

Goals and Philosophy of Training

The fundamental goal of the internship program is to provide interns with a combination of didactic and broad-based, supervised, direct service experiences that will prepare them for independent practice of clinical psychology in the future. Upon completion of the program, interns should evidence the personal maturity and integrity necessary for effective professional work, as well as a personal commitment to the highest standards of practice. In addition, they should exhibit attainment of a normative level of clinical skills commensurate with their level of professional development, and they should show a capacity for and commitment to self and peer review, continuing education, and ongoing professional development.

The formal organization of the program reflects an educational philosophy which endorses generic learning, competency-based sequences of training, multi-disciplinary and multi-theoretical perspectives, and promotes the development of sensitivity to the clinical implications of ethnic and cultural pluralism. The major objective is to integrate clinical with developmental psychology, ecology, and family systems formulations. The primary educational model is rooted in the practitioner-scholar model. While the focus is on clinical practice, emphasis is also placed on the importance of remaining current with the professional literature, increasing one's critical thinking abilities, and respecting the importance of ongoing scholarly inquiry to enhance practice. Our educational philosophy incorporates interdisciplinary learning. We emphasize learning of strategies that involve the coordinated efforts of mental health professionals acting conjointly with other Center staff and community organizations whose combined purpose is to facilitate the adjustment of individuals and families within the community even when severe pathology is present.

Our program promotes cross-cultural perspectives and strives for culturally sensitive practice. The program includes the entire range of assessment and treatment strategies for a community-based outpatient setting as well as for non-public school services. We strive for the clear delineation of contemporary legal, ethical, and clinical issues which define the obligations of clinicians to balance patients' rights with societal needs, expectations, and standards.

Treatment perspectives are consistent with current national priorities of providing empirically supported, evidence-based treatment; providing services that focus on prevention and early intervention with youth and families; and treating severe psychopathology, with foci on the family, alternatives to hospitalization, collaboration among relevant social systems and family support networks, and services to under-served groups. Those completing the internship will have obtained a frame of reference for elaborating concepts and strategies in the area of social policy and mental health for the family.

The internship, along with Child and Family Guidance Center as a whole, have responded and adapted to the ongoing Covid19 pandemic with the primary goals of continuing best practice care for our clients while minimizing the health risks to clients, staff, and community. Our agency has transitioned to telehealth via Zoom as the primary means of service delivery. Similarly, staff meetings, supervision, and internship training seminars are also via Zoom. In-person services on site, when appropriate and necessary on a case-by-case basis, may be provided following the current safety protocols developed by the agency. Additional periodic changes are likely due to the fluid nature of the situation and the needs/requirements of multiple stakeholders. While keeping aspects of telehealth to enhance our future services, the agency expects to transition to a more typical service and training model in a stepwise fashion, at each point heeding current guidance from health and governmental entities to make science-based decisions in the best interest of our clients, staff and community.