



Doctoral Psychology Externship Program

Overview

The externship program at Retriever Integrated Health (RIH) is designed for graduate students in a clinical or counseling psychology who are interested in developing their clinical skills and building upon their theoretical and experiential clinical knowledge. The emphasis within the training program is on providing culturally competent treatment for university students within a brief psychotherapy model. Supervisors utilize several theoretical orientations, including psychodynamic, attachment, family systems, interpersonal, humanistic, cognitive-behavioral, feminist, and integrative; the focus is on training in evidence-based practice. In addition to counseling skills, there is a strong emphasis on developing skills in group therapy and outreach. Two to three externship slots are offered each academic year.

Setting

Retriever Integrated Health serves over 13,000 undergraduate and graduate students at UMBC, which is an Honors University serving a highly diverse student population. Externs can expect to gain experience with a late adolescent and adult population. Retriever Integrated Health is an ideal setting for externs to learn to work with a wide variety of presenting concerns and a broad range of diagnoses. Additionally, the diverse student population offers the unique opportunity to work with clients from a wide variety of cultural and ethnic backgrounds as well as many international countries. Our multi-disciplinary staff currently includes three licensed psychologists, six licensed clinical social workers, two master's level counselors, one part-time psychiatric nurse practitioner and two to three doctoral psychology externs. The center is open 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Occasional evening hours may be required for outreach programs.

Schedule of Weekly Activities

The externship is scheduled to begin 1-2 weeks before the start of the fall semester for orientation. Externs are expected to work through the last week of classes in the spring semester. Externs have the option to work during winter break to accumulate additional clinical hours. In addition, there may be an option to extend the training into the summer months. The externship requires a minimum of 16 hours per week but can be extended to 20 hours, depending on the students' interests, the requirements of their program, and space availability at the Retriever Integrated Health. Thus externs can expect to accrue approximately 500 total hours and 200-250 clinical hours during their year of training.

The following is an outline of weekly activities:

1. Assessment (1 hour per week).
 - a. Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS). Learning to assess a client and the client's situation so as to help them make the most of their counseling is essential to the work at Retriever Integrated Health. Clients fill out a number of forms at the time of intake, including the CCAPS. Ongoing clients complete the CCAPS-36 at each session. Didactic training and supervision are offered for this assessment instrument.
 - b. Intakes. In order to obtain training and supervised experience in initial consultations, trainees will participate in intake sessions in a developmental manner. Externs in their first clinical

experience will first observe a senior staff member conduct intakes and then may have the opportunity to co-lead several intake sessions. Once they reach a level of competency, advanced externs will conduct their own intakes independently. The total number of independent intakes will vary depending on externs' skills and caseloads.

2. **Individual Therapy (8-10 hours per week)**. Clients are generally seen once a week or once every two weeks for short-term counseling. Retriever Integrated Health has a short-term treatment model that allows students to receive up to 6 clinical sessions. Trainees are typically able to see some of their clients for more long-term work. Caseloads will be smaller at the beginning of the semester and build as the semester progresses, with a weekly goal of to eight to 10 sessions per week. If trainees elect to co-lead or process-observe a group, the caseload for individual counseling will be lower. Trainees have the option to schedule therapy appointments over winter break. All sessions are held at RIH and are video-recorded.
3. **Supervision (2-3 hours per week)**. Externs will have two supervisors who will each provide one hour of supervision each week. Each semester, the extern will meet with a licensed psychologist for one hour of individual supervision and meet weekly for one hour of peer group supervision which is facilitated by a licensed psychologist. If the trainee is involved in group therapy, additional supervision will be provided by a licensed psychologist. Supervision for outreach will be scheduled periodically throughout the year.
4. **Group Therapy (1-1.5 hours per week)**. Externs may elect the option to participate in group therapy. During the first semester, it is likely that externs will process-observe a therapy group and participate in group supervision with the co-leaders. During the second semester, the extern may take on the role of co-leader. If this option is chosen, the extern would receive weekly supervision from the co-leader of the group. Depending on their level of experience, externs may be able to co-lead beginning in the first semester. All group experiences will be dependent on whether or not groups are available. While the group therapy program is highly valued by all staff, this option cannot be guaranteed.
5. **Outreach (1-2 hours per week)**. Externs will be involved in Outreach programs within the university community, including during evening hours. Additional outreach activities may include tabling, mental health screenings, and other presentations and workshops.
6. **Case Management/Administrative (1-2 hours per week)**. Administrative time will be built into the schedule to write case notes, read scholarly literature, and attend to other administrative responsibilities. Externs are expected to keep their case notes up to date; they are also required to have all notes written and signed by their supervisor in order to successfully complete the externship.
7. **Evaluation and Feedback**. Feedback on progress will be provided informally throughout the year as well as more formally twice a year. Formal evaluations are completed in December and May of the training year. Evaluations can either be from their home graduate program or from RIH. Externs are evaluated based on their ability to establish rapport with clients, conceptualization of client presenting complaints, and intervention skills given their developmental stage; the overarching goal is to integrate theory and research with clinical practice in a multiculturally competent manner.
8. **Professional Development**: The training year begins with three days of orientation, which will include didactic seminars as well as training on Point and Click, ethics, and legal issues. Other extern seminars will be offered throughout the year including monthly Extern Seminar. Externs have the option to attend other professional development programs offered at Retriever Integrated Health.

Self-Disclosure Policy

Training staff at Retriever Integrated Health value the power and complexity of the therapeutic relationship. Consequently, in our intervention, supervision, and training activities, there is a focus on the “person-of-the-therapist” and how this may impact the quality and effectiveness of work with clients and consultees. Trainees may be asked to reflect upon and share the ways that their own personal qualities, experiences, and reactions influence and are impacted by their clinical work in supervision and other training settings. Such exploration and disclosure is not intended to serve as psychotherapy for the trainee but is focused on enhancing self-awareness and professional development as related to the trainee’s clinical practice during their training. Supervisors and other training staff are expected to explore relevant information with the trainee in a respectful, non-coercive manner, within the context of a safe and supportive professional relationship. In accordance with APA code of Ethics, section 7.5, it is important for trainees to be aware that the Due Process procedures for our training programs indicate that the staff may require trainees to obtain psychotherapy in those cases in which a trainee is deemed problematic.

UMBC students who are accepted into the training program at Retriever Integrated Health will not be eligible for counseling services at UMBC so as to avoid any conflict of interest or dual relationships. UMBC students who have used counseling services in the past (or have seen our psychiatric nurse practitioner) will also not be eligible to apply to avoid the possibility of working with a former mental health provider. Eligible UMBC students who are accepted into the externship program and are in need of counseling will be provided with assistance in locating mental health services off campus. Students are required to sign an agreement upon their acceptance into the training program.

Application and Selection Procedures

Applicants must be enrolled in a doctoral program in clinical or counseling psychology. Competitive applicants will have had prior counseling experience. The application includes a letter of interest, a Curriculum Vitae, completed Director of Clinical Training Consent form, copy of graduate school transcript(s), and two letters of recommendation, at least one of which must come from a clinical supervisor. Application materials can be submitted electronically or via hard-copy. All hard-copies **must** be submitted all together in **one** envelope. Hard copies of letters of recommendation should be signed across the seal; electronic copies should come directly from the letter writer.

Application materials are located online at: <https://health.umbc.edu/counseling-services/internships-and-doctoral-training/>

Applicants are encouraged to submit applications in January. Upon review of applications, the Externship Coordinator will arrange interviews with those applicants under consideration on a rolling basis. Applications must be **received by February 6, 2026**. Final notification about acceptance to the externship will be given by the late February/early March. Retriever Integrated Health **does not** participate in the Washington DC externship match process. Questions are to be directed to Dr. Coughlin via email at jcoughl1@umbc.edu or by phone 410-455-2472.

Submit application packet to:

Jay Coughlin, Psy.D.
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