

UHCL Counseling Services: Internship Video Transcript

Dr. Jonathan Schmalz-Benson, June 2016

Hello, I'm Dr. Jonathan Schmalz-Benson, the current training director at the University of Houston-Clear Lake's Counseling Services. I'm so glad you're considering our center's APA-accredited internship.

We have put together this video to introduce you to our center, some key elements of our training, and our university.

While talking with our interns over the past few years, several strengths of our program have emerged. First, interns have said that the staff itself and the relationships both within our center and in the university at large are a key element of their satisfaction, and we've been especially proud when previous interns have described our center atmosphere as being "like a family."

Next, interns have appreciated our strong multicultural and diversity focus coupled with a developmental and mentorship model of trainee growth. Beyond this, interns have noted our strong group therapy program, as well as built in training and experience in supervision and outreach, as strengths of our training.

Additionally, training in vocational counseling is one of the hallmarks of our internship program. Finally, our center strives towards and supports a strong work-life balance for all of our staff members, and interns have often remarked at how much they appreciate this unexpected balance during their internship year.

The University of Houston-Clear Lake, or UHCL, is a stand-alone four-year university that is part of the larger University of Houston system. We are a Hispanic-serving institution with great diversity in our student population; over 10% are international and many are first generation college students.

Our center sees a broad range of clinical issues, including major depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorder, personality disorders and clients with trauma histories, and we see clients from 1-2 sessions to as many as 30 or more sessions, depending on client need. This is different than what you may find in other university settings.

In total, our office consists of five licensed doctoral-level psychologists, three support staff members, three interns, three doctoral-level practicum students, and one part-time consulting psychiatrist.

Each intern has an office with a beautiful third-floor view of the 500 acre nature preserve on which our campus is located. It is common to see alligators, deer, and various other animals around our campus.

UHCL is directly between downtown Houston and Galveston Island, near the Gulf of Mexico. In terms of climate, we experience short, mild winters and hotter summers.

The clear lake area is a suburban setting with excellent school districts, affordable housing and convenient access to shopping and activities, and is a short car ride to both the beach and downtown Houston. As one of the most diverse cities in the country, the metro-Houston area is home to fabulous restaurants, museums, parks, and many cultural activities. Further, our campus is adjacent to NASA-Johnson Space Center and a point of pride for the university is that we have graduated 10 astronauts over the years.

We hope that this video has provided you with a basic introduction to our center, and are looking forward to getting to know all of our candidates during the application and interview process. We know that the application process is often stressful, so we strongly encourage all of our candidates to prioritize self-care during this often-overwhelming period.

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly, or any of the current interns or other senior staff members, should you have any further questions about our site or training program.

I wish you all the best as you go through the internship selection process.