

PRE-DOCTORAL EXTERNSHIPS IN PROFESSIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

PSYCHOLOGY DIVISION of the MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE
DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS
NEW YORK HARBOR HEALTHCARE SYSTEM, MANHATTAN CAMPUS
423 EAST 23RD STREET
NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10010

Revised September 12, 2012 for the 2013-2014 training year

Overview

The Manhattan VA currently offers intensive clinical training to psychology doctoral students in 2 externship tracks:

- Neuropsychology
- Psychotherapy Research and Development Program

A description of each of these clinical specialty areas, as well as application and contact information, is provided on the following pages. Applicants must choose **one** of these areas of specialization for the duration of their training.

Depending on their schedules, externs may attend the didactic seminars held for psychology interns. Seminars cover a wide range of topics including clinical interviewing, Axis I psychopathology, character pathology, group psychotherapy, health psychology, cultural diversity, substance abuse, psychopharmacology, neuropsychology, supervision, and psychodynamic psychotherapy. Seminars are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays afternoons. Externs may also attend the psychology division's monthly clinical case conference, held the first Tuesday morning of each month. A variety of additional seminars, case conferences, grand rounds, and team meetings are available on each clinical service.

We are committed to providing muticulturally competent training for our practicum students and culturally sensitive assessments and interventions to our veterans. Our program offers plentiful opportunities to work with patients who represent a wide range of diversity. We are fortunate to be located in New York City, and our patient population includes African-American, Latino, Caribbean-American, Asian, and Caucasian veterans of both genders. Externs learn how factors such as race, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and socioeconomic background interact with both psychological issues and also with the unique culture of the armed services. We strongly encourage applications from individuals from a variety of ethnic, racial, cultural, and personal backgrounds.

Please be aware that we are currently unable to offer supervised training positions to students in bachelor's or master's level programs. Our internship, externship, and postdoctoral fellowship programs for psychology doctoral students comprise between 10-14 positions per year (6 interns, 3-7 externs, 1 postdoctoral fellow). Given the level of intensive supervision devoted to these programs, **we are not able to accommodate additional supervisees.**

For a full description of the psychology division, VA patient population, and medical center facilities, please see our internship brochure at:

<http://www.nyharbor.va.gov/docs/nypsychintern.pdf>

Questions regarding the specifics of each clinical specialty area should be directed to the appropriate supervisor for that placement (listed in subsequent sections of this brochure).

For general questions, please contact (email preferred):

Christie Pfaff, Ph.D., Director of Training and Assistant Chief, Psychology
Christie.Pfaff@va.gov
(212) 686-7500 ext. 7698

PLEASE NOTE: We follow the recommendations set forth by PSYDNYS (Psychology Directors of NYS) and NYNJADOT (New York New Jersey Association of Directors of Training). PSYDNYS and NYNJADOT have developed recommended policies to govern the process of applying to externships and accepting internship offers. These guidelines stipulate in part:

The earliest date that students can submit applications is Tuesday, January 15, 2013. There will be a 7 week period between submission of applications and the first date on which offers may be made to students. Select applicants will be invited for interviews during this time. The earliest date on which an offer can be made to a student is Monday, March 4 at 10 am. Students are not permitted to hold more than two offers at any time. Students will have until noon on the third day (including the day of the offer) following any offer to accept the offer. Students must inform their university Director of Clinical Training of any offer, rejection, acceptance and withdrawal. Externship Coordinators must cc university Directors of Clinical Training on all interview offers, acceptances and rejections.

Please see the full details of these guidelines at the link below, Fairleigh Dickinson University's index of externship opportunities in the metropolitan area:

http://psychpracticum.fdu.edu/index.php/Externship_Recommendations

Neuropsychology

The neuropsychology externship provides students with training in a variety of areas of neuropsychology (behavioral neurology clinic; traumatic brain injury, outpatient geriatric referrals). The externship entails participation in clinical interview as well as test administration, scoring, interpretation, report writing and feedback sessions, with supervision. Referrals cover a wide range of neurological disorders and emphasize differential diagnosis, evaluation of residual functioning, and disposition planning. Consultations from Primary Care and Neurology typically include questions of differential diagnosis of dementia, e.g. Alzheimer's disease, vascular dementia and Parkinson's disease. Referrals from Psychiatry may involve differential diagnosis of schizophrenia or major affective disorders and dementia as well as assessment for residual attention deficit disorder and learning disabilities. Students may do evaluations of the needs of patients with dementia and their families.

General Clinical Activities (required):

- Comprehensive outpatient neuropsychological evaluations

Electives:

- Individual psychotherapy (Outpatient Mental Health Clinic); receive yearlong individual psychodynamic psychotherapy case and separate individual supervision
- Psychodiagnostic or psychoeducational testing

Eligibility and Requirements: Clinical/counseling/health/forensic/neuropsychology students with course work in intelligence testing and psychological testing and also neuropsychology or physiological psychology. Practica in intelligence and psychological testing are recommended. Time commitment: 2 days per week (16 hours); one year required. Flexible days – Tuesday preferred. Tuesday/Thursday allows participation in intern seminars; Monday allows participation in the Behavioral Neurology Clinic. Tuesday allows attendance at neuropsychology rounds at Bellevue.

Application Process: Send **via email** a letter of interest, CV, 2 letters of reference, and a testing report to:

Susan Green, Psy.D., ABPP-CN
E-mail: Susan.Green@va.gov
Phone: (212) 686-7500; ext. 7699

Psychotherapy Research and Development Program

The Psychotherapy Research and Development Program Externship at the Manhattan VA provides students with training in both CBT and psychodynamic psychotherapy. As part of a research grant from VA Health Services Research and Development, externs will be involved in a treatment outcome study involving an empirically supported, manual based CBT intervention (REACH VA) designed for family members caring for an individual with dementia. Externs will also receive training in a principle based CBT approach and provide this treatment to veterans in our outpatient mental health clinic. Psychodynamic training will be provided through individual supervision on both “long term” (1 year) and short term (4 month) dynamic cases through our outpatient mental health clinic. Opportunities to be involved in psychotherapy research and intervention development, to learn cognitive behavioral couple’s therapy and lead caregiver support groups are also available.

General Clinical Activities (required):

- Long term (year-long) psychodynamic psychotherapy case
- Short term (4-month) psychodynamic psychotherapy cases
- Brief manualized CBT psychotherapy cases (REACH VA)
- Principle based CBT case
- Seminars on CBT, psychodynamic psychotherapy, and issues related to caregiving, dementia and aging

Electives:

- CBT couple’s therapy
- Personality testing
- Research
- Intervention Development
- Additional seminars with psychology interns, psychiatry residents or health psychology postdoctoral fellows

Eligibility and Requirements: Students must be from doctoral programs in clinical or counseling psychology and have completed at least two full years of study prior to the start of externship. Applicants also should have completed at least one year of a psychotherapy practicum. Externships generally begin in September and run for a full calendar year. A commitment of 2 days (16 hours) per week is required. Days and hours are individualized for each extern based on his or her availability as well as the needs of the service.

Application Process: Send (via email) a letter of interest, CV, and two letters of reference from psychotherapy supervisors to:

Cory K. Chen, Ph.D.
Clinical Psychologist
Director – Psychotherapy Research and Development Program
E-mail: cory.chen@va.gov
Phone: (212) 686-7500; ext. 4002