

Clinical Training Sequence

Students in the Clinical Concentration of the Program engage in clinical training and practice that is graded and sequential in complexity to facilitate a transition from student to practitioner. This process begins as early as the student's first semester with the Program and continues until the student graduates following successful completion of a full-time internship year.

Vertical Teams

The vertical team is a key element that crosses all levels of training experience, allows students at all levels to interact with and learn from one another, and ensures that students' off-campus experiences remain connected to the program. It also provides students with a forum to engage in scaffolded learning and to discuss clinical training issues. Each faculty supervisor leads a vertical team of students. Included in the vertical teams are pre-practicum students, as well as students with varying degrees of in-house practicum and externship experience. Students participate in bi-weekly vertical team meetings during which topics relevant to clinical training and practice are discussed. Formal case presentations are also part of the vertical team experience. As is described further in Appendix D, "Training goals and professional responsibilities at the BHWC," students begin their clinical training via live or video-recorded observation of more advanced clinicians providing therapy or conducting assessments, while more senior students on the vertical team may provide formal case presentations or informal teaching to other clinicians. Students are expected to participate in vertical team during all of their pre-practicum semesters, their 5 semesters of PSYC 7010, and during their time as peer supervisors.

Clerkship

A unique aspect of our clinical training is clerkship. Clerkship is a supervised shadowing experience in primary care (Clerkship I) and other primary care or specialty settings (Clerkship II) that facilitates a student's gradual development as a clinician, exposes them to clinical practice in primary care and rural settings, and demonstrates the important role of science in clinical practice in interprofessional environments. Students begin their training in Clerkship I in the second semester of their first year in teams in one of three ETSU Family Medicine training

clinics in the local area. Students on the teams shadow the site's licensed doctoral clinical psychologist, interact with other professionals who provide health services in the clinic, and meet as a group with their designated instructor to process and reflect upon their experiences. In Clerkship II, students have the opportunity to select a site that enhances their experiences from Clerkship I and that may also align with their training goals. Some examples include pediatric primary care clinics, various rotations at the James H. Quillen VA, or integrated primary care clinics operated by the ETSU College of Nursing. Students who begin the program with an articulated terminal Master's degree from a clinical psychology program are not required to complete Clerkship II.

Practicum

The program operates its own in-house department training clinic, the Behavioral Health and Wellness Clinic (BHWC). The BHWC serves a broad client base from the surrounding Tri-Cities area, including persons from surrounding rural communities. The BHWC is licensed as a mental health center by the State of Tennessee and accepts two forms of state-based insurance so as to provide necessary care for underserved and low-income client populations. The BHWC also serves as a significant resource to the ETSU student community, as approximately 1/3 of BHWC client referrals are students at all levels of matriculation in undergraduate and graduate education. Students in training complete a minimum of five semesters of practicum in the BHWC, with caseloads and learning expectations that are articulated within the document referenced above, "Training goals and professional responsibilities at the BHWC." BHWC supervisors include rotating assignments of core clinical faculty, a full-time clinic director who is a licensed doctoral-level psychologist and health service provide, and affiliated licensed supervisors who may supplement a student's training with exposure to specialist forms of assessment and treatment. Client sessions are video-recorded, and students are typically assigned a greater degree of complexity in clinical presentations and diagnoses as they progress through their semesters of practicum in the BHWC. At the completion of their five semesters, students take part in a supervision training practicum seminar in which they are exposed to models of supervision, the ethics of supervision, and individual and cultural considerations in providing competent clinical supervision. Students are later eligible to participate in the BHWC practicum as peer supervisors, most often during their final year prior to internship.

Externship

Students complete a minimum of 24 months of externship, during which they are placed at community-based sites for 20 hours per week. Students become eligible for externship placement following successful completion of a minimum of one semester of practicum in the BHWC. We currently have clinical affiliation agreements and other contracts for 17 positions at 14 sites within the region. Externship placement descriptions, including site description, types of clients and opportunities available, and position requirements, are articulated in Appendix E by way of site “face sheets.” Most sites provide stipends and tuition remission consistent with the department-funded GA’s, though students in research-based GA’s have the option of seeking and obtaining unpaid placements. Paid placements require 20 hours commitment per week while unpaid placements require 10 hours commitment per week. Externship contracts are for 12 months. Each site ensures face-to-face, on-site supervision with a licensed clinical psychologist at least one hour per week, plus on-site consultation/supervision with other practicing mental health or health professionals per the focus of the placement. Sites provide for supervision whether or not placements are paid. Site supervisors have no more than three student supervisees.

All externship sites are firmly committed to training, and many provide training to students in related disciplines (social work, counseling, medicine) or to medical residents or pre-doctoral psychology interns. Our partnerships with some affiliate sites have been longstanding. For example, key leaders from several sites participated in a series of community-based workshops we hosted when we initially developed our curriculum and identified the core competencies needed for psychologists practicing in rural behavioral health and primary care settings (e.g., Cherokee Health Systems and Frontier Health).

The quality of the externship sites is ensured through at least five mechanisms. First, our clinical affiliation agreements and other contracts specify student, program, and site responsibilities. Second, the DCT and Assistant DCT maintain personal and open communication with each site supervisor, and visit each site at least once per placement cycle for direct observation of student performance, typically at the beginning of each placement cycle. Third, throughout their community placements, students remain under direct program faculty supervision. Fourth, students rate each site supervisor and placement experience with respect to

the program's training goals and objectives. Fifth and finally, the clinical faculty meet with all site representatives and supervisors annually during an externship site summit (typically in January) to discuss the current and upcoming training year, any changes to programmatic procedures or needs, and to enhance relationships with each of our community partners. Students must complete a minimum of four semesters of Externship and must achieve clinical competencies as defined and measured on the Clinical Competencies Form, Appendix A, to be eligible for Internship.

The student selection process for externship mirrors that of the final internship. As the training cycle runs from July 1 – June 30, we begin early with matching students to appropriate training sites, given their particular interests, available skills, and training needs. Students identify 3-4 sites at which they would like to interview and communicate this to the DCT in February. Students interview at sites during March and early April. This allows for students to gain exposure to a variety of different sites each year, and for sites to meet and speak with as many students as possible. It also provides students with valuable interviewing experience and feedback that will assist them on later internship interviews. In mid-April, students and sites submit rank lists to the DCT, who will then work with the clinical faculty to “match” students and sites. This is not identical to the APPIC match in that sometimes programmatic funding and needs must also be taken into account during the decision-making process. However, with this process in place, students have greater empowerment in making decisions regarding their training and learn more about the variety of sites offered, and sites are able to speak with a more diverse student pool and to sell the advantages of training at their particular site. Match decisions are typically concluded by the first week of May, and students start at their new placements on July 1. Students are reminded that at many of these sites, medical residents, social work interns, pharmacy and nursing students, and counseling interns may also be starting at the same time. Thus, it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the site and ensure that any necessary paperwork (e.g., background check, immunization records, application) is turned in and that orientations are scheduled as needed.

Internship

A full-time, one-year internship in an agency approved by the student's primary academic advisor is required as a component of matriculation and must be successfully

completed prior to the awarding of the PhD. This internship is a requirement for APA-approved programs and serves to give students an intensive professional practice experience and the opportunity to demonstrate all profession-wide competencies at a level approaching professional standards. Students register for PSYC 7980 Clinical Psychology Internship during the fall, spring, and summer of their internship year. A permit for registration is required and is obtained through the Director of Clinical Training.

Dissertation Proposal and Data Collection Deadlines. Students applying for an internship must successfully defend their dissertation proposal by September 15 of the year they intend to apply for internship (i.e., the year prior to the anticipated start of internship) in order to receive a statement of internship readiness by the DCT. Further, the dissertation data must be collected before the student can begin the internship unless the internship agency gives written permission that the student may collect data while on internship. Students are encouraged to complete as much of the dissertation project as possible prior to their departure for internship, and to successfully graduate at the completion of their internship year, students will also need to have successfully defended their dissertation and submitted all paperwork to the School of Graduate Studies in accordance with required deadlines.

Internship Preparation. Internship preparation and application can be a daunting process, and the Program offers an internship preparation seminar series and workshop to assist each student through the process and to maximize the success of internship placement. The DCT meets each year with all interested students in April to review the internship process and associated requirements. Students are then encouraged to identify their intention to apply for internship in that year by July. Beginning each August, the DCT conducts 6-8 weeks of seminar meetings to prepare students for completing all elements of the internship application. Students who intend to apply for internship must submit drafts of their essays and cover letters for faculty feedback and review to facilitate a greater likelihood of matching to a desirable site.

The Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) is an educational, non-profit organization with the mission of enhancing internship and postdoctoral training programs in professional psychology. Members are independent agencies conducting or sponsoring internship or postdoctoral training programs, with over 700 programs represented.

Internship applicants can download registration materials from the National Matching Services web site. The clinical program has the authority to determine the applicant's eligibility for participation in the match. Participants in the APPIC match must register to participate. Applicants must notify internship sites to which they have applied if there is a change in their standing in the clinical program.

To apply for internship applicants must apply directly to the internship programs of interest via the online applicant portal operated by APPIC. Applicants are contacted directly by sites to be scheduled for interviews. After interviewing, applicants submit a Rank Order List of preferred programs. The internship programs also submit a Rank Order List of desirable applicants.

Application dates vary by program. In July a Listing of Programs is available for access by applicants. In December applicants should return their Agreements and fees to National Matching Services Inc., in order to register for the Match. The first Wednesday in February is typically the final date for submission of applicant and program Rank Order Lists. Applicants will be informed if they have been matched to an internship position at the conclusion of the third week of February. Applicants who do not match to an internship in Phase I of the APPIC match will be eligible to reapply during Phase II of the match.