

Counseling Center
University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)
Externship Program

<https://counseling.umbc.edu/training-programs/externships/>

Overview

The externship program at the Counseling Center is designed for **graduate students in APA-accredited doctoral programs in clinical or counseling psychology** who are interested in developing their clinical skills and building upon their theoretical and experiential clinical knowledge. The emphasis within the training program is on providing culturally-competent treatment for university students within a brief psychotherapy model. Supervisors utilize a number of theoretical orientations, including psychodynamic, attachment, family systems, interpersonal, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, feminist/multicultural, and integrative; the focus is on training in evidence-based practice. In addition to counseling skills, there is a strong emphasis on developing skills in group therapy and outreach. Two externship slots are offered for the 2021-2022 academic year.

Setting

The Counseling Center serves over 13,500 undergraduate and graduate students at UMBC. UMBC is one of the most diverse universities in the United States. Externs can expect to gain experience with a late adolescent and adult population. The Counseling Center is an ideal setting for externs to learn to work with a wide variety of presenting concerns and a broad range of diagnoses. Additionally, the diverse student population offers the unique opportunity to work with clients from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as many international countries. Our multi-disciplinary staff currently includes six licensed psychologists, two licensed clinical social workers, three doctoral psychology interns, and two doctoral psychology externs. The center is open 8:30am-5:00pm Monday through Friday. Occasional evening hours may be required for outreach programs.

Schedule of Weekly Activities

The externship is scheduled to begin 1-2 weeks before the start of the Fall semester for orientation. Externs are expected to work through the last week of classes in the Spring semester. Externs have the option to work during winter break to accumulate additional clinical hours. In addition, there may be an option to extend the training into the summer months. The externship requires a minimum of 16 hours per week but can be extended to 20 hours, dependent on the students' interests, the requirements of their program, and space availability at the Counseling Center. Thus externs can expect to accrue approximately 400-500 total hours and 150 clinical hours during their year of training.

The following is an outline of weekly activities:

1. Assessment (0-1 hour per week).
 - a. Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS). Learning to assess a client and the client's situation so as to help them make the most of their counseling is essential to the work at the Counseling Center. Clients at the Counseling Center fill out a number of forms at the time of initial assessment, including the CCAPS-62 and the Standard Data Set (SDS) in Titanium. Ongoing clients complete the CCAPS-34 at each session. Didactic training and supervision are offered for these assessment instruments.
 - b. Initial Assessments. In order to obtain training and supervised experience in initial consultations, trainees will participate in initial assessments in a developmental manner. Initial assessments (IA) are brief, semi-structured, clinical interviews that form the basis for establishing rapport, clarifying client needs and goals, and formulating initial clinical conceptualizations and treatment plans. Externs in their first clinical experience will first observe a senior staff member (or intern) conduct initial assessments and then may have the opportunity to co-lead several initial assessment sessions. For more advanced externs, they first observe initial assessments conducted by senior staff. Then externs will conduct initial assessments sessions along with a staff member, taking on a larger role over time. Once they reach a level of competency, advanced externs will

conduct their own initial assessments independently. The total number of independent initial assessments will vary depending on externs' skills and caseloads.

2. Individual Therapy (6-10 hours per week). Clients are generally seen once a week or once every two weeks for brief psychotherapy. Depending on clients' needs and trainees' interests, there are also opportunities for trainees to engage in more long-term work. Caseloads will be smaller at the beginning of the semester and build as the semester progresses, with a weekly goal of to 6 to 10 sessions per week. If trainees elect to co-lead or process-observe a group, the caseload for individual counseling will be lower. Trainees have the option to schedule therapy appointments over winter break. All sessions are held at the Counseling Center and are video-recorded.
3. Supervision (2-3 hours per week). Externs will have two supervisors who will each provide one hour of supervision each week. During the first semester, the extern will have one hour of individual supervision and one hour of peer group supervision, both of which are provided by members of senior staff. During the second semester, the extern will have one hour of individual supervision with a senior staff member and one hour of individual supervision with a doctoral intern who is supervised by a licensed staff psychologist. While efforts are made to match externs with a senior staff member who is a licensed psychologist for their individual supervision, this cannot be guaranteed and individual supervision may be provided by a licensed clinical social worker or an unlicensed psychologist (i.e., a member of senior staff in the process of becoming licensed who is supervised by a licensed psychologist). If an extern is involved in group therapy, additional supervision will be provided by the staff member responsible for coordinating the group. Supervision for outreach will be scheduled periodically throughout the year.
4. Group Therapy (1-1.5 hours per week). Externs can expect to participate in at least 1 group therapy experience per semester, provided there are a sufficient number of groups available to accommodate this. During the first semester, it is likely that externs will process-observe a therapy group and participate in group supervision with the co-leaders. During the second semester, the extern may take on the role of co-leader. If this option is chosen, the extern would receive weekly supervision from the supervisor of the group. Depending on their level of experience, externs may be able to co-lead beginning in the first semester.
5. Outreach (1-2 hours per week). Externs may co-present the Skills for Success workshops which are scheduled on Wednesdays from 12 noon to 1 p.m. each semester. Additionally, externs may be involved in other Outreach programs within the university community, including during evening hours. Additional outreach activities may include tabling, mental health screenings, and other presentations and workshops.
6. Case Management/Administrative (1-2 hours per week). Administrative time will be built into the schedule to write case notes, read scholarly literature, and attend to other administrative responsibilities. Externs are expected to keep their case notes up to date; they are also required to have all notes written and signed by their supervisor in order to successfully complete the externship.
7. Evaluation and Feedback. Feedback on progress will be provided informally throughout the year as well as more formally twice a year. Formal evaluations are completed in December and May of the training year. Evaluations can either be from their home graduate program or from the Counseling Center. Externs are evaluated based on their ability to establish rapport with clients, conceptualize client presenting complaints, and select and utilize interventions appropriate for clients' needs and the extern's developmental stage. Externs are also expected to engage in practices that are consistent with ethical and legal standards. The overarching goal is for externs to complete the training year with an enhanced ability to integrate theory and research with clinical practice in a multiculturally competent manner.

8. **Professional Development:** The training year begins with three days of orientation, which will include didactic seminars as well as training on Titanium, ethics, and legal issues. Other extern seminars will be offered throughout the year including monthly Extern Seminar. Externs have the option to attend other professional development programs offered at the Counseling Center.

Self-Disclosure Policy

Training staff at the UMBC Counseling Center value the power and complexity of the therapeutic relationship. Consequently, in our intervention, supervision, and training activities, there is a focus on the “person-of-the-therapist” and how this may impact the quality and effectiveness of work with clients and consultees. Trainees may be asked to reflect upon and share the ways that their own personal qualities, experiences, and reactions influence and are impacted by their clinical work in supervision and other training settings. Such exploration and disclosure is not intended to serve as psychotherapy for the trainee but is focused on enhancing self-awareness and professional development as related to the trainee’s clinical practice during their training. Supervisors and other training staff are expected to explore relevant information with the trainee in a respectful, non-coercive manner, within the context of a safe and supportive professional relationship. In accordance with APA Code of Ethics, section 7.05, it is important for trainees to be aware that the Due Process procedures for our training programs indicate that the staff may require trainees to obtain psychotherapy in those cases in which a trainee’s behavior is deemed problematic.

UMBC students who are accepted into the training program at the Counseling Center will not be eligible for counseling services at UMBC so as to avoid any conflict of interest or dual relationships. Students who are in need of counseling will be provided with assistance in locating mental health services off campus. Students are required to sign an agreement upon their acceptance into the training program.

Application and Selection Procedures

Applicants must be enrolled in an APA-accredited doctoral program in clinical or counseling psychology. Competitive applicants will have had prior counseling experience. The application includes a letter of interest, a Curriculum Vitae, completed Director of Clinical Training Consent form, copy of graduate school transcript(s), and two letters of recommendation, at least one of which must come from a clinical supervisor. Application materials should be submitted electronically.

Application materials are located online at <https://counseling.umbc.edu/training-programs/externships/>.

For best consideration, applicants are asked to submit completed applications by February 5th, 2021. We will accept applications until February 22nd, 2021, but will begin offering interviews and positions after the 5th. We aim to make offers to students by end of February or mid-March 2021. The Counseling Center does not participate in the Washington DC externship match process.

Questions are to be directed to:

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