

EAS Student Training Program SOP

Objectives

The 9-12 month practicum placement is designed for 2-3 doctoral students in psychology who are interested in developing their clinical skills and building their knowledge base. The practical application of this knowledge is in treatment of a diverse workforce within the federal government Intelligence Community.

Setting

The Employee Assistance Services (EAS) is the psychological treatment branch of the National Security Agency. It offers services to all employees and their spouses. The Center is an ideal setting for practicum students (hereafter referred to as students) to gain experience working with a wide variety of presenting concerns and broad range of diagnoses. EAS also offers the opportunity to work with clients from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and there is exposure to both civilian and military clients. EAS is open Monday-Friday, typically 7:30-5, with some slight variation.

Application and Selection Procedures

Applicants must be enrolled in an APA-accredited counseling or clinical psychology doctoral degree program. Applicants must be advanced students who have completed **at least two psychotherapy practica/field placements and are at least in their third year of course work**. A Top Secret security clearance is required for this position, so a security background check and polygraph will be completed following the conditional practicum placement offer. If clearance is not granted, the student will not be eligible to participate in practicum at EAS.

In choosing applicants, the training staff considers previous counseling experience, unique clinical skills, and the professional needs of both the applicant and EAS. In addition, the staff considers academic achievement, consulting/outreach experience, and non-classroom learning experience. The most qualified candidates will be asked to come to EAS for interviews. Final selection will be made on the basis of both the application and the interview.

Out of necessity, this application process begins before most other practicum placements do and the selection process typically ends after other practicum selections have been made.

Schedule of Weekly Activities

This 9-12 month practicum placement requires **20 hours per week** (this includes administrative responsibilities and supervision preparation). Students are responsible for ensuring that their hours meet criteria for their respective programs. The following is an outline of weekly activities.

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1. Therapy (full caseload 7-10 hours per week).

Clients will generally be seen once a week or bi-weekly with a ten-session limit; however, some are seen with less regularity. Students will be provided with private offices at EAS in which they will see clients. Students will provide 7-10 therapy hours per week and may have up to twice that on their caseloads (as typically all are not seen weekly).

2. Supervision of Therapy Cases (1-2 hours per week).

Each student will have a licensed clinical professional serving as their direct clinical supervisor for individual therapy cases. At least one semester this will be with a licensed psychologist. A multi-disciplinary consultation team will be made available to the student in formal and informal ways in order to provide an opportunity for the student to be exposed to various treatment modalities and theoretical orientations.

3. Intake Evaluation.

Learning to evaluate the client and the client's situation so as to help the client make the most of their counseling is essential to the work at EAS. Students will conduct an intake evaluation with clients prior to starting individual therapy. This will be conducted under supervision and a process will allow for the student and supervisor to determine whether or not a particular client is appropriate for the student to manage in individual therapy. At least once per semester, direct observation of an intake evaluation will occur in which the student and supervisor will be present in the room. (Additionally, ongoing therapy sessions may be observed as well.)

4. Urgent Care Coverage/Crisis Intervention.

Students will be given the opportunity to shadow a licensed clinical professional as they provide urgent care coverage.

5. Clinical Meeting (1.5 hours per week; Wednesdays 1:00-2:30pm).

Students meet with the staff to present cases and to address clinical issues. At least twice a year they give a formal case presentation to the clinical staff on cases which pose particular challenges.

6. Workplace Consultations/Outreach.

Each student will participate in at least one pre-planned workplace consultation/outreach activity for the workforce. Students are required to first observe said briefing, then co-facilitate its delivery. The goal is for 2 observations and 2 co-facilitations.

7. Quality Improvement Project (1 hour a week; Wed. 12pm-1pm, 1 day per month).

An integral part of our work is to continue to make improvements on delivery of services. Each student will be tasked with a quality improvement project. This can be either time-limited or last

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the entire year depending on the selection; further, they may be working alone (with a staff member) or with others in their student cohort. Work on QI projects will be designed once a month

8. Seminar (1 hour per week; Wed. 12pm-1pm, 2 days per month).

Students are required to attend the Student Training Program Seminar. This seminar (conducted by staff members and visiting clinicians) focuses on a variety of clinical areas, with emphasis given to those areas of interest by the students. Readings for the seminars will be posted in advance (all reading materials provided by EAS). Students will also be presenting on area of interest or expertise. This seminar will take place 2 times each month.

9. Process Group (1 hour a week; Wed. 12pm-1pm, 1 day per month).

Students will meet with the Student Training Program Director and Chief, EAS to process professional growth and development as well discuss ongoing concerns. It is expected that this will be an opportunity for reflection and exploration with little structured guidance given.

10. Evaluation and Feedback.

Feedback on progress will be provided in individual supervision as well as more formally at the end of each semester. Students are evaluated based on their ability to establish rapport with clients, integrate theory and practice, intervene effectively with clients, as well as on professionalism, administrative detail, and general workplace cooperation/comportment.