

Internship

Internship is the capstone experience in the preparation to become a school psychologist. It allows the student to integrate the many components of training and skill development in an applied setting that offers a wide range of situations that support the development of the professional role. "The active involvement of the intern in applied setting provides the opportunity to practice skills, to refine procedures, to identify needs for further development, and to integrate previous learning with new challenges" (UNI Ed.S. Manual, 1998, p.4).

The National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) offers suggestions in describing an appropriate internship experience. They include a placement that:

- is set in schools/agencies that serve children (birth through adolescence).
- involves appropriate on-site direct supervision of professional activities with indirect supervision given by the university or college.
- is typically offered for academic credit (at BSU for fall and spring semesters of the internship year).
- occurs after the successful completion of practicum
- occurs on a full-time basis over a period of one academic year or on a halftime basis over two consecutive years and meets requirements for state credentialing (licensing) as a school psychologist.
- is a professional preparation activity that offers a balance of learning and service components.

All M.A. and Ed.S. students are required to complete a school-based internship for a full academic year for a total of **1400** clock hours. These students enroll in EDPSY 690, Supervised Internship in School Psychology, for a total of 6 credit hours.

Internship Sites

Internship sites are selected and maintained on the basis of their capacity to offer students the most comprehensive repertoire of experiences for the allotted time period. Each site is expected to give the trainee the opportunity to develop new knowledge and skills and to assume substantial responsibility for carrying out major professional functions. Sites also are chosen based on their ability to offer appropriate supervisory support and ethical and legal practice. Primary considerations in the selection and maintenance of intern sites include:

- a licensed school psychologist for supervision;
- all grade levels (preschool, K-12);
- all categories of exceptionality;
- children from diverse ethnic and social groups;
- a variety of community agencies;
- a full range of special education services; and
- chances for involvement in regular education programs.

Internship

Although it is not essential for all of the elements to be present in a single school site, it is critical that the intern has all the elements available and integrated into the experience to the maximum extent possible.

Students

Considering the diversity of student backgrounds and interests, effort is made to match students with appropriate school settings. Students take an active role in securing internships. All students develop curriculum vitae and make application to several sites that students think offer the best chance for their personal and professional growth.

Students who have successfully completed practicum and the majority of their other coursework are eligible to consider an internship. They are responsible for providing potential sites with the necessary information to apply for internship once they have been given clearance by the practicum director and have informed the coordinator of internship of their intent to begin the experience.

Out-of-State Placements

Historically, students have had few problems obtaining appropriate well-paying internships within Indiana. However, there are times when students wish to consider available internships outside of the state. Prior to soliciting such sites, students seeking these placements must obtain the consent of a university supervisor who resides in the state and has agreed to fulfill the responsibilities of the BSU supervisor. The coordinator of internship must approve a written agreement before any contract can be signed. Students must agree to

any additional requirements imposed by the university supervisor. In the past, additional requirements have included enrolling at another university for internship credit in addition to that required by Ball State, completing additional coursework, and participating in group supervision or seminars at the participating university.

File Materials

Once an internship site has offered a position to an intern, the student is responsible for making sure that the following materials are on file:

- The supervision contract that specifies the salary and length of appointment.
- The agreement between the local agency and the BSU program.
- Contact information for all necessary parties involved in supervision.
- Copies of credentials for site supervisor(s).

Internship Plan

After the internship the internship supervisor approves placement and the initial documentation is in place, an internship plan must be formulated. A written plan for the internship is prepared and **agreed upon** by representatives of the local agency, the program supervisor, and the intern. The plan identifies internship objectives, describes the types of experiences needed to fulfill the objectives and outlines how the completion of objectives will be assessed. It also indicates the responsibilities for the supervisory personnel. The internship plan should be

Internship

based on the acquisition of competencies as outlined by the NASP Professional Standards. The internship plan must be on file **no later than 30 days after the official start of the contractual period.**

Suggested Elements for the Internship Plan

Description of Site

Describe setting, populations served, and the general mission of the setting.

Internship's length and projected hours of completion

Designate time span and expected clock hours

Supervisor Expectations

Name supervisors, their qualifications and expected amount of individual and group supervision (A minimum of two (2) hours per week).

Goals/competencies

Describe the activities planned in order to meet the competency requirements for internship. Use the *NASP Standards of Practice* to organize your plan.

Documentation

Interns document internship hours using log sheets and send copies of their logs, detailing their hours and initialed by their supervisors to the university supervisor no less than twice per semester (mid-point and end of first semester and midpoint and end of second semester).

Monitoring of Student Performance Requirement

As of August 2005, an additional element of documentation must be included for successful completion of the internship—evidence of the ability to affect student performance (behavioral and academic) and the documentation to support such evidence. Therefore, interns will have to provide to the university supervisor at least two case studies (one at the end of Fall Semester and one at the end of Spring Semester). The necessary elements for these case studies as well as rubrics for their assessment may be found in the *Internship Packet*.

Supervision and Assessment

Although the university supervisor determines internship credit and **the grade(s) for internship**, primary responsibility for supervision rests with local educational personnel. Local supervision is offered by a professional who has a valid credential as a school psychologist, is employed full-time by the local educational agency, and who has held such employment for at least one year prior to the addition of supervisory activities. The agency must be willing to release the local supervisor for at least two hours per week to fulfill the minimum requirements of supervision.

Internship

Site supervisors formally evaluate interns a minimum of once each semester using the required evaluation forms. The university supervisor visits with supervisors and interns at least twice during the course of the full-time experience.

Completion of the agreed upon internship plan and development of professional competencies form the basis of evaluation for internship. However, level of professional responsibility will be considered relative to the documentation of the experience as well as site-based professionalism. For example, failure to submit requested materials, an internship plan, logs, and evaluation forms may jeopardize successful completion of the internship or be factored into the grade. Should the intern fail to comply with his/her plan, the professional expectations of the site, and/or accumulate the necessary hours, the internship may be extended and/or a remedial plan instituted

Each semester the interns evaluate their experiences and are in turn evaluated by the site supervisors. Data from these evaluations and the **university supervisor's visits** are used in assessing the students' progress toward stated objectives as well as judging the feasibility of the future use of each site.

The Internship Packet including required evaluation forms is available from the internship advisor.

Internship Advisor:
Barbara Rothlisberg, Ph.D.
TC 523
765-285-8520
brothlisberg@bsu.edu