School Psychology Program
Department of Educational Psychology
2014-2015

Description of Internship in School Psychology

The primary goal of the internship is to promote future leaders in the field of school psychology who possess a considerable professional knowledge base, skills in implementing evidence-based practice designed to promote students' academic and social competencies, and a commitment to research, ethical practice, and continual critical and reflective analyses. The internship experience adheres to the scientist-practitioner model that assumes that the effective practice of school psychology is based on knowledge gained from established methods of scientific inquiry. In addition, the internship is designed to acquaint students with the diversity of theories and practices of school psychology, allowing the student sufficient intellectual freedom to experiment with different delivery systems and various theoretical bases. Such a philosophy encourages and reinforces the student's creativity and intellectual risk taking that are fundamental in the further development of the professional practice of school psychology.

The internship was designed to be in concert with the Council of Directors of School Psychology Doctoral Level Internship Guidelines (approved by the membership, May, 1998), and standards outlined by both the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP; 2000a), and the American Psychological Association (APA; 2005). As such the internship also meets the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology's Guidelines for Defining an Internship or Organized Training Program in Psychology. The internship is the joint responsibility of the School Psychology Program and the participating school districts and internship field placements. The internship occurs at or near the end of the student's formal training period. The daily supervision of interns is conducted by approved field supervisors in concert with School Psychology Program faculty supervision. The field-based internship supervisors are experienced, licensed or certified school psychologists or, in non-school settings, licensed psychologists. The field-based internship supervisors are responsible for no more than two interns at any given time. The University of Connecticut internship supervisor is responsible for no more than 12 interns at a given time. The University-based supervisor maintains an on-going relationship with field-based internship supervisors. In addition, interns are required to attend bi-weekly on-campus meetings throughout the period of their internships.

The internship is the culminating experience of the student's program. It provides the student with a planned program of participation in educational settings and allows the opportunity to integrate course work, research, theory, and practical experiences in a supervised, applied setting. The internship experience is intended to insure that students achieve proficiency in six general areas: (1) methods of assessment and diagnosis; (2) empirically supported interventions; (3) scholarly inquiry; (4) consultation, evaluation, and supervision; (5) ethical practice and professional behavior in concert with NASP (2000b) and APA (2002) standards; and (6) issues of cultural and individual diversity that are relevant to professional practice (APA, 2005).

To be eligible for internship, students must have: (1) completed the School Psychology Master's Degree program; (2) passed the Master's Degree Qualifying Examination; (3) completed all practica requirements; (4) passed the National School Psychology Examination; (5) for doctoral students, successfully defended their dissertation proposals.

The internship occurs on a full-time basis over one academic year or on a half-time basis over a period of two consecutive years. This amounts to approximately 1500 clock hours of sequential supervised experiences relevant to the practice of school psychology. Doctoral students with prior, appropriately supervised experience in educational settings are not necessarily required to complete internships in schools. These students may be placed in other settings that are
both appropriate to the professional practice of school psychology and compliment the student's interests and professional goals.

The internship includes the following: (1) scheduled supervisory meetings that are relevant to the intern's professional responsibilities that include at least 2 hours per week of individual supervision; (2) at least 2 hours a week of scheduled learning activities such as case conferences, seminars, inservice training, etc.; (3) a sufficient amount of the intern's time must be spent in direct client contact; and, (4) the intern may spend up to 25% of the internship time in research activities. These research activities may include the evaluation of the efficacy of the intern's own training.

The following outline contains recommendations regarding the primary purposes and goals of the internship in school psychology. These purposes and experiences should not be viewed as set requirements but are intended to provide suggestions for structuring the internship program:

I. Orientation to Public School Organization.

A. Goals:

1. To develop a broad understanding of the organizational framework of the public schools.
2. To provide a general orientation to administrative policies and personnel practices in the public schools.
3. To acquaint the intern with the role and function of the various specialists on the school staff in the areas of child study, guidance, pupil personnel, curriculum development, etc.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Attendance at board of education meetings.
2. Attendance at building principal and classroom teachers' staff meetings.
3. Participation in interdisciplinary child study teams.
4. Participation in pupil personnel staff meetings.
5. Participation in school counselor staff meetings.
6. Participation in meetings of special committees established to examine present areas of concern to the school.

II. Orientation to the Organization of Psychological Services in the Public School.

A. Goals:

1. To gain an understanding of both the unique and the common problems involved in the organization of psychological services in the schools.
2. To become familiar with the office and clerical procedures involved in the organization of psychological services in the schools.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Discussions with the Director of Psychological Services about problems encountered in organizing and administering psychological services and ways of solving them, as well as involvement in problems of organization and administration where possible.
2. Observations of other school psychological service programs in nearby communities, including visitations to psychological service departments of other school systems. Temporary assignment in another school system may be arranged if it is agreeable to both school districts and the University of Connecticut supervisor.
3. Exposure to clerical methods and procedures.
   a. Inspection of record and report and referral forms, descriptive bulletins, psychological report forms, cumulative folders.
   b. Inspection of filing and indexing systems.
   c. Assembly of personal file on test catalogs and other source of supplies.
d. Inspection of order request forms for materials and supplies.

III. Orientation to School Psychological Services in Relation to Available School and Community Resources.

A. Goals:

1. To provide knowledge of the variety of services offered to school age children by professional persons or facilities.
2. To develop an understanding of the place of the school and its psychological program in the community, especially the relationship of the school psychologist to community referral and to social assistance services.
3. To familiarize the intern with parent and private groups concerned with the education of children.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Visits (and discussion of programs) to: child guidance clinics, child social service agencies, speech and hearing centers, juvenile court and detention facilities, residential treatment centers, psychiatric hospitals, health departments, and medical clinics.
2. Information about special services such as: Community Chest or United Fund Offices, vocational rehabilitation services, Connecticut State Employment Services, special groups interested in assisting children and youth (e.g., Big Brothers, etc.), psychiatrists, pediatricians, and other medical personnel, reading therapists, tutors, speech therapists, and social workers in private practices.
3. Conferences with representatives of community agencies concerning educational and therapeutic planning, referral, and follow-up.
4. Attendance at meetings and talks to parent groups such as the PTA, and parent groups organized around specific issues related to the development of their children such as parent groups for children.

IV. Orientation to the Teacher's Responsibilities in the Classroom.

A. Goals:

1. To foster an awareness of the developmental sequence of academic skills.
2. To develop skill in sensitizing teachers to implications of individual differences as they relate to the learning process.
3. To develop effectiveness as a consultant to teachers and other school personnel in the development of a positive mental health atmosphere in the schools.
4. To become familiar with instructional materials and techniques.
5. To develop an awareness of the problems of group management.
6. To develop skill in interpreting classroom behavior within an educational-learning framework.
7. To develop skill in working cooperatively with teachers.
8. To develop skill in establishing and maintaining communication with teachers and principals.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Conferences with personnel responsible for curriculum development.
2. Observations of special and general education classes with supervised participation when possible.
3. Discussions with classroom teachers.
4. Attendance at in-service training workshops for classroom teachers.

V. Orientation to the School Psychologist's Global Commitment to Education.

A. Goals:

1. To develop an understanding that the goals of the school psychologist are in concert of those of the school
and its professional staff.

2. To develop an understanding that the value of the school psychologist lies in his/her ability to facilitate the efforts of other members of the school staff.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Exposure to the school psychologist's role in the following activities: (a) identification of the needs of the school system for special education programs; (b) preparation of proposals for special education programs; (c) development of an understanding of special needs of exceptional children among staff and community groups; (d) formulation of recommendations regarding the development and evaluation of special programs; (e) consultation to teachers, coordinators, and curriculum supervisors in special education.

VI. Development of Skills in Assessment and Diagnosis and Implementation of Empirically Supported Interventions:

A. Goals:

1. To provide experiences in the diagnostic evaluation of exceptional children at various age levels.
2. To provide experiences with children who present a wide range of problems in terms of school placement and programming.
3. To provide experiences with various diagnostic tests, developmental scales, and indices of personality or interpersonal and social functioning.
4. To provide experiences in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of individual tests, and in interviewing techniques.
5. To develop skills in identifying factors which influence learning efficiency and classroom behavior.
6. To sensitize the intern to sources and value of information in formulating diagnostic impressions and recommendations, i.e., previous psychological testing, achievement tests, cumulative folders, socioeconomic and demographic data, classroom and playground behavior, medical history, etc.
7. To assist the intern in the integration of all diagnostic findings into a useful and understandable written report which provides realistic and empirically supported recommendations pertinent to the referral question.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Experience evaluating a variety of types of children with exceptionalities at various age levels.
2. Experience with a variety of kinds of referral problems.
3. Exposure to various assessment indices in order to acquaint the intern with the diversity of available diagnostic indices which can be flexibly used according to the needs of the diagnostic situation; and, to foster a realistic recognition and appreciation of the limitations of test instruments.
4. Experience with diagnostic interviews with teachers and parents.
5. Diagnostic observations of the child in different school settings.
6. Experiences in the design and implementation of empirically validated individual and group interventions to promote students' academic and social functioning.

VII. Development of Skills in the use of Group Tests

A. Goals:

1. To orient the intern to the problems involved in the organization and administration of the group testing programs in the schools, with particular emphasis on the *Connecticut Mastery Test*.
2. To broaden knowledge of achievement, intelligence, personality, aptitude, and other group tests, and procedures for their administration, scoring, and tabulation.
3. To orient the intern to such problems as reporting and evaluation of group test results, the preparation of
test calendars and bulletins, the training of teachers and building principals in group test administration, the procurement of tests, etc.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences.

1. Exposure to selection of group tests.
2. Exposure to administering, scoring, and tabulating group tests.
3. Exposures to the reporting and evaluation of group test findings.
4. Exposure to the preparation of test calendars and bulletins regarding group testing.
5. Observation of the training of teachers or other personnel in group test administration.

VIII. Development of Skills in Interviewing and Counseling.

A. Goals:

1. To develop skills in diagnostic interviewing.
2. To develop skills in parent interviewing and counseling.
3. To develop skills in teacher interviewing and counseling (individually and in groups).
4. To develop skills in interviewing and short-term counseling with pupils (individual and groups).

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences

1. Interviews with teachers, parents, and children in which the primary purpose is to obtain information about the child's behavior that aids in the formulation of a diagnostic impression.
2. Parent counseling involving communication of psychological findings, behavior management and implementation of recommendations.
3. Individual and group counseling of pupils.

IX. Development of Skills in Consultation:

A. Goals

1. To be able to effectively implement the consultation process (problem identification, problem analysis, treatment implementation, and treatment evaluation) with teachers and other school personnel.
2. To be able to effectively design, implement, and evaluate academic and social interventions using a problem-solving consultation model.
3. To be knowledgeable about the various process variables that affect verbal communication in human systems.
4. To be knowledgeable about behavioral, organizational, and mental health consultative models.
5. To be able to use computer software to collect and display data gathered during the consultation process

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Consultation with teachers and other school personnel in order to ameliorate problems affecting students’ academic and social competencies.
2. Use of the consultant/consultee problem identification, analysis, treatment implementation and evaluation model.
3. Use computer software for collecting and displaying data relative to the consultation process.

X. Development of In-Service Training Skills.

A. Goals:
1. To develop skills in researching and organizing information for presentation to groups.
2. To develop skills in-group participation and in leading group discussions.
3. To develop skills in effective public speaking.
4. To provide experience in the organization of workshops, seminars, etc.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Serving as discussion leader, public speaker, etc., before staff groups.
2. Participation in workshops or conferences.

XI. Development of research skills.

A. Goals:

1. To alert the intern to the opportunities and limitations of research in a school setting.
2. To develop skills in research design and in the identification of research problems in the school.
3. To acquaint the intern with strategies of scholarly inquiry.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Conduct research or special studies of personal interest, which may or may not be related to the intern's thesis, project, or dissertation using, in addition to published texts and journals, on-line search engines.
2. Participate in on-going research studies in the schools by (a) assisting in the compilation of statistical data; (b) reporting the results of group tests and the implications for program development; and (c) evaluating the effectiveness of psychological services in the school.
3. Participate in research studies under supervision of the University of Connecticut advisor or other graduate faculty.
4. Conduct evaluations of the efficacy of their interventions that they designed and implemented to promote children's academic and/or social functioning.

XII. Development of understanding and respect for cultural diversity.

A. Goals:

1. To promote an understanding and respect for the diversity of individuals and cultures that comprise the school population.
2. To enhance responsiveness to the needs of children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Attending seminars, in-service programs, and presentations dealing with educational and psychological needs of culturally diverse children.
2. Participating in discussion groups designed to promote a respect for the diversity of cultures and individuals served by educational systems.
3. Attend community meetings, parent groups, or other organizations that are representative of the cultural diversity served by the schools.

XIII. Stimulating Continued Study and Professional Growth.

A. Goals:

1. To stimulate curiosity and openness to new ideas.
2. To promote the importance of life-long learning and acquisition of skills to improve professional
effectiveness.
3. To enhance a sense of professional commitment.

B. Desirable and Useful Experiences:

1. Attend University of Connecticut or CASP seminars and workshops for intern school psychologists.
2. Affiliate with national and state professional organizations such as the National Association of School Psychologists, Connecticut Association of School Psychologists, and the American Psychological Association.
3. Become involved with child guidance clinics or other facilities for specialized training.
4. Subscribe to professional journals.

Bi-Weekly Class Meetings

During the internship, students are required to meet on campus on a biweekly basis. These class meetings will be devoted to discussing issues relevant to students' placement sites including individual cases, assessment issues, interventions, and district and school policies.

Once each semester the student will submit a complete and comprehensive psychological evaluation that includes the administration and interpretation of intellectual, academic, personality, social-behavioral, and other indices and interviews that address the referral question. The assessment indices should minimally employ computer-based scoring and interpretation such as the Weschler-based scoring system for integrating intellectual and academic performance, and the computer scoring system for the Child Behavior Checklist, and Teacher, and Student-Self-Reports, or the Behavior Assessment System for Children, Second Edition. The psychological report should integrate the results of the assessment indices and clearly justify the empirically based recommendations.

Also, at each meeting students are required to submit their internship logs. Spread sheets should be used to calculate the accumulation of the required clock hours in each of the major areas of the internship including: (1) scheduled, formal, face-to-face individual supervision; (2) learning activities such as case conferences, seminars, inservice training, etc.; (3) time spent in direct client contact; and, (4) time allocated to research activities.

References


American Psychological Association (2002). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct, American Psychologist, 47, 1597-1628.
