

Readiness for Internship

A 12-month, full-time pre-doctoral internship is required to graduate with a Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology (registered as PSY 6023). The internship must be completed in a CPA-accredited or School of Psychology formally approved internship setting.

Process

The process of applying for internship involves multiple steps starting in winter semester of the application year. Students need to signal their desire to apply for internship to the Coordinator of Practica and Internships (CPI) in order to evaluate their overall readiness. This can be done anytime during the fall prior to the application year or during the winter semester prior to the Annual Student Review. Students are also required to signal their desire to apply for internship by completing the relevant documentation for the Annual Student Review (deadline usually May 15th). The CPI recommends a student for approval to apply for internship, and the approval decision rests with the Clinical Program Committee (student member recused) at the time of the Annual Student Review meeting.

Following the approval to apply for internship, students will be guided through various application steps, by means of 3 workshops. These steps include the preparation of relevant documentation, registrations with the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and the National Matching Service (NMS), the completion of the APPIC Application for Psychology Internships (AAPI), the interview and ranking process, and the matching proceedings.

There is no single “best” profile to be competitive for internship selection. Internships vary considerably in the types of training they offer, and no internship is intended to meet the training needs of all students who are applying in a particular year. Hence, “goodness of fit” is a vital component in making selection decisions. Goodness of fit is largely about congruence between what an internship setting offers and an applicant’s prior training and career goals. The components of a good fit are a combination of readiness to apply for internship, relevant course work, and the breadth and depth of clinical practicum training.

READINESS TO APPLY

Course Work

Students must have completed their coursework prior to the Fall term of the year in which they are **applying** for internship. The Director of the Clinical Program and the CPI are required to attest, in the AAPI, that students have completed all program requirements except for the dissertation when applying for internship. Students need to ensure that they select their courses with their internship and future career goals in mind. For internship sites, having *both* relevant course work and practicum training are important elements of a competitive application.

Dissertation Progress

In recent years, internship sites have become increasingly specific with respect to the dissertation progress applicants must have made prior to commencing their internship, and the status of the dissertation must be specifically outlined in the AAPI. For most internship settings, there is an expectation that if students have not deposited or defended their dissertation, a draft of the entire dissertation will be completed prior to the start of the internship. For this reason, students should be well-advanced on their dissertation prior to applying for internship. Of course, this progress requires considerable planning on the part of the student. Accordingly, we encourage students to work with thesis supervisors throughout all years in the program to ensure that the dissertation is sufficiently advanced to allow for a timely internship application.

The [Policy on Internships](#) outlines that students must have an approved thesis proposal and must have their data collected by Oct. 1 of the application year. Unless the dissertation is sufficiently advanced, students will not be approved to apply for internship.

Practicum Training

Intern selection (or match) by internship sites is determined by evaluating several factors. One is how applicants describe themselves in the essays that are part of the application submission. Another key element is the pre-internship clinical practicum training that a student has received. Virtually all internships value and expect students to have strong skills in assessment/diagnosis and intervention. The foundations for these components are laid in initial clinical practica and can be acquired in a broad range of settings. This element is typically achieved in the second and third years of the program. In upper years, students begin to develop a more personalized profile explicitly designed to achieve congruence with the type of internship and internship setting for which they wish to be competitive. Some settings also want interns to have prior consultation and program evaluation experience. In our program, this component can be acquired in an approved clinical practicum in program evaluation/community psychology.

All students will complete part of their pre-internship clinical training in the School's Centre for Psychological Services and Research (CPSR), beginning at the end of 1st year and continuing through 3rd and sometimes 4th year. The CPSR practicum must be completed no later than the summer of the internship application year.

External practica usually begin in 2nd year. Although the modal external practicum duration is 12 months duration, with a 2 days per week frequency, there is some variability across practica. The optimal balance of assessment, intervention, and other experience also varies according to the type of profile being pursued. Hence, the total number of external practica will also vary across students, although most students will complete 4-5 external practica. Depending on the evaluations received from practicum settings, it is possible that additional clinical practica, specialized training, and/or remedial training may be required.

Students who intend to apply for internship must be in good standing in the clinical training program to be approved for internship application. This means that all clinical practicum evaluations show that student competency ratings are indicative of readiness to assume more autonomous practice in the context of an internship. Students completing a formal remediation at CPSR and/or at an external practicum setting at the time of the Annual Student Review of the application year will not be approved to apply for internship.

The process of application can be all-absorbing and indeed, the APPIC application requires careful completion. It is important to plan well and to plan proactively. Taken together, however, the application for internship is an exciting time! Students look back at years of effort, determination, and achievements – all culminating in the application for internship.

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