CAPS Doctoral Psychology Internship Overview of Training Program

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's Counseling and Psychological Services offers a 2000 hour, twelve month, full-time APA-accredited Health Services Psychology internship. The overall goal of the training program is to help interns develop into professional psychologists who can think about, and integrate into their practice, the values and qualities that we have found to be essential to the field of psychology.

Using and incorporating a multicultural lens is a core value of the UNC-CH CAPS internship training program. Interns have the opportunity to work with a diverse group of clients and are encouraged to pay close attention to issues of difference (including but not limited to race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, disability, age) in their work with students. Interns have various opportunities to discuss multicultural issues and their impact on clients and themselves, such as in multicultural mentoring, during multicultural case presentations, and in individual and group supervision. Interns have the opportunity to meet representatives of different departments and liaisons to CAPS, such as the Dean of Students Office, Residential Life, Campus Health Service medical clinics, the LGBTQ Center, the Women?s Center, and the Carolina Covenant Program. In addition, interns are encouraged to consider developing outreach programs to underserved populations, possibly cooperating with the departments listed above, as well as others, and to consider a liaison relationship with these departments for the year. Lastly, interns are required to complete a multicultural project that may include, but is not limited to, the development of a specific outreach, collaborating with a department or student group, conducting a needs assessment for underserved populations, etc. Staff members at CAPS continually challenge themselves to work towards multicultural self-awareness, and this approach and attitude provide important opportunities for interns to observe and incorporate these skills and values.

Another core value of the Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) APA-accredited Health Services Psychology Internship Program is the ongoing development of self-awareness. We emphasize the use of self-awareness in providing effective and multi-culturally sensitive clinical interventions. Because interns negotiate relationships within their cohort and with their supervisors and are also members of multi-disciplinary teams, we believe that self-awareness and interpersonal skills are an important
As another core value, the CAPS internship program strives to support and enhance each intern’s professional development and identity. This involves incorporating the values of multiculturalism and self-awareness, as well as ethical practice and professional behavior into one’s professional identity. In addition, knowledge of clinical theory, evidence based practice, and clinical research are important components of developing clinical competence and a professional identity. Interns have the opportunity to expand their skill base through exposure to a wide range of clinical presentations and disorders, as well as a diversity of treatment approaches among the clinical staff. We aim to help interns enhance treatment skills in areas they are already invested in, as well as to balance skills by learning about and implementing approaches they are less familiar with. Interns also explore the underlying values, belief systems, and assumptions that guide their approach to treatment. By the end of the internship year, an awareness of their individual theoretical orientation and therapeutic style, and understanding of ethical and multicultural competence results in an increased sense of a coherent professional identity.

The CAPS internship program highly values a supportive learning environment and attention to self-care. We take a developmental approach to skill building so that intern can progress with appropriate levels of supervision and collaboration to becoming more autonomous in their professional roles by the end of the internship year.

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