

**RUTGERS UNIVERSITY**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**  
**Internship in Applied, School, and Community Psychology**

**Introduction**

The Internship Program in Applied, School, & Community Psychology is a semester-long course in the Department of Psychology, Rutgers University. It satisfies the requirement for ONE upper-level Psychology elective course. Students enrolled in the program will receive from 9-15 credits for working in a setting in which the application of psychology is essential. The student is supervised by a professional at the internship site and by a member of the Psychology Department. Over the past 50+ semesters, students have had enjoyable and stimulating experiences that have assisted them greatly in both academic and career related plans.

Students accepted into the program are expected to function as participant/conceptualizers. In this role they will be working to:

1. improve their observational and analytic skills with respect to the functioning of the organization in which they are placed.
2. learn to interact effectively with professional staff and clients.
3. develop consultation skills and skills in interacting with community agencies and groups.
4. learn to effectively use individual and group supervision.
5. understand the placement setting as a system, with special emphasis placed on the interrelationship of the setting with the community.
6. acquire specific professional skills essential for beginning career roles in the settings in which they are placed.
7. familiarize themselves with positive mental health practices and primary and secondary prevention of behavioral, social, and emotional difficulties, and begin to learn how to implement these approaches.
8. expand and broaden their appreciation of the multiple roles of the professional in a human service setting.
9. understand their strengths and weaknesses in the study and practice of applied, school, and community psychology.
10. stimulate their awareness and careful planning of future career goals.

## **Types of Settings**

During the application period, students need not be concerned about the specific settings, but rather with types of settings and populations, and their goals for the internship. A listing of current and recent placements is attached to this information form.

A special focus of the Internship Program is school-based placements, and applications for school placements will be given special consideration. Rutgers has a special collaborative relationship with the New Jersey Association of School Psychologists and a number of placements are with school psychology supervisors. Students with special interests are encouraged to work with the Coordinator of the Internship Program to develop new settings. However, sites must go through an approval process to become “registered” with the University and this can take some time. Every effort will be made to place each student in a setting which will contribute maximally to his or her growth and development.

## **Prerequisites**

Internship settings may seem bewildering and overwhelming to students who lack the proper experiential and course-related background. Therefore, it is important that students possess the basic knowledge and skills necessary to form a foundation on which they can build and expand. The following prerequisites for acceptance into the internship outline this foundation:

1. Students must be upper level undergraduates. Preference is given to psychology majors, but non-majors have been included in past semesters, with approval from their major advisor.
2. At least one course in abnormal psychology, personality, or community mental health, or a course related to the desired type of placement.
3. Students desiring to work with a special population should have taken a course corresponding to the given area or be able to demonstrate adequate knowledge concerning this population.
4. Previous field work is useful, but not required. It is however, most important that students demonstrate a genuine commitment to working in an internship setting and display a mature attitude towards their work.
5. Approval of Internship Coordinator and, if applicable, an advisor.

Please note that there are NO specific overall or Psychology GPA requirements for the Internship program.

## **Application Procedures**

Application forms and materials will be available at the Psychology Department web site and as paper copies from the Psychology Office at Tillett Hall. Specific application procedures and deadlines will be announced each semester as materials become available, but they are usually October 31 and April 1. Upon receipt of the materials, students are urged to complete the forms and return them to the Coordinator as quickly as possible.

Shortly after the application deadline, all applicants are contacted by e-mail and/or telephone regarding the status of their applications. All students are advised to register as if they are NOT going to be accepted. This is because of the timing of the Internship application process, relative to the course registration process. Upon acceptance, students can drop certain courses and add the Internship through special permission.

## **Evaluation of Performance**

The Internship is an academic experience for credit; therefore, grades are earned. Students' performance will be graded on the basis of constructive participation in the weekly supervisory seminars held at Rutgers, seminar presentations, completion of regular written assignments, supervisor's ratings, and an integrative final reflection paper. Each student is expected to demonstrate measurable improvement in on-the-job skills throughout the semester. The Coordinator of the Internship remains in close personal contact with the on-site supervisor via email, phone, and site visits. At the end of the semester, formal written evaluations are provided by each supervisor; in addition, students are asked to evaluate their own performance and report the degree to which they feel they attained their stated personal goals.

## **Credit**

Credit hours for the internship program range from 6 to 15 hours. Students typically work 3 days per week (for 9 credits-3 semester and 6 field credits, registered for 494 and 493, respectively) and some work in their settings for the full five day work-week (for 15 credits).

During the application process, students are strongly encouraged to meet with college advisors to determine that the Internship credits can be counted toward graduation or departmental major requirements. A minimum placement of 3 days is most desirable, since this will provide the students with a realistic picture of the operation and functioning of a human service setting. That said, there certainly are situations in which longer or shorter placements are appropriate, and these can be arranged.

## **Specific Arrangements**

Students spend from 2-5 days per week at the placements, in addition to attending a weekly supervisory seminar class at the University. This class operates basically as a forum for:

- (a) discussion of relevant issues concerning the settings and specific cases or projects with which students become involved, and
- (b) training of skills needed for successful task performance in the setting.

In addition, each student will have a primary supervisor in each setting. Specific arrangements are contracted among the setting, the Internship Coordinator, the student, and the student's major advisor.

Address all inquiries about the Internship program to:

Maurice J. Elias, Ph.D.  
Professor of Psychology  
Coordinator, Internship Program in Applied School, and Community Psychology  
Department of Psychology  
Rutgers University  
Tillett Hall, Livingston Campus  
53 Avenue E  
Piscataway, N.J. 08854-8040  
Internship Email: HPUSY@AOL.COM  
Telephone: 732-445-2444  
Fax: 732-445-0036

### **A Sample of Current and Recent Placements for Internship in Applied, School, and Community Psychology**

Association for Children of New Jersey (Newark)  
Basking Ridge Public Schools, High School  
Cherry Hill Public Schools, Dept. of Special Services/Child Study Team  
Child Day Treatment Program, UMDNJ-UBHC at Piscataway  
Child Inpatient Unit, UMDNJ-UBHC at Piscataway  
Child Residential Unit, UMDNJ-UBHC at Piscataway  
Early Prevention/ Teenage Parents/ Greenhouse Nursery Program, UMDNJ-UBHC at Piscataway  
Hamilton Township Public Schools, Dept. of Special Services  
Head Start Centers (throughout Middlesex County)  
Long Branch Public Schools, Dept. of Special Services  
Midland School for Emotionally Disturbed and Multiply Handicapped children  
Social Decision Making/Social Problem Solving Program at the Highland Park Public Schools

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**Application Form & Descriptive Materials**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

(campus)\_\_\_\_\_

(home)\_\_\_\_\_

Contact Information: \_\_\_\_\_ campus phone \_\_\_\_\_ home phone

\_\_\_\_\_ cell phone \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail

Expected Graduation Date: \_\_\_\_\_ College: \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Major: \_\_\_\_\_ Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you provide transportation? \_\_\_\_\_

Psychology Courses Taken or in Progress (state grade obtained):

Other relevant courses (i.e. sociology, education, community development, etc.)

Types or groups with whom you would like to work:

Types of placements in which you would like to work:

References: On the remainder of the page, please give the name, position, address, and phone number of anyone inside or outside the Psychology Department whom you wish to recommend you. (Names only are sufficient for Department members.) Give at least three (3) references. Do not ask them for letters. We will contact them if necessary.

Please briefly describe any relevant experience you have had. Examples of relevant experience might be volunteer work in a mental health setting, crisis or peer counseling, working with retarded children, serving as a camp counselor, etc.

What factors contribute to your desire to obtain an internship at this time? Specifically comment on how the internship relates to your career goals. This section is especially important if you are seeking a school-based internship.

What special qualities do you think you have that would make you an asset to an internship setting? Describe any special interests or talents you might have in areas such as theory (e.g., systems, behavioral, psychodynamic), techniques (e.g., psychological assessment, needs assessment, program evaluation, prevention work, individual or group therapy), research, education, hobbies, advocacy, etc.