone else, they could pull up a student's hours, reports, or full placement history at any time. The platform's always-on accessibility turned out to be just as transformative for faculty as it was for students.

For administrators, Experiential Learning Cloud replaced significant hours of manual data consolidation with instant, centralized access. Time that had previously been consumed by assembling information from multiple disconnected systems was redirected toward mentorship, student connection, and program development.

For site supervisors, many of whom are actively practicing clinicians managing busy caseloads of their own, Experiential Learning Cloud provided clear, on-demand access without requiring them to coordinate around a fixed schedule.

And for students, the platform delivered something equally powerful: ownership. Students could see their own progress at any time, know exactly what tasks were outstanding and who held them, and take real agency over their training journey—without having to wait for someone else to tell them where they stood.

Experiential Learning Cloud's ability to break training into clear, sequential steps also proved critical for a program where students are starting at different times and moving through requirements at different paces. Organizing the process into structured, actionable milestones helps students with full lives navigate complex requirements without getting lost—or left behind.

“Any time that we can empower students, that's a win. Giving them information whenever they want it, on their own time frame, is really helpful. They're able to see where they are and take ownership over that.”

— Dr. Lettenberger-Klein, Senior Director of Clinical Training, National University

## The results :

The transformation at National University has been far-reaching. With Experiential Learning Cloud in place, the program operates with a clarity and cohesion that simply wasn't possible before.

Faculty and administrators can now monitor hundreds of students in real time—pulling reports, reviewing histories, and identifying patterns at scale, then drilling down to the individual student level when something warrants closer attention. This visibility has enabled a fundamental shift from reactive to proactive: the team can now spot early warning signs—a student who has stopped logging hours or hasn't submitted tasks they were excited about—and reach out before small struggles become major setbacks.

“It's almost indescribable how beneficial it is to be able to really get the full picture of a student because there's so much going on during training. And now, we can actually do something with that. We can reach out before a small struggle becomes a big one, instead of finding out too late,” said Dr. Lettenberger-Klein.

On top of that, the time freed from manual processes has unlocked space for genuine innovation. Dr. Lettenberger-Klein's team has already piloted an AI-powered clinical simulation tool—giving students the opportunity to practice counseling skills in a safe environment before working with real clients—a project that would have been out of reach when the team was consumed by spreadsheet management.

Experiential Learning Cloud didn't just clean up National University's operations—it gave a complex, high-flexibility program the foundation it needed to focus on what matters most: preparing the next generation of clinicians to serve their communities with excellence.

“When you're operating from a reactive stance, it's very difficult to think about growth and innovation. But when you have a lot of those manual tasks taken care of for you, you can start thinking about some pretty cool things to do.”

— Dr. Lettenberger-Klein, Senior Director of Clinical Training, National University