

RUTGERS SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY CONSORTIUM

OVERVIEW

Rutgers Consortium Purpose and Philosophy

Although the majority of youth who receive psychological services do so in school settings, and most school psychologists will seek employment in schools, a shortage of APPIC member and APA accredited school-based and school-related sites exist to train doctoral interns. It is essential that school psychology doctoral students be provided with the opportunity for high quality internship experiences in settings that will prepare them for their future professional practice. The Rutgers School Psychology Internship Consortium provides doctoral school psychology internship positions in schools and related settings in New Jersey that serve the mental health, educational, and health needs of children and adolescents. The Rutgers Consortium provides training experiences within the context of a practitioner-scholar model, in which professional practice is based on knowledge of current theory and research findings, and in which assessment, monitoring, and evaluation of progress of clients guide practice decisions. The Rutgers Consortium will provide broad training in the delivery of school psychological services, with an emphasis on serving the mental health needs of youth through research- supported practices and an understanding of systems functioning.

Training Goals

The goals of the Rutgers Consortium are to prepare doctoral psychology students to: (a) function at a high level of professional competence in a range of school psychological service roles; (b) provide school psychological services with an understanding of the impact of culture and context; (c) provide school psychological services with an understanding of the importance of evidence-based practice; (d) assume professional leadership roles; and (e) obtain the credentials to engage in practice in schools and school-related settings, as well as independent practice.

Internship Timeframe

The internship is 1750 hours completed over 10-12 months.

The Rutgers Consortium Curriculum

Interns have training experiences in a broad range of school psychological service delivery including psychological and educational assessment, individual and group intervention/counseling, development and implementation of behavioral intervention plans, school-wide mental health/social-emotional prevention, teacher and parent consultation, parent training, teacher professional development, program planning and evaluation, research, and individual case management, with an emphasis on evidence-based practice. These services will be provided to address a variety of client problems such as disruptive and/or aggressive behavior; academic/learning problems; emotional problems such as anxiety, depression, and anger; social interaction problems; and mental health and learning problems related to physical health conditions and disabilities. Interns have experiences in prevention and development of

systems supports, as well as with direct intervention for client problems. Intern leadership abilities are developed through program planning, implementation, and evaluation activities.

Each Intern develops an internship contract which provides detail about the specific activities the Intern will be engaged in. In developing the contract, the Intern, the Supervising Psychologist, and the Director of the Consortium consider the Intern's existing knowledge and skills, and the Intern's training needs and areas of interest. Interns spend at least 25% of their time in face-to-face direct service delivery with clients. Interns have experiences dealing with cultural and individual diversity as a result of the diverse populations served through the Consortium Partner settings.

All Interns engage in assessment activities. Assessment activities may target individual clients, group/classrooms, and/or the systems/setting level. At the individual client level, assessments include assessment of cognitive and academic functioning; social, emotional, behavioral, and/or personality assessment; and screening for mental health and learning problems. Assessments at the group/classroom or systems/setting level include analysis of aggregate data from individual assessments, as well as analysis of observation of group/classroom interactions, and organizational needs assessment. All Interns engage in assessment at the individual client level, and some may also engage in assessment at the group/classroom or systems level. Each Intern will complete at least 4 individual assessment cases, and may complete additional individual assessment cases, or group/classroom/school-wide assessment projects. As part of their internship contract, each Intern details the specific assessment activities they will be involved in.

Interns engage in a range of evidence-based intervention activities, including individual and group therapy with clients, development of individual and group interventions based on principles of applied behavior analysis, development of individual and group interventions for learning problems based on learning theory and research, and implementation of group and school-wide prevention programs. Interventions address client problems including anxiety, depression, aggression/disruptive behavior, substance abuse, trauma-related issues, mental health issues related to illness/health conditions, and learning problems. All Interns deliver 4 evidence-based individual or small group interventions, and may deliver additional individual or small group interventions or develop and/or implement school/organization-wide interventions. As part of their internship contract, each Intern details the specific intervention activities they will be involved in.

The internship includes competency training as well as didactic training. This is accomplished through observation of psychological service delivery, supervised provision of psychological services, individual supervision sessions, group supervision sessions in which Interns can process service delivery experiences with other Interns, and didactic training sessions. Didactic training is provided through the Rutgers Internship Seminar. Group Supervision is also provided at Rutgers University.

Settings and Client Populations

The Rutgers Consortium serves clients in educational settings including public schools, private schools, private schools for students with disabilities, and colleges. Clients in these settings range from ages 3 to 22, and have learning, emotional, social, and/or behavioral problems that interfere with their academic achievement. Some clients are in special education

placements. The Rutgers Consortium serves clients from a broad range of cultural and socio-economic groups. Interns will be exposed to clients from multiple cultural and socio-economic backgrounds.

Supervision

Two hours of individual supervision are provided for the Intern each week by a licensed psychologist. In addition, Interns are provided with two hours of group supervision per week by a licensed psychologist. In some Consortium Partner sites, Interns are provided with an additional one to two hours of individual and/or group supervision by a doctoral level school psychologist who is certified as a school psychologist by the state department of education.

The Affiliation Agreement signed by each Consortium Partner indicates that the Supervising Psychologist is clinically responsible for the cases under supervision. In addition, each Intern has a contract which is signed by the Supervising Psychologist, the Intern, and the Rutgers Consortium Director describing the nature of the internship, internship activities, and the supervisory relationship. The Supervising Psychologist uses multiple methods to assess an Intern's performance. These may include discussion with the Intern, contact with other internship site personnel, and observation of the Intern at work. All psychological reports and any other paperwork prepared by the Intern are signed by both the Intern and the Supervising Psychologist.

Intern Title

The intern uses the title "Psychology Intern" in the work setting, and signs all reports and other paperwork with this title.

Expectations for Intern Performance

Interns are expected to complete the required number of internship hours as specified in their internship contract and to complete the Rutgers Consortium Internship Seminar. Interns are expected to adhere to the work schedule of the internship site and to complete the work tasks provided by their site supervisor in a timely manner and consistent with professional ethical guidelines. Interns are expected to achieve the Rutgers Consortium internship competencies at a level competent for beginning professional doctoral level school psychologists, as determined by Supervising Psychologist ratings.

Intern Evaluation

Interns receive formal written evaluation of their performance and achievement of internship competencies twice a year at the end of each semester of internship.

Intern Stipends

Each intern receives a stipend of \$25,000.