



Travis County Psychology Internship Program

Policies & Procedures

Developed by the TC-PIP Training Committee

Updated:
7/03/2024

Internship Admissions, Support, and Initial Placement Data

Internship Program Admissions

The Travis County Psychology Internship Program (TC-PIP) offers 4 (4) full-time positions.

The internship program is a member of APPIC; the Program Code for TC-PIP is **202911**. Students interested in applying for the internship program should submit an online application through the APPIC website (www.appic.org).

All application materials must be received by November 1st in order to be considered. If applicants are invited to interview, they will be notified by email on or before the November 15th deadline. Interviews will be scheduled in early January. Online interviews are completed in order to best assure equality of access to the interviewing process. Intern selection occurs through a comprehensive review process.

The Travis County Psychology Internship Program requires that applicants have attended an APA-accredited doctoral program and strongly prefers that students have completed a minimum of 400 intervention hours and 30 assessment hours at the time of application. The number of intervention hours in each of the following areas is noted as part of consideration: Individual Adult, Individual Adolescent, Group Adult, Group Adolescent, Family, Intake, Substance Abuse, and Consultation. Additionally, the number of Testing hours and total number of Integrated Reports with specific consideration to Adolescent Reports are evaluated. Applicants are evaluated on the quality and perceived goodness of program fit of their cover letter and essays as well as their reference letters. Experience with youth and families as well as with working with diverse populations are preferred and serve as indicators of fit. Successful applicants have had experience working within systems and will have a genuine interest in working in a juvenile justice setting. Finally, the evaluation process considers the following: doctoral program and degree; status of dissertation proposal/defense; undergraduate program/degree; and GPA. Applications are reviewed comprehensively and applicants are considered based upon the full range of their experience, skills, and training/professional interests.

Financial and Other Benefit Support for Upcoming Training Year

Annual Stipend/Salary for Full-time Interns: \$44,561

Program provides access to medical insurance for intern?	Yes
Intern contribution to medical insurance required?	No
Coverage of family member(s) available?	Yes
Coverage of legally married partner available?	Yes
Coverage of domestic partner available?	Yes
Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off:	128
Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave:	96

Initial Post-Internship Positions

Aggregated Tally for the
 Preceding 3 Cohorts: 2021/2022-2023/2024
 Total # of interns who were in the 3
 cohorts: 12
 Total # of interns who did not seek
 employment because they returned to their
 doctoral program/are completing doctoral degree: 0

	Post-doctoral residency position	Employed position
Community mental health center	N/A	N/A
Federally qualified health center	N/A	N/A
Independent primary care facility/clinic	N/A	N/A
University counseling center	N/A	N/A
Veterans Affairs medical center	N/A	N/A
Military health center	N/A	N/A
Academic health center	N/A	N/A
Other medical center or hospital	N/A	N/A
Psychiatric hospital	N/A	1
Academic university/department	1	N/A
Community college or other teaching setting	N/A	N/A
Independent research institution	N/A	N/A
Correctional facility	2	8
School district/system	N/A	N/A
Independent practice setting	N/A	N/A
Not currently employed	N/A	N/A
Changed to another field	N/A	N/A
Other	N/A	N/A
Unknown	N/A	N/A

Diversity and Non-Discrimination Policy

The Travis County Psychology Internship Program strongly values diversity and believes in creating an equitable, hospitable, appreciative, safe, and inclusive learning environment for its interns. Diversity among interns and supervisors enriches the educational experience, promotes personal growth, and strengthens communities and the workplace. Every effort is made by TC-PIP to create a climate in which all staff and interns feel respected, comfortable, and in which success is possible and obtainable. TC-PIP strives to make every effort to dispel ignorance or anxiety associated with multicultural experiences. TC-PIP's training program includes an expected competency in diversity training, and multiple experiences are provided to be sure that interns are both personally supported and well-trained in this area.

TC-PIP welcomes applicants from diverse backgrounds. It is the belief of the program faculty and Travis County administrators that a diverse training environment contributes to the overall quality of the program. TC-PIP provides equal opportunity to all prospective interns and does not discriminate because of a person's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or any other factor that is irrelevant to success as a psychology intern. Applicants are individually evaluated in terms of quality of previous training, practicum experiences, and fit with the internship.

Grievance and Due Process Procedures

Grievance Procedures:

Interns are encouraged to report all concerns regarding ethical, professional, or administrative problems. Most issues can be informally resolved through discussion with clinical supervisors and/or the Training Director. Travis County Juvenile Probation emphasizes early identification of potential problems, cooperative efforts at resolution, and open communication.

Interns may address grievances about a supervisor, staff member, trainee, or the training program either informally or formally.

I. Informal Review

- a. Interns should make every effort to resolve their complaints informally and directly with the person who is the subject of the complaint. When such resolution is not practical due to power and authority differences or other factors, interns are encouraged to seek consultation from the Training Director and/or a senior staff member to explore ways of reaching a resolution.

II. Formal Review

- a. Interns have the right to activate a formal review when they believe their rights have been violated. Additionally interns may report concerns to their academic institution, APA, or APPIC, as appropriate.
- b. In instances of workplace-related complaints, interns are expected to follow the procedures outlined below.
 - i. If the intern wishes to file a formal complaint, this will need to be submitted in writing to the Training Director with sufficient details describing the nature of the problem. The Training Director will review the complaint to determine if it merits further inquiry. If the Training Director determines the complaint does not merit further inquiry but the intern perceives a continued problem, the intern may bring his/her complaint to the Chief Psychologist or his/her designee. If the Training Director is the subject of the intern's complaint, Dr. Daniel Hoard, Deputy Chief and Chief Psychologist, will become the point of contact regarding the intern's grievance. The Training Director (or Dr. Hoard, if applicable) will meet with the intern and the individual being grieved within 10 working days of receipt of the intern's written grievance. The goal of the joint meeting is to develop a plan of action to resolve the issue. In some cases, the Training Director may wish to meet with the intern and the person being grieved separately first.
 - ii. The Training Director will document the outcome of the meeting, including the identified plan of action. The intern and the person being grieved will be asked to report back to the Training Director within 10 working days as to whether the issue has been adequately resolved.
 - iii. If the plan of action fails to adequately resolve the issue, the Training Committee will convene to review the issue within 10 working days of the Training Director receiving the follow-up report from the intern and the individual being grieved. The Training Committee will review all written materials and have an opportunity to interview the parties involved as well

as other individuals who have relevant information. The Training Committee has final discretion regarding outcome. If the panel determines that a grievance against a staff member has merit, the issue will be turned over to the department to initiate due process procedures as outlined for employees.

- c. If the intern's complaint indicates ethical misconduct or potential for harm, the Training Director may choose to suspend the potentially harmful relationship until further investigation has been completed.

Due Process Procedures:

The training program has procedures in place to address inadequate or unacceptable trainee performance. These procedures help ensure that judgments or decisions made by the internship program about interns are not arbitrary or personally biased.

For the purposes of procedural policy, inadequate or unacceptable trainee performance is defined broadly as interference in professional functioning that is reflected in one or more of the following ways:

1. an inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's professional behavior,
2. an inability and/or unwillingness to acquire professional skills necessary to reach an acceptable level of competency,
3. an inability and/or unwillingness to manage personal stress, psychological problems, and/or excessive emotional reactions that interfere with professional functioning.

Problems affecting an intern's performance may be identified either through formal evaluation procedures or through the informal interactions of supervisors and other training staff working with the intern. Some situations of inadequate or unacceptable intern performance can be successfully addressed through a remediation plan, while other such situations cannot. Problems typically become identified as impairments when one or more of the following characteristics are present:

1. the intern does not acknowledge and/or successfully address the problem when it is identified,
2. the problem is not a skill deficit that can be rectified by further academic or didactic training,
3. the quality of services delivered by the intern is negatively affected and may be considered destructive to clients,
4. the problem is not restricted to one area of professional functioning,
5. a disproportionate amount of attention by training personnel is required, compared to other interns in the group,
6. the intern's behavior does not change as a function of feedback, remediation efforts, and/or time,
7. the problematic behavior has potential for ethical or legal ramifications if it is not addressed,
8. the intern's behavior negatively impacts the public's view of the department,
9. the problematic behavior negatively impacts the intern class.

The Training Committee will consider the number and severity of the characteristics noted above when determining how to address identified impairments in functioning. The Training Committee may use either an informal or formal review when addressing identified impairments.

1. Informal Review

- a. If a supervisor believes that an intern is not performing in an appropriate/professional manner or that the intern's behavior is becoming problematic, the supervisor will address the issue directly and as soon as possible with the intern in an attempt to resolve the problem. This process will be documented in writing by the supervisor, but it will not become part of the intern's professional file.

2. Formal Review

- a. If an intern's problematic behavior persists following an attempt to resolve the issue informally, or if the intern receives less than a "3" on a competency domain in the six-month supervisory evaluation, the following steps will be taken:
 - i. The intern's supervisor raising the concern (if applicable) will meet with the Training Director and the intern within 10 working days to review the problem(s). If the Training Director is the intern's immediate supervisor raising the concern, Dr. Hoard will be included in the meeting.
 - ii. The intern will be provided with the opportunity to offer a response to the problem in writing.
 - iii. After discussing the problem and the intern's response, the supervisor and Training Director (or Training Director and Dr. Hoard) will define the trainee's problem as concretely and behaviorally as possible, decide on the severity, and assess the potential for remediation.
 - iv. The Training Director and supervisor may:
 1. issue a verbal warning,
 2. generate a remediation plan without probation,
 3. place the intern on probationary status with a remediation plan,
 4. terminate the intern from the training program.
 - v. The Training Director's and supervisor's response will be provided to the intern within 5 working days of the initial meeting. In the case of probation or termination, the intern, the intern's academic program, and other relevant persons will be notified in writing. Furthermore, as deemed necessary by the Training Director, the intern's academic program may be consulted or notified at any time regarding concerns about the intern's performance. If the intern wishes to challenge the decisions made, s/he may request to appeal the decision as outlined in the *Procedures for Appeal*.

Explanations of recommended actions:

1. A verbal warning is issued to the intern: If a remediation plan is not deemed necessary, the Training Director and supervisor may choose to issue a verbal warning to modify the problematic behavior. This consequence is primarily designed to be educational in nature and typically occurs within the context of the intern's supervision. Depending on the nature of the identified problem, the amount of supervision received might increase and/or case responsibilities may be changed.

2. A remediation plan is generated without probation: If termination or probation is not deemed appropriate, the Training Director and supervisor will generate an appropriate plan of remediation. All remediation plans will comply with juvenile probation policies and procedures. Several possible courses of action designed to remediate deficiencies may include (but are not limited to):
 - a. increasing supervision with the primary supervisor or changing the primary supervisor,
 - b. changing the format, emphasis, and/or focus of supervision,
 - c. recommending or requiring a psychological assessment and/or personal therapy, and clarifying to all parties involved whether or not the assessment and therapy contacts will be used in the intern evaluation process, and if so, how they will be used,
 - d. reducing or limiting the type of direct client contact or other internship responsibilities or increasing certain types of client contacts, if the problem behavior is related to insufficient competency,
 - e. requiring specific continuing education,
 - f. recommending, when appropriate, a leave of absence from the internship.
3. The Trainee is placed on probation with a remediation plan: Probationary status is defined as a situation where the intern is actively and systematically monitored by supervisors and the Training Director for a specific length of time regarding the necessary and expected changes in the problematic behavior. The intern is given a written statement notifying him/her of the probationary status and specifying:
 - a. the behaviors which need to be changed,
 - b. the stipulations for remediating the problem,
 - c. the time period during which the problem is to be ameliorated,
 - d. the procedures designed to evaluate whether the problem has been appropriately addressed.

Following the intern's written notification of his/her probationary status, the Training Director will meet with the intern to review the probationary conditions. The intern may then choose to accept the conditions of the probation or to challenge the action. The procedures for appealing the action are presented in a subsequent section. If the action is not challenged by the intern, the remediation plan is put into action.
4. Termination is recommended: Termination from the internship program at this point in the process would be recommended only in extreme circumstances (e.g., the problem represents gross misconduct or ethical violations that have potential to cause harm). Examples of such circumstances are acts of physical aggression against a staff member or a client, or serious ethical misconduct such as a sexual relationship with a client. After the trainee is notified in writing of the recommendation, s/he may choose to appeal the decision as outlined in the ***Procedures for Appeal***.

When a remediation plan is put into action, the Training Director and supervisor will work with the intern to facilitate and monitor change over a specified period of time. If the intern demonstrates sufficient positive change, s/he will be formally notified, in writing, that satisfactory change has been accomplished. For an intern placed on probationary status demonstration of sufficient positive change will be documented in writing and the intern will be notified that the probationary period has ended. At the end of the probationary period, the intern's academic program will be notified that probationary status has been lifted. If, at the end of the probationary period, the Training Director and supervisor determine that insufficient positive change has taken place, they will review the situation and recommend one of the following:

1. The intern remains on probation: The intern remains on probation with a new time period specified. The intern may challenge this recommendation or may accept the new remediation plan.
2. A new plan is generated: A recommendation of termination is not deemed to be appropriate at this time, and a new plan for remediation is generated in another effort to promote change. This plan may include (but is not limited to) psychological/psychiatric treatment, careful screening of clients, closer and more intense supervision, and/or suspension of certain activities.
3. Termination is recommended: The Training Director and supervisor, after reviewing the problem, conclude that it is both serious and resistant to change; on this basis, termination is recommended. Again, at this point the intern may choose to challenge the decision according to the appeal procedures outlined below. In the case of termination, the Training Director will notify APPIC and the intern's graduate program of the termination.

The trainee is notified of the final decision and, again, may appeal the decision. If the intern accepts the decision, his/her academic program and other appropriate individuals will be notified. If the trainee chooses to appeal, these individuals will be notified of the final decision at the conclusion of the appeal process.

Procedures for appeal:

Within five working days of notification of (1) remediation plan, (2) probationary status, or (3) termination, an intern may submit a letter (or email) to the Training Director requesting an appeal.

Within five working days of the receipt of the appeal request, the Training Director will request that the department's Chief Psychologist or his/her designee convene an Appeals Committee. The Chief Psychologist or his/her designee will then select the members and a Chair. The Appeals Committee will have fifteen working days to conduct a fact- finding review.

The procedures invoked for a special fact-finding review by the Appeals Committee are as follows:

1. The intern and his/her supervisor or the staff member(s) involved will be notified that a special review meeting will be held.
2. The Appeals Committee may request personal interviews and/or written statements from individuals as it deems appropriate.
3. The intern may submit to the Appeals Committee any written statements s/he believes to be appropriate, may request a personal interview, and/or may request that the Committee interview other individuals who might have relevant information. The supervisor or staff members involved will also be afforded the same privilege.

Following the fact-finding review, the Chief Psychologist or his/her designee will communicate a summary of the Appeals Committee's findings and any recommendations to the Training Director, within five working days of the end of their deliberation. The Appeals Committee may choose to sustain any previous actions taken or may implement a new course of action as deemed necessary. The Appeals Committee has final discretion regarding outcome.

Intern Evaluation Procedures

The Travis County Psychology Internship Program requires that interns demonstrate minimum levels of achievement across all training competencies, as outlined in the description of the program's goals, objectives, and competencies. Interns are formally evaluated by the Training Committee twice annually, at the midpoint and end of the internship year. Evaluations are conducted using a standard rating form, which includes comment spaces where supervisors provide specific written feedback regarding the intern's performance and progress. The evaluation form includes information about the intern's performance regarding all of TC-PIP's expected training objectives and related competencies. The faculty supervisors and the Training Director provide written feedback on the evaluation regarding areas of strength and areas for future growth. The Training Director reviews these evaluations with the interns and provides an opportunity for discussion if the intern has questions or concerns about the feedback.

A minimum level of achievement on each evaluation is defined as a rating of "3" for each competency and subcomponent. The rating scale for each evaluation is a 5-point Likert scale, with the following rating values: 1= Development Needed, 3= Meets Expectations, 5= Exceeds Expectations. Interns are given individual competency scores within each of the nine areas assessed by the program. These areas are: professional conduct and ethics; professional development; individual and cultural diversity; psychological diagnosis and assessment; effective therapeutic intervention; scholarly inquiry and application of scientific knowledge to practice; consultation, supervision and evaluation; psychology and juvenile justice; and teaching.

If an intern receives a score of less than 3 in any domain or element comprising a domain, or if supervisors have reason to be concerned about the student's performance or progress, the program's Due Process procedures will be initiated. The Due Process guidelines are outlined in the Intern Handbook and in a separate document provided to interns during orientation.

Additionally, all TC-PIP interns are expected to complete a minimum of 2,000 hours of training during the internship year with 500 hours in direct service provision (assessment, intervention, consultation), 200 hours participating in supervision, and 100 hours participating in didactic trainings. Meeting this requirement and obtaining sufficient ratings on all evaluations demonstrates that the intern has progressed satisfactorily through and completed the internship program. Feedback to the intern's home doctoral program is provided at the culmination of the internship year. Doctoral programs are contacted within one month following the end of the internship year and informed that the intern has successfully completed the program. If successful completion of the program comes into question at any point during the internship year, or if an intern enters into the formal review step of the Due Process procedures due to a grievance by a supervisor or an inadequate rating on an evaluation, the home doctoral program will be contacted within 30 days. This contact is intended to ensure that the home doctoral program, which also has a vested interest in the intern's progress, is informed in order to support an intern who may be having difficulties during the internship year. The home doctoral program is notified of any further action that may be taken by TC-PIP as a result of the Due Process procedures, up to and including termination from the program.

In addition to the evaluations described above, interns will complete supervisor evaluations as they complete rotations with specific supervisors, an informal program evaluation at the mid-point of internship, and a formal program evaluation at the conclusion of internship as well as a training

director evaluation at the conclusion of internship. Interns provide feedback about each didactic training at the conclusion of the training. Feedback about the program is welcomed and informally solicited during supervision throughout the internship experience in order to better adjust to the needs of interns.