

**UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE**  
**SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY INTERNSHIP GUIDELINES**  
**Revised 2006**

**Purpose of Internship**

The internship follows completion of all required coursework, allowing the student to demonstrate proficiency with skills acquired during the training program and to gain new knowledge and skills. The internship gives the student the opportunity to integrate all previous training experiences and to provide, under supervision, a broad range of outcome-based school psychological services for preventing and resolving individual, group, and system-level problems. As a reflection of the culmination of graduate training in school psychology, it is expected that interns will demonstrate competency in all areas corresponding with the program's goals.

More specific outcome-based competencies are listed in the [Field Experience Checklist and Evaluation Form](#), which serves as a systematic plan and evaluation procedure for monitoring students as they progress through the program. This instrument serves as a written plan, detailing a variety of outcome-based competencies that must be demonstrated.

**Length of Internship**

The specialist internship must involve a minimum of 1200 clock hours (6-12 credit hours). Interns in a school setting are expected to complete an internship that entails a full academic school year. Internships may be completed on a half-time basis over a period of two consecutive academic years. The doctoral internship is typically 12 months in duration and a minimum of 1500 clock hours.

**Setting**

Finding an appropriate internship site is the joint responsibility of the university supervisor and the student. While every effort is made to arrange for a paid internship, paid internships are not guaranteed. However, over the past 20 years all interns have been offered paid internships.

The university supervisor must approve placements. Although the supervisor attempts to place interns in locations that they most desire, the program's obligations to local school districts must be respected. Likewise, quality of the site is considered to be more important than a high salary. Thus, an intern may not be allowed to complete an internship in an unknown setting in Alaska, for example, if an opening nearby would go unfilled or if the local site pays less but offers a better internship.

The internship must be in a school setting. Although other settings may be incorporated into the internship experience, the public school setting must constitute at a minimum one half of

the time designated for the internship. Where other settings are employed, a rationale must specify its appropriate relationship to the practice of school psychology.

The public school setting must offer:

- Children of all ages and of a diversity of cultures;
- Pupil personnel services functioning within a team framework;
- Full-range of services for children with disabilities of both high and low incidence;
- General and special educational services at the preschool, elementary and secondary levels. It is not essential that the above all be provided within the context of the local educational agency to which the intern is assigned.

The essential aspect is the *availability* of these elements. Thus, rural districts participating in joint agreements, special education districts and other administrative arrangements for the provision of special services are considered equally appropriate as internship settings to larger educational agencies that provide all elements as part of their educational programs. A balanced exposure to regular and special educational programs must be provided.

### **Supervision**

Supervision is the collaborative responsibility of local and university personnel. In addition to e-mail and/or telephone correspondence, the University supervisory should meet with the intern's site supervisor, as needed (site visits outside of the region may not be necessary, however). Whereas the authority for providing internship credit and the intern's grade rests with the university faculty, primary responsibility for intern supervision rests with the site supervisor.

Local supervision is to be provided by a person(s) holding valid certification as a school psychologist, who is employed full-time as a school psychologist in the local educational agency, and who has held such employment in that agency for a minimum of one school year prior to undertaking supervisory responsibilities. The local supervisor should have at least three years of experience as a school psychologist (exceptions to this requirement will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the university's internship supervisor). For an internship in a non-school setting, the supervising psychologist must be appropriately credentialed for the internship setting.

To ensure appropriate supervision the local school psychologist should be provided sufficient assigned time from regular duties and must not be responsible for more than two interns at any given time. *A minimum of one half day per week of supervisory time per intern is to be documented.*

Both local and university supervisors should demonstrate active involvement in the profession as evidenced through professional association memberships, scholarly pursuits, experience and professional competence, and continued professional development.

## **Evaluation**

A variety of performance-based procedures are used to ensure that interns demonstrate accountability with regard to the effectiveness of the University's school psychology training program. These procedures are designed to evaluate competencies in each of the areas delineated above and to demonstrate that the intern possesses the dispositions of scholar, problem solver, and partner.

### **Supervisor's observations and ratings of specific competencies and professional qualities**

At the end of each semester the on-site supervisor, university supervisor, and the intern shall jointly evaluate specific competencies and professional qualities that are taught over the course of the school psychology program. As described below, an evaluation form developed by the University is used for this purpose (i.e., the evaluative component of the *Field Experience Checklist and Evaluation Form*).

- For the purpose of initial planning, at the beginning of each semester the intern and on-site supervisor completes the [Field Experience Checklist and Evaluation Form](#) indicating when each skill will be addressed (marking the first column of the form with a specific date, where appropriate; otherwise, simply checking that the skill will be addressed). The intern immediately sends the completed form to the University supervisor, who must review and approve the intern's plans for the year (or term of placement).
- For purposes of evaluation, the above form is reviewed periodically by the intern and the on-site supervisor, as appropriate. A review at midterm is **required** and should be noted in the intern's log. However, the checklist does not need to be completed, unless the supervisor has areas of concern about the intern's lack of progress or professional skills. Note that the university supervisor does not need to be sent a copy of such a review; however, the university supervisor is to be contacted if the intern receives low ratings or if disagreements exist between the intern and the on-site supervisor with respect to the intern's progress). At the end of the semester, the on-site supervisor completes the evaluation column of the form ('mid-term' for fall and 'final' for spring). Each competency receives a rating of Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, or Competent (i.e., mastery). The supervisor reviews his/her final evaluation with the intern, giving the intern the opportunity to disagree with any points in the evaluation. The intern signs the form and sends a copy to the university supervisor.
  - Doctoral students participating in APPIC may substitute the site's evaluation forms with permission of the university supervisor.

### **Portfolio Requirements**

Throughout the semester the intern is required to prepare a comprehensive portfolio that demonstrates his/her competencies in school psychology and the dispositions of scholar, problem solver, and partner. The university supervisor shall provide timely feedback on each

portfolio component. The portfolio shall contain the following components (as detailed in the course syllabus):

**Monthly log.** Following the same format used in practicum, the intern must keep an accurate ongoing log and send it to the university supervisor the first of each month. It is critical that supervision be documented (also, the intern should not include identifying information on students, note the student's age, suspected disability/problem, and the service activity provided). The university supervisor shall review the log monthly and provide the intern with feedback.

**Comprehensive assessment report.** This report should reflect an integration of multiple methods of assessment (observations, interviews, standardized and CBA measures, response to intervention, etc.) linked to interventions.

**Professional development goals and activities.** The intern is to develop a set of goals for professional development during the internship and a sequence of activities designed to address these goals. All professional development activities are to be documented in the internship log. It is expected that approximately 25 hours of professional development time will be documented.

**Collaborative consultation case.** Following the same format used in EDUC 830 (Consultation and Intervention in the Schools) for the first consultation project, the intern must submit materials that describe, and evaluate, a collaborative, problem-solving consultation case. The submission must include a tape of a problem identification interview, a complete description of the consultation, and a reflective self-critique.

**Counseling case.** Following the same format used in EDUC 831 (Advanced Counseling), the intern must submit a videotape of one counseling session with progress note and self-critique. Additionally, students should submit a brief summary of the background information, problems identified, counseling goals, the treatment plan, and effectiveness of the intervention (insofar as possible, given the status of the counseling case).

**Comprehensive assessment/intervention case study.** The intern is to submit a complete case study demonstrating that the intern possesses the knowledge and professional expertise to collaborate with teachers, families and other professionals in designing, implementing, and evaluating interventions that effectively respond to the educational and mental health needs of children and youth.

**Special project.** This portfolio item must be presented at the program's annual spring "Supervisor Appreciation Luncheon" in April or May. The project should involve an activity in which you integrate the dispositions of scholar, problem solver, and partner. The project should address the educational or mental health needs of children and youth, their families, and/or educational and mental health agencies that serve them. The project could consist of a program evaluation, the design or implementation of a prevention program, a

comprehensive group intervention, a needs assessment, systematic in-service training, curriculum development, etc.

- Doctoral students may substitute evidence of substantial progress on their dissertation research for this portfolio item.

**Passing score on the PRAXIS exam in school psychology.** Interns are required to achieve a passing score (660) on the National School Psychology Examination administered by the Educational Testing Service. Information about the test and available test dates are available on the [NASP web page](#) and on the [ETS web page](#). Complete credit for the internship will not be awarded until a passing grade on the exam is forwarded to the University supervisor.

### **EVALUATION OF THE SITE.**

At the end of the internship the student completes the [Site Evaluation Form](#) and submits it to the university supervisor. (Additionally, the university supervisor will interview the on-site supervisor and the intern with respect to overall quality of the site and internship experience.)

### **Ethical and Professional Development Standards**

The internship is to be conducted in a manner consistent with NASP/APA ethical standards and the legal-ethical standards established by the local school district and the state. Additionally, the intern is expected to participate in scheduled monthly university meetings, as well as regional and state-wide meetings for school psychologists. If feasible, the intern also should participate in national level meetings. The appropriation of reimbursement monies by the school district for such travel is strongly encouraged. Irrespective of the availability of reimbursement or other financial support, released time for attendance at professional meetings should be provided.

### **Contractual Agreement**

A written contract specifying the following must be signed by the intern and the appropriate authorities representing the University and the agency appointing the intern:

- a. period of appointment and terms of compensation,
- b. a schedule of appointment consistent with that of agency school psychologists (e.g., calendar, participation in in-service meetings, etc.),
- c. provision for participation in continuing professional development activities,
- d. expense reimbursement consistent with policies pertaining to agency school psychologists,
- e. an appropriate work environment including adequate supplies, materials, secretarial services, and office space,
- f. release time for internship supervisors, and
- g. a commitment to the internship as a diversified training experience.

### **Final Grade**

The intern's final grade will be determined by the university supervisor based on evaluations by the on-site supervisor, the quality of the portfolio, submission of all materials when due and any other criteria the instructor may add to a course syllabus for the internship. When feasible (i.e., an adequate number of interns reside near the University), monthly intern meetings will be held by the university supervisor. Participation at such meetings will be included in determining the intern's grade.

### **Certification in School Psychology**

National certification in school psychology is strongly recommended. National certification is fairly simple for graduates of our program since it is NASP approved and requires that graduates pass the PRAXIS exam in school psychology. However, you must apply (and pay a fee).

Although it is unlikely that *national* certification will be required to practice in a state upon completion of your internship, STATE certification will be required. Thus, interns should begin preparing for such certification during the internship. Different states have different requirements. Interns need to contact the state department of education for the state(s) in which they plan to work to learn of their certification requirements. In Delaware, graduates will be certified upon completing the program, which includes completion of the internship and receiving a passing score on the PRAXIS exam in school psychology, AND passing the PRAXIS I exams in reading, writing, and mathematics (or obtaining equivalent passing scores on the SAT or GRE). NOTE: Graduates must apply for certification! It is NOT automatic.