

Advanced Practicum Experience

Ph.D. in Educational Psychology-
School Psychology Specialization Strand

EPY 793-Advanced Doctoral Practicum: 3-6 credits
(Advanced practice supervised experience for doctoral
students in school psychology and counseling)

EPP 765- Adv. Assess Seminar: Clinical Practice
(Advanced supervised experience for doctoral students
in school psychology in a mental health setting)

In the practicum experience, defined as all supervised pre-internship clinical training experiences, a student is expected to apply and extend the knowledge, skills and attitudes learned in the program's didactic coursework. Recognizing the importance of this experience, the initial practicum in the UNLV School Psychology program has been extended from a one-semester, 4-credit course to a two-semester, 6-credit requirement with experiences in both campus clinic and school-based settings.

In addition, all doctoral students are required to complete either an advanced doctoral practicum or a teaching practicum as a part of the core requirements. Students who eventually plan to seek licensure for clinical practice are strongly encouraged to complete both the clinical and teaching practica.

The doctoral practicum has become an increasingly important step in professional training in professional psychology, in part because the competition for internship placements is strong, and also in recognition that the revised model licensing act policy adopted by the APA Council of Representatives in 2006 places more emphasis on clinical experience obtained prior to the doctoral degree.

A student seeking additional clinical supervised experience after completing the doctoral practicum can obtain this experience through enrollment in another section of EPY 793, Advanced Doctoral Practicum, and/or enrollment in EPP 765, Advanced Assessment Seminar: Clinical Practice.

Experience Requirements:

The specific advanced practice experiences prior to the doctoral internship will be contingent on the setting and the student need but are guided by templates/benchmarks for practicum experience in preparation by APA's Core Competencies Benchmarks Workgroup. These competencies have been categorized into expectations for Novice, Intermediate, and Advanced levels, and more recently are being described as "Readiness for Practicum, Readiness for Internship, and Readiness for Entry to Practice."

Specific behavioral anchors are still in preparation by the APA workgroup, but expectations during the advanced practice experience include continued growth in professionally appropriate and responsible behavior in areas including:

Professionalism: Professional values and ethics as evidenced in behavior and comportment that reflects the values and ethics of psychology, integrity, and responsibility.

Reflective Practice/Self-Assessment/Self-Care— Practice conducted with personal and professional self-awareness and reflection; with awareness of competencies; with appropriate self-care

Scientific Knowledge and Methods - Understanding of research, research methodology, techniques of data collection and analysis, biological bases of behavior, cognitive-affective bases of behavior, and development across the lifespan. Respect for scientifically derived knowledge.

Relationships - Relate effectively and meaningfully with individuals, groups, and/or communities.

Individual and Cultural Diversity- Awareness, sensitivity and skills in working professionally with diverse individuals, groups and communities who represent various cultural and personal background and characteristics defined broadly and consistent with APA policy.

Ethical Legal Standards and Policy - Application of ethical concepts and awareness of legal issues regarding professional activities with individuals, groups, and organizations.

Interdisciplinary systems –Knowledge of key issues and concepts in related disciplines. Identify and interact with professionals in multiple disciplines.

Assessment - Assessment and diagnosis of problems, capabilities and issues associated with individuals, groups, and/or organizations.

Intervention- Interventions designed to alleviate suffering and to promote health and well-being of individuals, groups, and/or organizations.

Consultation- The ability to provide expert guidance or professional assistance in response to a client's needs or goals.

Research/evaluation - Generating research that contributes to the professional knowledge base and/or evaluates the effectiveness of various professional activities.

Supervision- Supervision and training in the professional knowledge base and of evaluation of the effectiveness of various professional activities.

Teaching: Providing instruction, disseminating knowledge, and evaluating acquisition of knowledge and skill in professional psychology.

Management-administration - Manage the direct delivery of services (DDS) and/or the administration of organizations, programs, or agencies (OPA).

At the conclusion of the advanced practicum experience, the student is expected to demonstrate the competencies associated with the second level, "Readiness for Internship."

With these categories as a template, the site supervisor and campus supervisor will assess the student's performance using developmentally appropriate rubrics and with recognition that not all experiences can be available at a specific setting.

For example, at the "Readiness for Internship" level, a student would obviously not be expected to serve as a manager or administrator of an organization, program, or agency. An example of a developmentally appropriate behavior for the "Readiness for Internship" level could be that the student responds appropriately to managers and other employees at the site and is able to identify responsibilities, challenges, and processes of clinical management. In like manner, the student may or may not have tasks involving research or program evaluation, but in any setting could be expected to demonstrate the competence to be a critical consumer of research and an understanding of the significance of evidence based practice.

Requesting Approval for Advanced Practicum Experience:

It is the student's responsibility to identify potential sites for advanced practicum experience and to make initial contact with the site about potential placement. The student is encouraged to confer with her/his advisor and/or the school psychology doctoral program coordinator before initiating contact with the site.

The form to apply an advanced practicum experience is on the department website:

http://education.unlv.edu/EP/epp_advanced_practicum_request.doc

The form is submitted to the school psychology doctoral program coordinator and requires signatures from the student, the site supervisor (psychologist), and a campus supervisor. Requests should be submitted well before the deadline for registration.

Note: Materials in these guidelines were drawn from:

R. Hatcher (2006), "The New Prominence of Practicum Training in Professional Psychology: A Guide for Practicum Supervisors and Trainers", *Register Report: Competences National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology*; and

Draft Documents from Assessment of Competency Benchmarks Work Group convened by the APA Board of Educational Affairs in collaboration with the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (distributed and discussed at the Winter Conference of the Council of Directors of School Psychology Doctoral Programs in Deerfield Beach, Florida, January 2009, and the APPIC Conference in Portland, Oregon, April 2009).