

**Nova Southeastern  
University  
Center for Psychological  
Studies**

**Handbook of Doctoral  
Practicum Training: 2011-  
2012**

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## Introduction

This handbook was prepared to assist doctoral students in the Center for Psychological Studies at Nova Southeastern University as they engage in clinical practica training. It will also help students, site supervisors, faculty clinic directors and intensive supervisors understand the roles of all these parties. Students are advised that this handbook does not include all CPS policies. Students should consult the *Center for Psychological Studies Student Handbook* for additional information.

### *Purpose*

As part of the requirements of the doctoral program in clinical psychology at Nova Southeastern University, students must successfully complete two 12-month practica, the first starting in the second year of the curriculum, and the second starting in the third year of the curriculum. Students may also take an elective practicum in the fourth year of the curriculum. These experiences allow students to bridge the gap between theoretical foundations and clinical practice. As students learn theories and techniques in the classroom, they begin to practice and to apply these skills under close supervision. The goal of practica is to provide supervised clinical experiences, with a focus on practice informed by science that will enhance the development of students' knowledge and skills as they become clinical psychologists. The Director of Clinical Training or other designated core faculty members will visit non CPS practica sites periodically to insure continuity of training and compliance with the site's practicum agreement.

### *Clinical Practicum I, II and Summer Practicum Overview*

During the second year of coursework, students are required to enroll in a 3 credit-hour course for 3 semesters called **Clinical Practicum I, II and Summer Practicum**. This is a 480-hour practicum experience that enables students to gain firsthand experience at a clinical training site. Simultaneously with each practicum registration students enroll for 1 credit of supervision.

### *Clinical Practicum III, IV and Summer Practicum Overview*

During the third year of coursework, students are required to enroll in a 3 credit-hour course for 3 semesters called **Clinical Practicum III, IV and Summer Practicum**. This is a 720-hour practicum experience that enables students to continue refining their clinical training experience. Simultaneously with each practicum registration students enroll for 1 credit of supervision.

### *Internship in Psychology*

During the fall of the fourth year of coursework, students begin the internship application process. Students are provided support by university faculty in developing their curriculum vitae and practicing interviewing skills. Special training sessions are conducted through the year starting in June of the year before the students go on internship interviews. The internship is a full-time, 2,000 clock-hour field-based placement designed to serve as the culminating training experience in the program.

### *Ethical Behavior*

Students, faculty, and staff are responsible for abiding to the [ethical principles of the American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#). Students are responsible for reading, understanding, and being prepared to utilize the information from this document prior to starting their first clinical practicum. In the first year of course work as part of their class on Professional Issues and Ethics all students will receive NSU didactics in the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

*Professional Behavior*

Information regarding professional behavior and appropriate conduct for the Center for Psychological Studies can be found in the current [NSU Student Handbook](#) and the [current CPS Catalogue](#). Information on the review process for alleged violations of the University Student Code of Conduct, including academic standards and ethical standards for practicum placements are reviewed in the section titled *Professional Standing Committee* found in the CPS student handbook.

Several observable behavioral categories are considered to be an integral part of professional functioning. The broad categories include the following:

1. Professional Behavior
  - a. Demonstrating dependability (e.g., punctuality in submitting papers and assignments, meeting with clients, etc.)
  - b. Accepting responsibility for one's own work (e.g., presenting passages as one's own from the internet or other source is plagiarism)
  - c. Carrying through and completing tasks
  - d. Seeking guidance from appropriate sources
  - e. Dressing in a manner consistent with the professional setting
2. Intrapersonal Behavior
  - a. Displaying mature and appropriate behavior
  - b. Demonstrating ability to function independently
  - c. Exhibiting usual and customary judgment and discretion in both student and professional activities
  - d. Presenting a generally respectful and non-hostile attitude
  - e. Participating in activities that are pursuant to professional development
  - f. Developing intrinsic criteria to evaluate own performance
3. Interpersonal Behavior
  - a. Cooperating with and being respectful of others
  - b. Giving, accepting, and utilizing feedback effectively
  - c. Developing and maintaining positive relationships with peers and faculty
  - d. Developing satisfactory working relationships with supervisors and advisors
  - e. Respecting human diversity
  - f. Communicating appropriately and effectively
  - g. Demonstrating ethical responsibility
  - h. Adapting well to new situations
4. Students are expected to carefully read the Center for Psychological Studies student handbook and are expected to follow all the guidelines set out in this document. Additionally the following guidelines associated with specific practicum-related behaviors must be adhered to:
  - a. Under no circumstance are students to arrange or attempt to arrange a practicum rotation with any site, whether it is at the NSU Psychology Services Center or not.
  - b. Students must put in the required hours at each site.
  - c. When arranging practicum schedules with sites, students need to know that only assigned classes take precedence over practicum schedule, work hours or other personal schedules do not take priority.

- d. Students will be assigned to new practicum sites typically in early March for either a Summer start (first of May) or Fall start (end of August). Each student will be notified of his/her site assignment and intensive supervisor and should immediately contact the site to arrange an interview. No student is automatically accepted outright. The site has the right of refusal. It is important to contact assigned sites immediately upon receipt of placement notification as some sites have very long federal/state background checks.
- e. Students should also be aware that several practicum sites have background checks that cover past arrests and convictions, urine screens, and so forth. It is imperative that each student reports honestly. Failure to do so will result in his/her not being able to go to that site, in addition to a possible referral to the Professional Standings Committee.
- f. Any students experiencing difficulties contacting a site or supervisor or having difficulty meeting practicum hour requirements should contact either the Associate Director or Director of Clinical Training. Those students assigned to a non-NSU site can also discuss issues with their CPS intensive supervisor.
- g. Students need to be aware that assignments to first year practicum can occur starting either in the summer of your second year or the fall. Therefore, students should not arrange to engage in other activities (e.g., weddings, vacations, work) that may prevent them from starting a practicum in the summer.
- h. Students cannot see clients at any site without an assigned licensed clinical supervisor.
- i. All students who decide to continue seeing clients beyond their assigned practicum year will need to submit a practicum extension. This applies to all NSU and non-NSU sites.

#### *Professional Liability Insurance*

All enrolled students have liability coverage through NSU. This coverage applies to academic, clinical or research activities for which a student is registered.

All students are required to abide by the *American Psychological Association Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*, understand the [State of Florida statutes for Licensed Psychologists](#) (Title XXXII, Chapter 490) and follow the policies and procedures of the Center for Psychological Studies.

In addition, students must adhere to policies, procedures, rules and regulations of the agency/site where his or her practicum/internship will be completed.

#### Practicum Procedures

The Clinical Training Director will approve the student's readiness for practicum based upon performance, grades, and professional behavior. **Students who do not meet the minimum requirements will be advised and remediated as appropriate.**

#### *Clinical Practicum I, II and Summer Practicum*

The first practicum experience will start either in the summer (May) or Fall (end of August) during the student's second year. To be eligible to register for **Summer Practicum** or **Clinical Practicum I** (depending on practicum start date) students must have been matriculated, and have successfully completed (or be co-enrolled in) the following courses with a grade of at least a B.

PSY 1401: History and Systems of Psychology  
PSY 1403: Adult Psychopathology  
PSY 1405: Developmental: Child & Adolescent  
PSY 1407: Developmental: Adult & Older Adult  
PSY 1408: Child & Adolescent Psychopathology  
PSY 1409: Professional Issues & Ethics  
PSY 1501: Assessment: Intelligence Testing with Lab  
PSY 1502: Assessment: Interviewing  
PSY 1605: Diversity in Assessment & Interventions  
PSY 1610: Adult Intervention I  
PSY 1703: Pre-Practicum.

There are two prerequisites for **Clinical Practicum II and Supervision II:**

PSY 2701: Clinical Practicum I  
PSY 2703: Supervision I

*Clinical Practicum III and IV and Summer Practicum*

The second practicum experience will start either in the summer (May) or Fall (end of August) during the student's third year. However, students who began their first practicum in the fall cannot start a second practicum until the Fall as two practica cannot be taken simultaneously.

The following prerequisites with a Grade B or higher are required for **Clinical Practicum III:**

PSY 2507: Objective Personality Assessment  
PSY 2509: Behavioral Assessment  
PSY 2511: Projective Personality Assessment  
PSY 2603: Systems/ Family Therapy  
PSY 2604: Child and Adolescent Intervention  
PSY 2606: Case Conceptualization  
PSY 3501(Psy.D. Only): Integrated Report-Co/prerequisite  
PSY 2702: Clinical Practicum II  
PSY 2704: Supervision II  
Summer Practicum and Summer Supervision

There are two prerequisites for **Clinical Practicum IV:**

PSY 370: Clinical Practicum III  
PSY 3703: Supervision III

*Practicum Placement*

Students must abide by the guidelines established by practicum sites. These may vary from site to site. **Certain sites may require students to complete a security clearance, which may include, but not be limited to, a background screening, fingerprinting, and drug testing.**

In early spring, students will be notified of their assigned practicum placement, start date (summer or fall) and their intensive supervisor if the site is not a faculty clinic at the Psychological Services Center in the Maltz building. These notifications will be placed in student mailboxes. **Students are required to contact the site within 2 weeks to arrange for an interview with the director or supervisor at the site.** Although most students are accepted at their assigned site, each site has the opportunity to interview each student for a goodness of fit. If a site decides a student is not appropriate or if a student fails to receive the required clearance(s) at a site, the student should contact the Clinical Training Office immediately and another practicum site will be sought.

#### *Time Requirements and Procedures*

**Please note that the time requirements listed below are a minimum.** Some sites may require more hours, specific days of the week, evening hours, weekends, specific courses, past experiences, language spoken, and other training requirements. The requirements for each site are described in detail in the CPS practicum brochure that is available on the CPS website and is updated each year (see online documents found at [www.nova.edu/cps/](http://www.nova.edu/cps/)). Please be sure to check the most recent practicum brochure online.

- First year practicum students are required to document on average 10 weekly hours for Clinical Practicum I, II and Summer of which a minimum would be on average 5 face to face hours with clients/patients.
- Second year practicum students are required to document on average 15 weekly hours for Clinical Practicum III, IV and Summer of which a minimum would be on average 7.5 face to face hours with clients/patients.
- Elective practicum students are required to document on average 10 weekly hours of which a minimum would be on average 5 face-to-face hours with clients/patients. Elective practica are typically for 2 semesters or 8 months. These are assigned after all second and first year practica students have been assigned a practicum site.

**Please note as indicated in the CPS student handbook, the only thing that can take precedence over practicum hours are CPS courses in which students are currently enrolled.** In other words, students cannot tell sites that they cannot work certain times or days because of employment or personal obligations. In instances where conflicts between practicum and class schedules exist, students are encouraged to work with site supervisors to resolve the scheduling conflicts. If such efforts are unsuccessful, students should contact the Director or Associate Director of Clinical Training.

#### *Selecting Practicum Sites*

All students are required to take two years of practica. One of the two rotations must be completed at a site where clinical interventions can be applied and that will allow the student to tape a case for the Clinical Competency Examination (CCE).

All practicum applications are to be completed online. Students will be notified by email when they can start the application process. Usually this will occur sometime in January. To complete the application students should do the following:

- Log on to <http://www.nova.edu/cwis/cpsforms/practicum>
- Students will be asked for a username and a password that will be emailed at the time of the announcements for completing the application form. Students will also be asked for their NSU number and their NSU email address.
- **Only NSU email addresses are to be used for the application process.**

- With few exceptions (e.g., concentration students in some years), students will be asked to select and rank order 8 practicum sites. **Students must fill in the names of 8 sites.** The names of the sites are listed in each box.
- Descriptions of the sites can be found in the CPS practicum brochure that is available on the CPS website at [www.nova.edu/cps/](http://www.nova.edu/cps/). On the left hand side go to Current Students and click on online documents. From here you can download the pdf file titled Practicum Brochure (make sure this is the current practicum year's brochure)
- Before making final choices students are advised to carefully look at the requirements in the CPS doctoral Practicum Brochure (make sure this is the current practicum year's brochure). Some sites will not accept first year students or require certain courses or experience (e.g., Neuropsychology) or certain time commitments (e.g., Friday mornings, weekend training for the first month)
- **Once students submit their applications further changes cannot be made. Students are urged to look over their applications carefully before submitting them.**
- After submission, a copy of the application and choices will be sent to each student at his/her NSU email address.

### *Supervision*

Students are required to have 45 minutes of individual supervision per week or its equivalent in groups (e.g., 2 students in a group would receive 90 minutes of supervision).

In addition, the American Psychological Association requires that a licensed clinical psychologist who is located at the site at least 20 hours per week supervise all students.

Students who are in practica headed by a CPS faculty member (at the Maltz building) have as their supervisor the faculty member who heads the faculty clinic.

Students who are in non-CPS practica are also assigned CPS faculty or adjunct faculty members who serve as their intensive supervisors and who provide additional supervision about cases seen at off site practica. Intensive supervisors are optional for elective practicum students.

### *Practicum Student Evaluation*

Each semester all students will be evaluated and will receive two grades: (a) a practicum grade, and (b) an intensive supervision grade. For students in PSC faculty clinics directed by CPS faculty, the clinic directors will give both grades using the [EVALUATION OF PRACTICUM & SUPERVISION PERFORMANCE form](#). For students at non-CPS sites the supervisor will use the following form to give a practicum grade [Evaluation Practicum Performance \(Offsite Supervisors\)](#). For students in non-CPS or non-PSC practica, the onsite and the intensive supervisor will provide the intensive supervision grade using the [Evaluation of Intensive Supervision Performance \(CPS and Offsite Supervisors\)](#) form. Students in the forensic concentration will be evaluated using [Evaluation of Practicum Performance \(Forensic\)](#) form and [Evaluation of Supervision Performance \(Forensics\)](#) form.

Each semester students will also complete [Evaluation of Clinical Experience](#) form. **These evaluations are anonymous and students are never identified in any data summaries provided to supervisors.** These forms need to be turned in to the Clinical Training Office each semester.

### *Grading*

Students will be evaluated on their skills in several domains, including assessment, report writing, and receptiveness to supervision. Students will also be evaluated on personal and interpersonal skills and professional behaviors. In order to receive a grade for a practicum, students must satisfactorily demonstrate competencies as required by the practicum site and complete all of the practicum site requirements (e.g., paper work, reports etc.), and demonstrate satisfactory performance on the EVALUATION OF PRACTICUM & SUPERVISION PERFORMANCE forms. Grades will be assigned according to the following system: A, B, C, and F. **Grades of C or F will require the student to repeat that semester in another practicum.**

### *Extension of Practicum Experience*

At times students may choose to extend a practicum experience, either to gain further experience or follow specific clients. Students must obtain permission from the practicum supervisor and must submit an agreement form to the Office of Clinical Training prior to embarking on any additional training experience beyond the required one-year period. The one for CPS is [Psychology Services Center Request to Extend Clinical Experience beyond Practicum](#) and the one for non [Request to Extend Clinical Experience beyond Practicum \(Non CPS Practicum\)](#) CPS sites is

## Duties and Responsibilities

In order to optimize the practicum experience, it is important to delineate the responsibilities of all parties involved. The following sections describe the responsibilities of students, site supervisors, Psychology Services Clinic faculty directors and intensive supervisors.

### *Duties and Responsibilities of Students*

The placement of a practicum student in a facility is made with consideration of the needs and strengths of the practicum student, as well as the specific needs of the placement setting. **Practicum students are expected to act in a professional manner at all times (as described in this document on page 3 – Professional Behavior) and expected to fulfill the following responsibilities:**

1. Perform appropriate job-related functions in the facility as directed by the on-site supervisor(s).
2. Demonstrate competencies associated with the areas described in the practicum and supervision evaluation forms.
3. If applicable, read assigned materials.
4. Discuss with their site supervisor and/or their intensive supervisor any problems or issues that may arise at a practicum. **If a problem arises at the site that cannot be resolved, the student should contact the Director or Associate Director of Clinical training to discuss this further.**
5. Continuously work to improve his or her performance in response to constructive feedback provided by supervisors.
6. Complete the *Evaluation of Clinical Experience* form to be collected each semester.
7. Abide by the ethical principles of the American Psychological Association (APA), and understand the State of Florida statutes for Licensed Psychologists (Title XXXII, Chapter 490) Likewise, as representatives of NSU, all students have an obligation to perform at the highest

- level of functioning and to demonstrate professional behavior as specified in this handbook and the CPS student handbook at all times.
8. Become familiar with and abide by all state and federal regulations governing the practice of psychology (e.g., abuse of disabled, elders, children; rules governing breaking confidentiality).
  9. Maintain confidentiality of client records and all relevant information.
  10. Spend the required amount of time in practicum activities and supervision: First year practicum students – a minimum of 480 hours of practicum activities and 45 minutes per week of individual supervision (with an additional 45 minutes of weekly supervision for students with intensive supervisors). Second year practicum students – a minimum of 720 hours of practicum activities and 45 minutes per week of individual supervision (with an additional 45 minutes of weekly supervision for students with intensive supervisors). Elective practicum students – a minimum of 320 hours of practicum activities during an 8-month rotation and 45 minutes per week of individual supervision (with an additional 45 minutes of weekly supervision for those elective practicum students who choose to have intensive supervisors).
  11. Audio or videotape assessment, intervention or consultation sessions provided that patients (or guardians) allow for such and with the proper informed consent. **Students are never to coerce clients into signing consents for taping.**
  12. Must have completed HIPAA training offered through CPS prior to starting their first practicum as well as any other additional training required by practicum sites.
  13. Ascertain from site supervisors whether any background check, drug screen, physical readiness or other screening is required prior to beginning the placement and to take all necessary steps to have such screening steps completed.

#### *Duties and Responsibilities of Site Supervisors*

The site supervisors have major responsibility in helping to structure a beneficial learning experience throughout the practicum and to provide students with the requisite clinical hours and supervision. The practicum site holds full authority for the management of patient care, and thus has responsibility over cases students are seeing. Supervisors closely supervise the practicum students' activities and will follow these guidelines:

1. Acquaint the practicum students with all practicum site's rules and policies, including those governing the students' practicum experiences and policies and procedures regarding safety and security at the facility.
2. Provide opportunities for the practicum students to complete required clinical hours and activities and to provide at least a minimum of 45 minutes of individual supervision or its equivalent in groups per week.
3. When appropriate, assist the practicum students in relating experiences in the practicum setting to theoretical constructs learned in coursework.
4. When appropriate, provide feedback of students' performance and, if necessary, report conflicts/concerns to the Director of Clinical Training or his/her delegate.
5. Complete the evaluation forms and meet with students to discuss their grades each semester. Return the completed evaluation form to Clinical Training Office no later than two weeks after the end of the semester.
6. Hold a valid license as a psychologist in the State of Florida and is employed at least 20 hours at the practicum site.

7. Provide the practicum students with a place to work that offers privacy for the purpose of conducting assessments and/or interventions with clients and their families.
8. Provide opportunities for the practicum students to demonstrate clinical competencies relevant to the practicum site.
9. Review and sign the practicum students' clinical records, charts, and reports as applicable.
10. Act as a troubleshooter as problems arise at the practicum site.

Affiliation agreements are required from each practicum site (see [model affiliation agreement](#)). It specifies the responsibilities of the facility, the student, and the university (through the Director of Clinical Training and/or his/her designees). An individual agreement between the student and his/her on-site supervisor is also required. This agreement delineates starting and ending dates, primary responsibilities (e.g., 3-5 individual therapy clients, 1 2-hour group, and 2 hours of intakes weekly), and the required hours/days of attendance per week. Lastly, each practicum site needs to complete a description of their practicum that will go into the practicum brochure.

#### *Duties and Responsibilities of Intensive Supervisors and PSC Faculty Directors*

Psychology Services Clinic faculty directors as well as intensive supervisors who are supervising practicum students placed at practica in non-CPS faculty clinics have a major responsibility in helping to structure a beneficial learning experience throughout the practicum. Additionally, PSC faculty directors have to provide students with the requisite clinical hours. PSC faculty directors have primary responsibility over cases students are seeing and are ultimately responsible for client care. Intensive supervisors and PSC faculty directors will follow these guidelines:

1. Provide opportunities for practicum students to relate and discuss their clinical experiences/competencies/diagnoses at the practicum site and to help students formulate appropriate case conceptualizations.
2. When appropriate, help practicum students relate experiences at the practicum site to theoretical constructs and/or empirical outcomes.
3. Follow the activities of the practicum students closely over the year.
4. Monitor students' performance continuously throughout the semester and complete the appropriate evaluation forms each semester.
5. As appropriate and relevant, discuss with practicum students ethical standards for professional behavior and legal issues pertaining to psychologists and their clients.
6. Supervise assessment and/or intervention skills through role-playing, audiotape/videotape analysis, direct observation (when feasible) and written reports.
7. Help students to evaluate their experiences and to recognize areas of growth and areas where further development is needed.
8. Hold a valid license as a psychologist in the State of Florida.
9. Intensive supervisors supervising students in non-faculty clinic placements recognize that on-site supervisor directives about client management supersede those made by the intensive supervisor. However, if the intensive supervisor has concerns about the management of any case he/she is expected to contact the site supervisor to discuss the matter directly with the site supervisor.

*Practicum student performance difficulties*

If a student in a first, second, or elective practicum evidences difficulties in knowledge acquisition, skill development, or behavioral difficulties that interfere with his/her development of the performance expected for his/her level of training, three stages of remediation could be employed. First, the on-site supervisor, faculty supervisor, or both will discuss the difficulties with the student, suggest changes (e.g., additional reading) or implement changes (e.g., providing for supervisor review additional audio recordings of practicum performance), and monitor and provide feedback on their impact. Second, if such steps do not lead to the warranted knowledge or skill improvement, the on-site and faculty supervisor will jointly develop a written performance improvement plan, review it with the Director or Associate Director of Clinical Training, and discuss and sign it with the student before implementation. The fully signed performance improvement plan will be provided to the Director of Clinical Training for monitoring and placement into the student's clinical training file. Third, if the performance improvement plan does not result in the targeted change(s) during the period specified, the matter will be referred to the Director of Clinical Training. In consultation with the Clinical Training Committee, the Director of Clinical Training will meet with the student and his/her supervisors, identify the areas of continuing deficit or surfeit, and determine whether interruption of the clinical practicum sequence is warranted to facilitate more intensive remediation steps. Such steps can include, but are not limited to, retaking a specified skills course, shadowing more advanced practicum students, specified reading, and a recommendation for personal therapy. A minimum time period for the remediation process may be specified. Behavioral indicators for successful completion of the remediation process will be identified and included in a written remediation plan. At the scheduled conclusion of the remediation period, the student, the Director of Clinical Training, and the practicum supervisor(s) will meet again to review the student's performance on the behavioral indicators, and determine whether the student (1) can return to clinical practicum training, (2) needs to extend the remediation plan with or without modification(s), or (3) warrants referral to the Professional Standing Committee for a determination of his/her fitness to continue doctoral training.

## CPS Practicum Training Handbook

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