



# UAB-BVAMC Clinical Psychology Internship Consortium 2022-2023



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<http://www.uab.edu/medicine/psychiatry/education>

## Policies & Procedures

***\*\*Due to the current COVID-19 Pandemic, all didactic trainings will occur via zoom. Many clinical rotation opportunities will also occur over zoom.\*\****

The UAB - BVAMC Clinical Psychology Internship Consortium offers a doctoral internship in clinical psychology accredited by the American Psychological Association. This internship program is a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and endorses and adheres to all policies set forth by the APPIC.

Questions related to the programs accreditation status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation  
American Psychological Association  
750 1st Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002  
Phone: (202) 336-5979 / E-mail: [apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org)  
Web: [www.apa.org/ed/accreditation](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation)

## Intern Selection:

### *Required Characteristics*

- Verified progression within a doctoral program in Clinical Psychology.
- The graduate program must be APA-approved or in the process of APA approval with reasonable likelihood of approval.
- US Citizenship is required for VA Stipends.
- Selection decisions are made without regard to age, sex, race, or religion.

There are no minimum required hours for application. Our settings and faculty offer training across a broad array of clinical experiences, including neuropsychology, health psychology, trauma recovery, and rehabilitation. We welcome applicants with primary interests in assessment, intervention, or both.

We are strongly committed to building a diverse internship class and welcome applications from prospective trainees of varied ethnic, cultural, sexual orientation, and/or disability backgrounds.

## **Intern Selection Procedure:**

### *Application*

Applications are due by November 1<sup>st</sup> (<https://membership.appic.org/directory/display/737>)

- The overriding mission of the admissions process is to identify applicants who will both desire and benefit most from our internship setting.
- Completed applications are reviewed by the training director to assure applicants meet minimal required clinical experiences. Individuals not meeting these requirements are notified of the rejection of their application.
- Applicants who are deemed to meet minimum criteria are reviewed and evaluated by Admissions committee members.
- Ratings are compiled and the committee meets to determine applicants to be interviewed.
- Notification of interview status is conducted via email.

*Interview \*\*Due to current COVID-19 restrictions, all interviews for 2021/2022 intern applicants will occur via virtual methods (e.g., zoom)\*\**

- Applicants are given two interview dates from which to choose and are given the opportunity to identify faculty they would like to meet.
- Interviews will occur in December 2020 and January 2021.
- Interviews are conducted and ratings compiled.
- Ratings are reviewed by the committee and final selection of rank order is completed and submitted to APPIC.

### *Match Day*

- At the appropriate time on match day, matched interns are contacted by the Training Director.
- Matched interns are also notified via email as well as USPS mail to obtain appropriate signatures.
- Letters of recognition of the match are sent to each intern's program director.

## **Work Environment and Administrative Assistance**

Interns select multiple training experiences from within the UAB Health System, VA Medical Center, and The Children's Hospital of Alabama. Each site is responsible for providing adequate space and equipment for interns to conduct their training. Most offer designated office space and computers or computer access. All interns are expected to have "uabmc.edu" email addresses.

Sites also provide administrative support appropriate to the training activities. The consortium administrative support specialist assists with general administrative duties for all interns.

## **Work Week**

The work week and clinic hours for support staff of most Medical Center work sites is typically 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. These hours vary somewhat among programs (e.g. some rotations begin at 7:00 a.m.; others end at 6:00 p.m.). The typical workday of interns is expected to be 8 hours per day for 40 hours per week. Hours outside of the typical workday are expected but vary from site to site.

## **Stipend and Financial Assistance**

Each funding site has required paperwork which is completed at the beginning of the internship year. Stipends are paid according to the policy established by each stipend support site. Additional financial

support for professional activities may be available on certain rotations or at certain stipend sites. These funds may be made available for travel, presentations, books, or other educational materials. It is the responsibility of the intern to inquire about funds. Supervisors and the Training Director are available to discuss details of acceptable, educational experiences as well as budgetary constraints.

### **Holidays**

New Year's Day, Dr. Martin Luther King Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day are regularly scheduled UAB Health System and VA Medical Center holidays. The VA adds Presidents Day, Veterans Day, and Columbus Day while UAB Health System gives the day after Thanksgiving. In special circumstances, other days may be declared holidays by appropriate administrative authority. With respect to Presidents Day, Veterans Day, Columbus Day, and day after Thanksgiving, interns report to work if that day's rotation assignment does not observe the holiday unless they take a vacation day.

### **Leave**

Intern leave includes:

- 13 days of vacation, (up to) 13 days of sick leave
- Additional time may be requested for approved professional activity

All requests for leave are to be submitted using the MedHub online system. The intern applies in MedHub and the leave request is routed to the Major rotation supervisor for approval. The minor rotation supervisor should be notified of the leave with an email approval sent to the Consortium administrative coordinator. The intern is responsible for obtaining permission from the year-long supervisor as well as other supervisors and for arranging clinical coverage as necessary. Permission for planned leave time is required.

VA-funded interns will need to enter leave requests into VATAS online system in addition to MedHub.

If the intern is ill, they must notify the supervisor as soon as possible and do so on a regular basis if illness is prolonged. Interns should contact the rotation administrative support team and take whatever other steps are necessary to cancel, reschedule or otherwise cover scheduled clinical contacts. Upon return to work, a MedHub leave request should be completed.

***\*\*Due to current COVID-19 regulations, if you have symptoms of COVID-19, contact your healthcare provider and notify the training directors. Do not come to work or report to your rotation site (CDC isolation guidance). Employee Health will actively monitor your progress and follow up with you as necessary\*\****

Leave time may not be used in bulk at the end of the year without prior approval from the year-long supervisor and the Training Directors.

### **Rotation Selection and Assignment**

During orientation, interns learn about training experiences across the UAB-BVAMC Clinical Psychology Internship Consortium. Rotation supervisors attend orientation in conjunction with their institution or department colleagues to discuss the population served, what problems are seen, and in what activities interns may participate. At the end of the second day of orientation, interns, their year-long supervisors, interested faculty members, the VA training director, Child track director, and program training director

assemble to build the rotation schedules for the intern class. Major rotations (20-24 hours weekly) are completed at the intern's stipend site. For the 2022-2023 training year and beyond, all off-site rotations for VA-funded interns must be approved by the VA's National Office of Academic Affiliations. Thus, off-site minors (10-15 hours per week) may be available for VA-funded interns, subject to national approval. UAB-psychiatry funded interns may choose minor rotations within other UAB departments or the VA (with a Without Compensation) appointment.

In consultation with the year-long supervisor, each intern selects 3 major rotations and 3 minor rotations to meet training gaps or to prepare the intern for the next stage in professional development. Under our current model, rotations last 4 months with minor variation accounting for natural transitions to end/start a rotation. Once all interns have proposed a schedule of experiences, the training directors with assistance from year-long supervisors and input from rotation supervisors resolve conflicts among the schedules. Most often, the order in which an experience is completed may change due to limited availability within a training rotation. If a situation arises in which all interns wanting a specific rotation cannot be accommodated, interns who are funded by the relevant site are given priority, followed by training need of interns from other funded entities, and finally by general interest of an intern. Because many rotation supervisors provide clinical services throughout the week and maintain active clinical practices, it is rare that an intern is "blocked" from an experience. Typically, the intern will be able to train in the setting or with the faculty member of interest but during a different time than originally requested.

While it is expected that interns will complete the training experiences established during orientation, the intern has the option to review the proposed program and to consider alternatives as the intern gathers additional information from peers about a rotation, identifies a deficit to remediate that requires a change, or would benefit from a different experience to prepare for a postdoctoral or employment opportunity. Changes will be made in consultation with the year-long supervisor and training directors. Any proposed changes to a schedule cannot adversely affect another intern's program of training. Otherwise, the proposed change will be honored.

As noted, the usual schedule comprises 3 major/3 minor rotations over a concurrent 4-month span. However, the consortium has modeled integrating unique minor or major rotation structures that overlay the basic program organization. Some opportunities are limited in scope so don't meet standards of a minor or major rotation as defined generally. Also, some experiences are ill-suited to the arbitrary 4-month span limiting their training value. Consequently, interns can overlay a 6-month half-day or full-day in the basic schedule to access an experience that would not be available. This can also be done for the entire year if the intern so desires.

### **Schedules**

It is the intern's responsibility to circulate a copy of their rotation schedule and phone numbers where they may be contacted to their year-long supervisor, rotation supervisors, training director, and Consortium administrative personnel. Every attempt should be made to keep these schedules up-to-date. A new schedule sheet should be made with each rotation change.

The intern is responsible for informing the appropriate supervisor of their schedule and patient appointments. This procedure will help insure charts are made, fees are collected, and interview rooms are not double scheduled.

## **Outside Activities**

All outside activities, including external work, seeing patients, conducting research, outside consultation or public presentations must be approved by the training directors, the intern's supervisor, and the Internship Training Committee (ITC). In no case is an intern to commit to a training or research activity without due consultation with the supervisor. Initiative is encouraged, but no arrangement should be made before obtaining the consent of the supervisor, the training director, and the ITC.

## **Extension of Internship**

The internship is designed to be completed in twelve (12) consecutive months. It may be extended if the intern has been granted personal/medical leave or has not demonstrated satisfactory progress such that the intern will not have completed 2000 hours of internship experience.

If such extensions occur, they will be on a non-stipend basis, as funding cannot be extended beyond the consecutive 12 months period. Such decisions will be made on an individual basis and should be brought to the Training Director and Committee by the intern's year-long supervisor.

## **Internship Certificate Award**

Following a successful completion of the internship, the intern is awarded a certificate of completion of internship training. The UAB-BVAMC Psychology Internship also awards the C.J. Rosecrans Intern of the Year Award for excellence in performance. This award is voted on by the ITC faculty and is generally accompanied by a monetary gift.

## **Supervisors**

### **Year-Long Supervisors**

Prior to the internship orientation each intern is assigned a year-long supervisor. This person is the intern's advocate and, in collaboration with the intern, responsible for the overall organization and conduct of the intern's training year. The supervisor will meet regularly with the intern (minimally once a month) to review progress and discuss the intern's experience. The supervisor will also make reports or convey requests to the Internship Training Committee (ITC). The supervisor will be responsible for compiling the intern's rotation and therapy evaluations, assuring/documenting that the intern has reviewed the evaluation and been provided an opportunity to respond, and, in conjunction with the ITC, evaluating the intern's progress toward meeting profession wide competencies and minimum level of achievement necessary for successful internship completion. Additionally, year-long supervisors are expected to monitor supervision received by the intern to assure it meets accreditation standards of regularly scheduled.

### **Rotation Supervisor**

A rotation supervisor is a faculty psychologist or other professional approved by the PTC who teaches, instructs, observes, and otherwise assumes direct responsibility for a specific clinical training activity. Each rotation has a rotation supervisor who is responsible for coordinating the intern's activities; the primary supervisor is expected to set regular supervision times during the rotation, minimally 1 hour each week. Supervisors will evaluate the intern at 6 weeks of the rotation to give formative feedback and at the conclusion of the training activity to provide a summary performance assessment. Evaluations are discussed with the intern and communicated to the year-long supervisor.

## **Intern Seminar**

*\*\* Due to covid-19 pandemic, all didactic trainings/seminars will be conducted via Zoom or other virtual platform until further notice.. \*\**

Each week, interns participate in a 1-hour didactic seminar led by faculty. Topics of the intern seminar span a variety of topics including: Theories and methods of assessment and diagnosis, and effective intervention (including empirically supported treatments); Theories and/or methods of consultation, evaluation, and supervision; Strategies of scholarly inquiry; and Issues of cultural and individual diversity that are relevant to all of the above.

## **Intern Research Seminar**

This research requirement involves a 30-minute presentation given by each intern to peers as well as at least four training faculty members. Research presentations may consist of the intern's original research or a clinical case conference focused on published peer-reviewed research that illuminates a complex case or disorder. Research presentations will occur within the weekly neuropsychology didactic conference or within the BVAMC Evidence-based Psychotherapy Consultation Series.

## **UAB-BVAMC Year-Long Psychotherapy Group Supervision**

Interns are expected to carry a minimum of 2 psychotherapy cases outside their rotations throughout the internship year. This experience will consist of a weekly, 2 hour, group psychotherapy supervision seminar led by a combination of VA and UAB clinical supervisors/faculty. The evidence-based treatment, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Depression protocol, will be the therapeutic modality taught and used by interns. Interns receive psychotherapy referrals from VA Primary Care-Mental Health Integration and UAB Psychiatry. Interns provide peer supervision to one another, which provides a medium for evaluation of supervision competency by faculty.

## **Psychology Training Committee**

The Psychology Training Committee is comprised of the faculty and staff psychologists involved in the training of psychology graduate students, interns, and postdoctoral fellows. PTC meetings occur quarterly.

## **Internship Training Committee**

The Internship Training Committee (ITC) consists of licensed professional psychologists involved with the provision of clinical services within the VA Medical Center, UAB School of Medicine, and Children's Hospital. Members of the ITC provide clinical experiences, didactic training, and/or research opportunities across settings from which interns may choose. The ITC is responsible for establishing policies and procedures, evaluating the program, and reviewing intern progress. ITC meetings occur on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 12:00 noon via zoom due to current COVID-19 restrictions. These meetings include internship updates, information from the intern representative, and evaluation of intern progress.

## **Evaluations**

Evaluation is an ongoing process and the ITC strongly encourages supervisors and interns to share feedback with each other informally throughout the year. Formal intern evaluations take place at the midpoint and end of the first two rotation cycles and once during the final rotation period. The intent of the midpoint evaluations is to provide early identification of any areas of concern so that the faculty and

intern can address deficits early. Midpoint evaluations are considered "formative" with greater emphasis placed on the end of rotation performance ratings with respect to assessing progress. For interns to meet the minimum level of achievements (MLA) on their evaluations, they must have an average score of, "(5) Little consultation/Supervision needed. Sound clinical thinking/judgement evident overall. (Intern exit level; postdoc entry level)," or higher on each PWC at the end of their final rotation. This average will be created across supervisor ratings of their final major and minor rotations.

In collaboration with the internship directors, each intern's year-long supervisor will assess competency ratings at the end of each rotation to ensure that informative feedback is provided to interns and supervisors and to allow for any necessary remediation with interns who might be at risk for not meeting the MLAs by the end of the year. Rotation feedback will be discussed with the intern by rotation supervisors as well as the year-long supervisor.

The supervisor reviews the feedback with the intern and the written evaluation will be placed in the intern's permanent file by the Consortium administrative personnel.

Interns are also responsible for evaluating the internship program. Rotation evaluations take place immediately following completion of the experience to capture accurately the intern's perspective; therapy and year-long supervisor evaluation forms will be given to interns at the end of the year and returned to consortium administrative assistant for collation and recording. These evaluations are conducted via anonymous forms as well as during an exit interview with the training directors.

### **Guidelines for Responding to Inadequate Performance by an Intern**

These guidelines represent the general format for responding to inadequate performance (problem behaviors, ethical violations, inadequate skills) by an intern. The procedures can be altered to meet the needs of each individual situation, with the top consideration for the best interest of the intern's training experience and the professional practice of psychology.

- Training faculty member first discusses the concern with the intern in an effort to resolve the issue informally. This level of intervention is discussed during the rotation evaluation at the discretion of the faculty member.
- If the faculty member is dissatisfied with the results of the informal intervention, the issue is brought to the attention of the Training Directors and the intern's year-long supervisor. Plans for additional informal intervention are discussed. Usually the intern is involved in this process. This level of intervention is discussed during the rotation evaluation and may be informally discussed with the intern's DCT from their university.
- If the results of the previous intervention are unsatisfactory, the Training Directors will initiate a written warning letter that will be reviewed with intern and placed into the intern's file. The DCT will be contacted by the Training Directors and may be sent a copy of the written warning letter.
- Dissatisfaction after a written warning will result in probation and potentially termination from the internship program as outlined by the remediation plans.

### **Problematic Behavior**

Problematic Behavior refers to behavior which interferes with professional functioning. These behaviors may include any of the following:

- Inability to acquire professional skills or knowledge to meet profession wide competency standards.
- Inability to control personal stress, strong emotional reactions, and/or psychological dysfunction that negatively impact the intern's ability to meet professionalism competency standards.

Interns may demonstrate certain attitudes, characteristics, or behaviors appropriate for their level of training, but not appropriate to independent professional practice. These behaviors may be of concern within the focus of professional training but are not necessarily considered problematic. Behaviors are typically identified as problematic in the following situations:

- The intern does not acknowledge, understand, or address the problem when it is identified
- The quality of services delivered by the intern is negatively affected
- A disproportionate amount of attention by training personnel is required
- The trainee's behavior does not change as a function of feedback, remediation effort and/or time.

## Remediation and Disciplinary Actions

Formal disciplinary action may include verbal warning, written warning, probation, and termination. Usually this represents a linear progression but is not necessarily followed depending upon the problematic behavior. In cases where personal or public property has been stolen, defaced, disfigured, damaged, or destroyed, the disciplinary action may also include restitution. The Director of Clinical Training at the intern's university is contacted once a written warning, probation, or termination occurs, but may also be notified at the time of a verbal warning as well. Every effort is made to interact with the university DCT to offer remediation plans and support to the intern. The disciplinary actions are defined as follows:

**Verbal Warning:** The intern is given verbal feedback from a supervisor and the training directors to emphasize the need to discontinue the inappropriate behavior under discussion. No record of this action is kept.

**Written Warning:** The intern is given written feedback indicating the concern of the Training Directors and ITC regarding the problematic behavior. The feedback also documents the discrepancy between the intern's performance and the faculty expectations. A remediation plan is outlined as specifically as possible (target behaviors, timeline, etc.) and the implications of failure to accomplish remediation are reviewed. The intern will be provided a copy of the remediation plan signed by the consortium training director, site training director, the intern's yearlong supervisor, and the intern. A copy of this letter will be kept in the intern's file as well as documentation regarding successful remediation of deficits in knowledge, skills, or professional conduct or failure to do so. The intern will be provided written acknowledgement of successful completion of the plan. If the intern has not successfully met expectations, he/she will be informed in writing and placed on probation (see the following discussion).

**Probation:** The intern is given a time-limited, remediation-oriented, closely supervised training period. The purpose is to assess the ability of the intern to complete the internship and to return the intern to a more fully functioning state. Privileges may be revoked and the intern may be terminated for unsuccessful completion of the remediation plan outlined in the probation terms. Probation terms will include identification of the specific behaviors targeted for remediation, the process suggested for



remediation and the means of reevaluating behavior change. Information regarding Probation remains in the intern's file along with written confirmation of the results following the probationary period.

**Termination:** Dismissal from the internship results in permanent withdrawal of all internship responsibilities and privileges. When remediation plans do not rectify the problem behavior or concerns, the Training Directors and the Internship Training Committee will determine the possibility of termination of the intern's position. Human Resources and Education Officials at the intern's funding site will also be consulted when termination is being considered. This action is considered the last available option and is taken seriously by the Training Directors and ITC. In the event of termination, the intern will receive a letter stating in what ways the intern failed to rectify successfully the specific knowledge, skill, or behavioral problems outlined in the written warning and probationary period. Terminated interns will not receive a certificate of internship completion.

## Due Process General Guidelines

Due process ensures that decisions about interns are not arbitrary or personally based. It requires that the Training Program identify specific evaluative procedures which are applied to all trainees and provides appropriate appeal procedures available to the intern. All steps need to be appropriately documented and implemented. General due process guidelines include:

1. During the orientation period, presenting to the interns, in writing, the program's expectations related to professional functioning. Discussing these expectations in both group and individual settings.
2. Stipulating the procedures for evaluation, including when and how evaluations will be conducted. Such evaluations should occur at meaningful intervals.
3. Articulating the various procedures and actions involved in making decisions regarding the problem behavior or concerns.
4. Communicating, early and often, with graduate programs about any suspected difficulties with interns and when necessary, seeking input from these academic programs about how to address such difficulties.
5. Instituting, when appropriate, a remediation plan for identified inadequacies, including a time frame for expected remediation and consequences of not rectifying the inadequacies.
6. Providing a written procedure to the intern which describes how the intern may appeal the program's action. Such procedures are included in the intern policies and procedures document. This is provided to interns and reviewed during orientation.
7. Ensuring that interns have sufficient time to respond to any action taken by the program.
8. Using input from multiple professional sources when making decisions or recommendations regarding the intern's performance.
9. Documenting, in writing and to all relevant parties, the actions taken by the program and its rationale.

## Due Process Procedures

The basic meaning of due process is to inform and to provide a framework to respond, act or dispute. When a matter cannot be resolved between the Training Directors and intern or staff, the steps to be taken are listed below.

### **Grievance Procedure**

Grievance procedures may be initiated under the following conditions:

1. When an intern encounters any difficulties or problems (e.g. poor supervision, unavailability of supervisor, evaluations perceived as unfair, workload issues, personality clashes, other staff conflict) during his/her training experiences; or
2. If a training staff member has a specific concern about an intern.

### **Procedure for filing a grievance**

When an intern contends that any disciplinary action (warning, probation, termination) is unfair, or that due process has not been followed, the intern may address the grievance in a variety of avenues. In general, the specific contention should be addressed by following a standard hierarchy. This hierarchy may be altered due to the parties involved.

1. If possible, the grievance should first be addressed through open discussion between the intern and faculty member with the year-long supervisor assisting communication, as needed. The year-long supervisor may be consulted at any time to offer guidance and support but will generally allow the intern to address the issue with the specific faculty member.
2. The intern may also report directly the training directors. Again, the year-long supervisor can offer guidance and support during the process.
3. If a resolution satisfactory to the intern and/or faculty member has not been established, the intern or faculty member may submit the issue to the ITC for review. This grievance should be submitted in writing and should describe the problem and describe previous attempts to deal with it. This written grievance should be submitted to the intern's year-long supervisor and to the Training Directors within two weeks of receiving the disciplinary action. The Training Directors will then put the grievance on the ITC agenda at which time the intern may request to be present during review of the issue. The ITC will investigate the grievance with the supervisor and attempt to gain resolution. If no satisfactory resolution can be reached, the ITC will make a decision regarding the disposition of the grievance.
4. If the intern is dissatisfied with this resolution, the intern may submit a further appeal in writing to a Review Panel (described below) whose ruling will be final.

**Notes:** The year-long supervisor serves as the advocate for the intern. If this presents a dual role (i.e. the year-long supervisor is the individual with whom a grievance is involved) then another advocate will be assigned by the Training Directors.

### **Discuss the issue with the intern(s) involved**

1. Consult with the Training Directors
2. If the issue is not resolved informally, the staff member may seek resolution of the concern by written request, with all supporting documents, to the Training Directors for a review of the situation. When this occurs, the Training Directors will:
  - a. Within three days of a formal complaint, the Training Directors must consult with the faculty and implement Review Panel procedures as described below.

### **Review Panel and Process**

1. When needed, a review panel will be convened by the Training Directors, with the Training Director for the funding source leading the process. The panel will consist of three internship faculty members, with no prior involvement, reviewing the grievance, selected by the ITC and the intern involved in the dispute. If the issue involves the Training Directors or any member of the ITC, that individual will be recused from selecting the Review Panel. To minimize conflicts of interests and/or possible retaliation, members of the Review Panel will be chosen from entities separate from the involved faculty member's institution and/or department. The intern has the right to hear all facts with the opportunity to dispute or explain the behavior of concern.

2. Within five (5) work days, a hearing will be conducted in which the challenge is heard and relevant material presented. Within three (3) work days of the completion of the review, the Review Panel submits a written report to the ITC, including any recommendations for further action. Recommendations made by the Review Panel will be made by majority vote.

3. Within three (3) work days of receipt of the recommendation, the ITC will either accept or reject the Review Panel's recommendations. If the ITC rejects the panel's recommendations, due to an incomplete or inadequate evaluation of the dispute, the ITC may return the matter to the Review Panel for further deliberation and revised recommendations or may make a final decision.

4. If referred back to the panel, they will respond to the ITC within five (5) work days of the receipt of the ITC's request of further deliberation. The ITC then makes a final decision regarding what action is to be taken.

5. The ITC informs the intern, staff members involved and, if necessary, members of the training staff of the decision and any action taken or to be taken.

6. If the intern disputes the ITC's final decision, the intern has the right to contact the Human Resources department of their funding site (e.g., UAB or BVAMC) to discuss this situation.