



**University  
of Houston  
Clear Lake**

**University of Houston – Clear Lake (UHCL)**

**DOCTORAL STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**Health Service Psychology (Clinical/School)**

Revised August 1, 2020

\*\* It should be noted that all information and policies in this handbook is subject to change at any time. It will be updated annually. Students are responsible to be aware of these policies and all updates. Further, students will be held accountable to the handbook current in effect, not the handbook they were given when starting the program.

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## UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON – CLEAR LAKE

### DEPARTMENT OF CLINICAL, HEALTH AND APPLIED SCIENCES

#### PsyD IN HEALTH SERVICE PSYCHOLOGY (COMBINED CLINICAL/SCHOOL)

Welcome to the University of Houston – Clear Lake Health Service Psychology (Combined Clinical/School Psychology) Program. This doctoral program will help students develop the necessary prerequisite skills to function effectively as a professional psychologist. This program will enable students to acquire expert knowledge, clinical skills related to interviewing and assessment, therapeutic skills in empirically supported interventions, and personal development regarding a professional's role as a psychologist. Students will be responsible for both learning in the classroom and continually searching for knowledge outside of the coursework. As with all doctoral programs, students will find this program to be exhilarating and challenging, as well as highly rewarding, both professionally and personally.

The PsyD Student Handbook is designed to guide students and facilitate their progress through the program. It includes official policies, recommendations for making life easier, and the accumulated wisdom of peers and faculty mentors. The manual supplements the *UHCL Graduate Catalog*, the *Policies and Procedures Manual of the Psychology Clinic*, the *Dissertation Manual*, and the *Practicum Handbook*. In this manual, we periodically reference relevant portions of these sources. Students should be familiar with these documents in their entirety, as such knowledge will facilitate their progress through the program. **Students need to read all of these documents, and students are held to the standards in these documents. Lack of awareness is not a defense.**

The policies and recommendations contained in this handbook and other handbooks and manuals are modified periodically. As stated in the "Standards of Academic Performance" section of the *UHCL Graduate Catalog*, students **must be aware of and abide by current policies and procedures** and not those in effect upon admission. The University, the Department, professional organizations, and program reserve the right to make periodic changes to policies to clarify or improve program procedures. Students should review these documents throughout their academic careers to ensure compliance. The most recent version of the handbook is available online at the program website. Any updates to policies prior to the update of the Student Handbook will be communicated to students and faculty directly from the program director.

#### **The University and Program**

The University is located in the Clear Lake area of Houston, which is approximately 30 miles south of downtown Houston and 25 miles north of Galveston. The University includes four colleges and is home to a diverse student population of nearly 9,000 students.

The PsyD Program is part of the Clinical, Health and Applied Sciences Department, which is one of five departments in the College of Human Sciences and Humanities. Seven full-time faculty members serve as core faculty in this doctoral program (with

anticipation of 10 full-time faculty in the future). Associated faculty in the Psychology Department function in supportive roles within the PsyD Program. Further, the UHCL Psychological Services Clinic director also teaches classes in the program and supervises the students in their clinical work. Faculty biographies and contact information can be found at <https://www.uhcl.edu/human-sciences-humanities/departments/clinical-health-applied-sciences/doctorate-psychology/>.

The program also maintains the Psychological Services Clinic located on campus. The clinic has six individual therapy/assessment rooms, two family therapy rooms, a student office, and two conference rooms. Psychological services are provided to the Clear Lake community, as well as the greater Houston area. This Psychological Services Clinic provides an excellent training opportunity for students to be supervised by licensed psychologists as well as provide low-cost services for individuals with mental health needs.

### **APA Accreditation**

The program was accredited on contingency in April 2019 by the American Psychological Association (APA). By 2022, the program will submit another self-study to seek full accreditation. To become APA-accredited, doctoral programs must comply with several standards (see *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation of Programs in Professional Psychology*, 2008). The accrediting body may be contacted at the following address:

American Psychological Association  
Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation  
750 First Street NE  
Washington, DC 20002-4242  
(202) 336-5979

Along with the knowledge base outlined by the state of Texas for licensure, APA Guidelines require doctoral programs to provide students with “adequate and appropriate practicum experiences” that provide supervision in a “wide range of training and educational experiences through applications of empirically supported intervention procedures.” In keeping with these guidelines, we provide extensive training in an on-site clinic, staffed and supervised by our faculty. We also require off-site clinical practica and doctoral internships to diversify clinical training.

### **Mission**

The Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) in Health Service Psychology (Combined Clinical/School) provides broad practitioner-scientist training with an emphasis on clinical practice. The aim is to prepare students for careers as health professionals in clinical and school settings. The overarching model of the program is the provision of health services, with particular emphasis on cognitive-behavioral psychology. Graduates from this program are well prepared to function as licensed professional psychologists in a variety of roles across a variety of settings.

### **Training Model**

As a practitioner-scientist program, the PsyD program's primary aim is to train practitioners, scholars, and applied researchers in the areas of Clinical and School

Psychology. The program develops graduates who use scientific methods in the professional practice of psychology with the aim of improving health and behavioral-health outcomes. The program emphasizes the importance of the scientific method as the primary basis for advancing knowledge and informing practice. Graduates will be competent in evidence-based practice (assessment, intervention, and consultation). The program emphasizes the reciprocal relationship between psychological, biological, and social aspects of both personal and community health. Through coursework, clinical experiences, and research, students may individualize their training, including clinical, school, or clinical-health experiences.

**Discipline Specific Knowledge (DSK) and Foundational Knowledge**

The program provides an educational foundation in discipline specific areas that are outlined by the American Psychological Association (APA), as well as those deemed important to the program. These areas enable students to acquire broad and general foundational knowledge in health service psychology. The program ensure that all students are adequately and effectively trained in all areas of the psychology that influence health service psychology. These DSK and Foundational Knowledge includes:

<b>DSK (APA)</b>	<b>Foundational Knowledge (UHCL)</b>
History and Systems Affective Aspects of Behavior Biological Aspects of Behavior Cognitive Aspects of Behavior Developmental Aspects of Behavior Social Aspects of Behavior Advanced Integrative Knowledge Research Methods Statistical Analysis Psychometrics	Orientation to Health Service Psychology Learning Principles Psychopathology

**Profession-Wide Competencies**

Outside of the Discipline Specific Knowledge, the PsyD program is guided by the eight competency areas outlined by APA. These competencies are designed to ensure that candidates: acquire skills in the techniques that constitute the practice of psychology; develop skills to analyze and conduct research; understand and adhere to ethical practice in psychology; and become culturally competent practitioners.

Profession-wide competency areas include:

1. Research - To train students to conduct and consume research and to disseminate this psychological knowledge through publication, presentation, and practice
2. Ethical and Legal Standards - To enable students to understand ethical, legal, and professional issues and to adhere to ethical and legal standards in all of their professional activities
3. Individual and Cultural Diversity - To enable students to understand and appreciate individual differences and diversity, thereby becoming culturally competent in the delivery of psychological services

4. Professional Values and Attitudes– To train students to have the knowledge and skills necessary to conduct themselves professionally
5. Communication and Interpersonal Skills - Write and present professional products, including articles, evaluations, treatment plans, progress notes, case presentations, and presentations
6. Assessment - To competently administer and use multimodal and multimethod assessment approaches as well as empirically-based diagnostic techniques and to write professional evaluations
7. Intervention – To competently implement multimodal and empirically-supported treatment approaches and treatment plans and to write professional intake reports, treatment plans, and progress notes
8. Supervision – To develop skills in training and supervising others by demonstrating knowledge of models and methods of clinical supervision and demonstrate ability to supervise master’s level students in assessment and treatment
9. Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills – To develop skills to collaborate effectively with psychologists and other individuals or groups to solve problems, share knowledge, or promote professional activities.

In order to accomplish these competencies, students practice these competencies during their coursework and supervised environment through an on-site clinic and in off-site practicum placements. In these practicum experiences, students work with and are supervised by faculty and site-based licensed psychologists, who have a variety of clinical expertise. These sites offer a variety of assessment and treatment modalities, use state of the art equipment and technology utilized in the field today, and participate in a collegial atmosphere that is accepting of diverse opinions that prepares students to analyze the current literature critically.

To complete the program, students must demonstrate both knowledge (DSKs) and skills (PWCs) – a combination of coursework and practice competencies.

### **Policies for All Students**

All students are subject to the policies stated in the “Academic Policies” section of the UHCL Graduate Catalog, as well as policies articulated in the *Policies and Procedures Manual of the Psychology Clinic*. Additional policies and procedures for students in the program are presented in this handbook.

#### *Non-Discrimination Policy*

It is the policy of the University of Houston-Clear Lake and the HSP program to recruit and retain highly-qualified individuals. As an essential part of this policy, the University and program is dedicated to equal employment opportunity for all employees. The University and program do not discriminate based on race, color, sex (including pregnancy), religion, national origin, disability, age, veteran status, genetic information or sexual orientation. Additionally, the University and program prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression.

### *Student E-mail and Responsiveness to E-mail*

The University uses the UHCL e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. A student must activate his or her e-mail account, use it to communicate with the program, department, and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important information. All official correspondence from the program will be sent to the student's university e-mail account. More specifically, students need to use their UHCL email, to check it, and to respond within 2 business days to all emails. It should be noted that student's staff e-mail account is deactivated, once the student is "out-of-contract" with the University. Thus, students need to plan accordingly.

### *Students Records*

All student records for the program are stored on the program's shared drive. The shared drive is both FERPA and HIPPA compliant. Further, only the program faculty and the administrative assistant have access to this shared drive. While students are in the program, all forms that are completed are scanned into a PDF version, and the PDF versions are stored on the shared drive as an electronic copy. The hard copies are shredded. Please remember that all signatures need to be collected before each form is scanned into the shared drive.

### *Students Activities & Behaviors*

All students need to understand that faculty members need to communicate about all students. Since the professional and educational development is of utmost concern of all faculty members, students' behaviors and activities will be discussed with all core faculty members. **Further, students must communicate with their advisor (within 48 hours of notification), if they are involved in any behaviors that violate any policy or code of conduct for the university, program, or profession.** This may include, but is not limited to, charges/arrests that constitute a misdemeanor or felony (as these may impact your ability to obtain licensure), charges of academic dishonesty or research misconduct (include, but not limited to, cheating, falsification of information, plagiarism), and failure to earn a grade of B- or higher in a course. Students are required to provide a full account of the incident to their advisor as well as any outcomes (rulings, judgments, consequences, etc.). This is necessary so the program can understand the behavior and determine appropriate responses (e.g., remediation plan, program dismissal).

### *Registration and Degree Audit*

Students, in consultation with their advisor, are responsible for correctly registering for courses and paying all tuition and fees by the official university registration and payment deadlines. All students should verify the accuracy of their enrollment status before the end of the "add period" and should check their online accounts to verify that they are registered for the classes in which they intend to enroll. Classes "fill-up" very quickly, so students are encouraged to register as soon as their registration times open.

All students are responsible for reviewing their own transcripts and degree audits regularly, with consultation recommended from their advisor, to ensure that they are correct and that students are on track to meet all their requirements in a timely fashion.

### *Withdrawal*

Students are financially responsible for all courses in which they remain officially enrolled once the drop period has ended. Instructors do not have the authority to withdraw students from classes. Withdrawals are only permitted for non-academic reasons; no withdrawals will be approved for academic reasons. When submitting a withdrawal request, students must provide verifiable, third-party documentation for the reason for the withdrawal. Meeting this condition does not guarantee that a withdrawal request will be granted. All requests for withdrawals are submitted to the university registrar.

### *Grade Appeals*

Grade appeals must follow the process specified in the UHCL Graduate Catalog (<https://www.uhcl.edu/policies/documents/academic-affairs/academic-appeals-policy.pdf>). If disputes are resolved within the department or program, the matter is considered resolved. The departmental decision may be appealed to the Dean based on a procedural irregularity. If the grade appeal is not resolved within the department or program, the Chair makes a recommendation to the Dean, who makes the final determination. The decision of the Dean is not subject to review or further appeal.

### *Formal Complaints*

Formal complaints are made in writing to the Associate Dean of the college.

### *Accommodations for Students with Disabilities*

Students with documented disabilities should contact the Accessibility Support Center (<https://www.uhcl.edu/disability-services/>) to initiate accommodation requests and to learn more about accommodations that may be available to them. Accommodations are **only made** if the student formally documents their accommodations through the Accessibility Support Center and appropriate documentation is provided to the faculty member for the course or program requirement (e.g., Qualifying Exam Paper).

### *Academic Load*

Graduate students are considered full-time if they take 9 credits per long semester. However, students may enroll in up to 12 credits of course work each semester. Requests for enrollment in more than 12 credits needs to be submitted to the Director of Clinical Training (DCT) for approval, and final approval needs to come from the Associate Dean for students in the PsyD program, full-time load expectations vary by semester and are listed in the curricular layout found in the section below titled "Course Schedule."

### *State Licensing*

The state of Texas issues four types of licenses, each of which include different requirements as set by the Psychologists' Licensing Act and Board rules. These requirements relate to training, supervision, and specific practice components. In Texas, applicants for licensure must pass a national licensing exam and a state jurisprudence exam. Licensure information for Texas can be found at <http://www.tsbep.texas.gov>. Licensure requirements are regulated by each state. Students should review the requirements of the state or states in which they expect to practice.

## **Overview of the Curriculum**

The doctoral program is a full-time, full residency program. The program is designed to be completed in five years, including a one-year doctoral internship. The program could be completed in less time if students enter with foundation courses completed through a completion of a Master's degree or Specialists Degree. No part-time students are accepted. The curriculum is designed to meet or exceed state and national guidelines for licensing and accreditation.

The doctoral program includes coursework related to discipline specific knowledge (DSK), assessment, intervention, consultation, and supervision. Further, the PsyD program builds on students' broad knowledge of the empirical, theoretical, and philosophical underpinnings of the profession. Students need to develop and demonstrate substantial competence in several areas, including foundations of psychology, research skills, and clinical skills, including assessment, intervention, and supervision. Throughout their coursework and practica, all students engage in and gain experience in both research and clinical work.

The program requires 108 semester credit hours of coursework organized into four sections: Discipline Specific Knowledge, Research, Ethical and Legal Standards, Individual and Cultural Diversity, Assessment, Intervention, and Supervision. Further, throughout the program, faculty will be training and assessing your competencies in the areas of professional values, attitudes, and behaviors and communication and interpersonal skills.

### **DSK and Foundational Core (SCH = 42)**

PSYC 5031	Human Growth and Development
PSYC 5235	Learning Principles
PSYC 5532	Advanced Social Psychology
PSYC 6130	Psychological Measurement
PSYC 6134	Biological Basis of Behavior
PSYC 6533	History and Systems
PSYC 6832	Advanced Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior
PSYC 7030	Orientation to Health Service Psychology
PSYC 7136	Multicultural and Diversity Issues
PSYC 7736	Ethical and Legal Issues in Health Service Psychology
PSYC 7531	Psychopathology

### ***Research Core***

PSYC 7130	Experimental Methodology
PSYC 7131	Quantitative Analysis I
PSYC 7132	Quantitative Analysis II

### **Assessment Core (SCH = 6)**

PSYC 7032	Cognitive Assessment
PSYC 7033	Personality Assessment

**Intervention Core (SCH = 6)**

- PSYC 7235    Advanced Behavioral Therapy  
PSYC 7332    Advanced Consultation and Program Design/Evaluation

**Clinical Experience (SCH = 30)**

- PSYC 7038    Practicum I (repeated for 2 semesters)  
PSYC 7039    External Practicum/Internship (repeated for minimum of 4 semesters)  
PSYC 7936    Supervision and Clinical Practice  
PSYC 8931    Doctoral Internship (repeated for 3 semesters)

**Thesis/Dissertation (SCH = 15)**

- PSYC 7939    Health Service Psychology Thesis (minimum 6 hours)  
PSYC 8930    Doctoral Dissertation (minimum 9 hours)

**Electives (Choose 3, other courses may be offered; SCH = 9)**

- PSYC 7139    Intervention I: Academic and Cognitive Skills  
PSYC 7239    Advanced Group Psychotherapy  
PSYC 7337    Development and Treatment of Mood and Anxiety Disorders  
PSYC 7138    Mindfulness and Acceptance Therapies  
PSYC 7333    Pediatric Psychology  
PSYC 7334    Adult Behavioral Medicine  
PSYC 7331    Design/Evaluation of School Health Programs  
PSYC 7232    Advanced Child Behavioral Therapy  
PSYC 7034    Neuropsychological Assessment  
PSYC 7630    Behavioral Parent Training

Upon admission, students' records are assessed to determine whether they can waive courses. There are only specific classes that can be waived. Students can waive discipline-specific classes (DSK) and some core competency classes. These classes are outlined below.

**Waiving Courses/Thesis***Waiving Courses*

If a student has taken courses they believe meet criteria to waive a class, the student will need to formally submit a waiver request for the classes to be incorporated into their candidate plan of study for credit. **Students can waive up to 27 credits.**

The courses that can be waived include the following:

1. Biological aspects of behavior (DSK)
2. Social Aspects of Behavior (DSK)
3. Psychometrics/Psychological Measurement (DSK)
4. Development/Human Growth and Development (DSK)
5. Cognitive Aspects of Behavior (DSK)
6. Affective Aspects of Behavior (DSK)
7. History and Systems of Psychology (DSK)
8. Learning Principles (UHCL program requirement)
9. Psychopathology (UHCL program requirement)
10. Advanced Behavior Therapy

11. Cognitive Assessment
12. Personality Assessment
13. Therapy Elective (up to 2)

To ensure that students have been adequately prepared in the DSKs, there is a formal waiver process. To officially waive a DSK class into the program and to demonstrate doctoral level knowledge of each specific area, students need to complete a *Course Waiver Approval Form* and pass a multiple choice test. To complete a *Course Waiver Approval Form*, the students need to complete the form and submit a transcript and syllabus for the course or courses to be considered, along with the CV of the faculty member who taught the course. Once the *Course Waiver Approval Form* is completed, they will submit it to their advisor. The advisor will review the form and determine if each of the requested classes seems to be a ***candidate for a full waiver or if other activities need to be completed***. Faculty will complete a review to examine the following: 1) grade of B- or higher for the course, 2) appropriate breadth and depth of topic areas, 3) graduate level communication, 4) inclusion of original source readings; and 5) vitae of the professor for the class.

If other activities need to be completed (i.e. journal readings and reviews), the advisor will notify the students that they need to complete these activities. Once the activities are completed, the advisor will review the completed activity. Outside of needed activities, students will also need to take a 20-question exam for each DSK they are asking to waive. The student will need to pass the exam for each DSK-related course at 80%. If the advisor deems the completion of the activity adequate and the student passes the exam (DSK only), the student will be granted the waiver of that specific class. If the class is not approved by the advisor, the student will need to take the class while in the program (for Core Courses). All course waivers must be submitted to the student's advisor by August 1 of the year of entry of the student and all requirements must be completed prior to the end of the fall semester of entry into the program. Failure to waive a course during this period will necessitate the student taking the course through the program.

#### *Waiving the HSP Thesis*

If a student has completed a Master's thesis, a substantial research project, or contributed substantially to an empirically-based published article (peer-reviewed), they can apply for a waiver of the Master's Thesis requirement. To gain approval of the Waiver of the thesis, the student will need to submit three documents. The *Research Project/Thesis Approval Form*, the original thesis or research project, and a letter completed by the research supervisor (if the project is not a thesis). The research supervisor will need to verify that the student participated in a variety of tasks for the research project.

#### **Other Information on Waivers**

Waiver requests are best made early, as the completed waiver process will help guide your class schedule. The faculty advisor and DCT approve requests for class waivers. All waiver courses are formally noted in the Candidate Plan of Study (CPS).

**Course Sequence**

\*\* "Substitution" courses are those foundation courses that may be taken in place of a waived course. This is a tentative schedule, which will be changed based on waived courses.

<b>UHCL PsyD in Health Services Psychology (Combined Clinical/School)</b>		
<b>Typical Course Sequence*</b>		
<b>First Year (SCH = 30)</b>		
<b>Fall Yr 1 (12 hours)</b>	<b>Spring Yr 1 (12 hours)</b>	<b>Summer Yr 1 (6 hours)</b>
PSYC 7030 Orientation to Health Service Psychology PSYC 7531 Psychopathology PSYC 5235 Learning Principles PSYC 5031 Human Growth and Development	PSYC 7235 Advanced Behavioral Therapy PSYC 7032 Cognitive Assessment PSYC 7033 Personality Assessment PSYC 7136 Multicultural and Diversity Issues	PSYC 6533 History and Systems PSYC 7736 Professional Issues in Medical/Health Psychology <i>Or</i> PSYC 6832 Advanced Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior <i>Or</i> PSYC 6130 Psychological Measurement
<b>Second Year (SCH = 30)</b>		
<b>Fall Yr 2 (12 hours)</b>	<b>Spring Yr 2 (12 hours)</b>	<b>Summer Yr 2 (6 hours)</b>
PSYC 5532 Advanced Social Psychology PSYC 6134 Biological Basis of Behavior PSYC 7130 Experimental Methodology PSYC 7939 HSP Thesis	PSYC 7131 Quantitative Analysis I PSYC 7038 Practicum I PSYC 7939 HSP Thesis ELECTIVE (1 of 3)	PSYC 7038 Practicum I PSYC 7736 Professional Issues in Medical/Health Psychology <i>Or</i> PSYC 6832 Advanced Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior <i>Or</i> PSYC 6130 Psychological Measurement
<b>Third Year (SCH = 21)</b>		
<b>Fall Yr 3 (9 hours)</b>	<b>Spring Yr 3 (9 hours)</b>	<b>Summer Yr 3 (3 hours)</b>
PSYC 7132 Quantitative Analysis II PSYC 7039 External Practicum/Internship Elective or DSK/Foundation	PSYC 7332 Advanced Consultation and Program Design/Evaluation PSYC 7039 External Practicum/Internship ELECTIVE (2 of 3)	ELECTIVE (3 of 3) or DSK/Foundation
<b>Fourth Year (SCH = 18)</b>		
<b>Fall Yr 4 (9 hours)</b>	<b>Spring Yr 4 (6 hours)</b>	<b>Summer Yr 4 (3 hours)</b>
PSYC 7039 External Practicum/Internship PSYC 7936 Supervision and Clinical Practice PSYC 8930 Doctoral Dissertation	PSYC 7039 External Practicum/Internship PSYC 8930 Doctoral Dissertation	PSYC 8930 Doctoral Dissertation
<b>Fifth Year (SCH = 9)</b>		
<b>Fall Yr 5 (3 hours)</b>	<b>Spring Yr 5 (3 hours)</b>	<b>Summer Yr 5 (3 hours)</b>
PSYC 8931 Doctoral Internship	PSYC 8931 Doctoral Internship	PSYC 8931 Doctoral Internship

Outside of these curriculum requirements, the list of all requirements includes:

1. **Coursework:** Complete 108 hours of coursework (or waived coursework).
2. **Internal Practicum (PSYC 7038):** Direct and indirect hours. Doctoral students begin to see 3-4 clients (assessment and therapy) with a goal of 300-400 hours for the two semesters.
3. **External Practicum/Internship (PSYC 7039):** Approximately 500 hours each semester (offsite; doctoral students typically complete 1000 hours, working 20 hours per week for a year).
4. **HSP Thesis (or Research Project or Master's thesis):** Students will complete a thesis during the program. Students can waive the HSP thesis, by having a research project or thesis completed prior to starting the program. All theses and projects need to be approved and accepted by program faculty.
5. **Qualifying Exam Paper (QEP):** Students are required to complete a Qualifying Exam Paper, which functions as an evaluative educational experience for students enrolled in the Health Service Psychology PsyD Program. The QEP requires students to demonstrate integration of discipline specific knowledge. The QEP **must be passed** and would typically be taken after completing the HSP Thesis and completing the relevant DSK courses. Students cannot propose their dissertation until they have completed their QEP.
6. **Doctoral dissertation:** Typically, dissertation proposal follows successfully completing the Qualifying Exam Paper.
7. **Doctoral Internship:** An APA accredited internship is highly recommended, and all students are required to apply for accredited internships; however, students may match or accept a non-accredited internship, pending discussion and approval of the director and student's advisor. If the program is not fully APA accredited, an internship with an APPIC member program is also recommended. To apply for internship, students need to demonstrate appropriate matriculation the program, as evaluated on the Annual Competency Evaluation. Further, students need to:
  - a. Pass their Qualifying Exam Paper
  - b. Propose their dissertation
  - c. Get approval from the Program Director (approval is done through the APPIC application)

All of these requirements are methodically assessed and monitored throughout a student's time in the program. These requirements are monitored to ensure adequate progress through the program by meeting sequential benchmarks. Although students can petition to apply for internship if one of these requirements are not met, the student should know that is very unlikely that the petition will be granted.

## **Academic Benchmarks:**

### **Benchmark 1: Coursework**

To meet the first benchmark, students will need to complete 36 credit hours of coursework, by the end of the fall of the second year.

### **Benchmark 2: Qualifying Exam Paper**

To meet the second benchmark, students need to complete and pass the Qualifying Exam Paper.

### **Benchmark 3: Dissertation**

To meet the third benchmark, students need to successfully propose and defend their dissertation.

### **Benchmark 4: Internship**

To graduate, all students complete a year-long, full-time internship. Students are not able to apply for internship until they have completed all coursework in the program, completed a QEP, and completed the dissertation proposal.

## **Timeline summary for Academic benchmarks:**

*Fall 1<sup>st</sup> year – Fall 2<sup>nd</sup> year:*

Complete coursework

*Fall 2<sup>nd</sup> year – Spring 2<sup>nd</sup> year:*

Develop and complete thesis project

*3<sup>rd</sup> year*

Pass the Qualifying Exam Paper

*Fall 4<sup>th</sup> year*

Propose Dissertation

*Fall 4<sup>th</sup> year – Spring 4<sup>th</sup> year:*

Work on and Complete Dissertation

Complete activities for internship applications and interviews

Beyond these program benchmarks, there are also clinical and practical experiences that are essential to the development of the skills needed to graduate from this program. These clinical experiences include practica experiences and doctoral internship. To ensure that students are successfully completing these experiences, students are assessed on whether they are meeting these benchmarks successfully.

## **Doctoral Candidacy**

A student advances to a doctoral candidate once they have completed most coursework required for the degree and has passed the comprehensive exam paper. As a doctoral candidate, students mainly needs to complete their internship and dissertation.

## **Clinical Experiences**

Students in the PsyD program complete two kinds of clinical experiences: practica experiences and doctoral internship experiences. These are described below.

## **Practica Experiences**

Below is a summary of the practica experiences. Please see **Practicum Handbook** for more detailed information.

Practica experiences begin in the second year of the program (**or first year potentially for students with a clinically-based masters/specialist degree**). Students participate in a full practicum experience, conducting assessments with and providing therapy to clients at our on-site community clinic (Internal Practicum). In the subsequent years of the program, students secure off-site practica (at least two years) at numerous community agencies in our area (External Practicum).

### *Internal Practicum (PSYC 7038)*

Internal Practicum is taken for two semesters and is held in the UHCL Psychological Services training clinic. The practicum instructors assign clients to be seen in practicum; the instructor supervises the assessment and therapy cases. In the practicum class, each student works with clients and observes sessions conducted by other clinicians. The practicum instructor gives each student feedback. Students complete intakes and progress notes as directed by their practicum supervisors.

Students are responsible for maintaining all paperwork on clients, scheduling appointments, and identifying treatment goals. Group supervision is provided on a regular basis. Students also receive significant individualized supervision. Supervising faculty members conduct evaluations of students' clinical work. Student must successfully complete PSYC 7038 prior to being approved to move to an external practicum placement.

### *External Practicum/Internship (PSYC 7039)*

The external practicum is taken for a minimum of four semesters and occurs in a community and/or school placement. The external practicum must include face-to-face supervision of at least four hours per month by a fully licensed psychologist, who evaluates students' skills once a semester. Further, the students meet once a month with their university external practicum supervisor. This class may be repeated for additional experience. It should also be noted that students **will not** be allowed to do practica at two external sites in the same semester unless approved by a petition to the DTC prior to interviewing at practicum sites.

### *Supervision and Clinical Practice (PSYC 7936)*

Also, during the fourth year in the program, doctoral students complete one semester of clinical training related to supervision. In this class, students learn to train and supervise beginning level clinicians.

As a result of the various clinical experiences, students should have a minimum of 600 hours of direct client contact prior to applying for internship. Students are expected to complete several integrated assessment reports prior to applying for internship; reports can be done at either internal or external practicum sites.

### **Doctoral Internship**

The Doctoral Internship is typically completed during the last year of the program. Passing the Qualifying Exam Paper, successfully proposing the dissertation, and receiving approval from the program director (approval is given through APPIC website) are requirements to apply for internship. During internship, students need to register for the 3-credit PSYC 8931 Doctoral Internship class for each semester (Fall, Spring, Summer) that they are on internship.

Doctoral internship is typically the capstone experience of a doctoral student's graduate program and serves as a gatekeeper into the profession. It typically consists of spending 2000 hours (1 year) at a local or national site. Students are required to apply to sites that are APA approved and meet their area of specialty. Even though an APA accredited internship is highly recommended, at the least, the internship should be an APPIC member. Using these criteria, students receive high-quality training in practice and specialties. If a student wishes to complete a non-APPIC/non-accredited internship, they need to submit information about the program (site, requirements, internship responsibilities, supervisor credentials and commitment to supervision) to the DCT. The DCT has to approve all non-APPIC internships.

When a student has been approved to complete a non-APA accredited internship, the following standards must be met (adapted from the Council for Directors of School Psychology Programs [CDSPP] Doctoral Level Internship Guidelines (2012) see Appendix C):

1. The doctoral internship in Health Service Psychology requires an organized training program that, in contrast to supervised experience (e.g., practica) or on-the-job training, is designed to provide the intern with a planned, programmed sequence of training experiences. The internship is the culminating supervised professional practice training experience prior to the granting of the doctoral degree. It follows a programmed sequence of coursework, practica, and field experiences and occurs after the substantial completion of the coursework leading to the degree. Its primary focus and purpose is ensuring breadth and extension of education and supervised training from the university program. The internship consists of a range of activities including assessment, evidence-based intervention, consultation, program development and program evaluation, supervision, and research designed to meet the psychological, educational, and health needs of the clients. Interns should have experiences with prevention and development of system supports, as well as direct intervention for client problems, and should have experiences dealing with cultural and individual diversity.

2. The intern, whether full-time or part-time, spends at least 25% of her or his time in providing direct (face-to-face) psychological services to clients, patients, or consultees, a minimum of 500 hours out of 2000 doctoral internship hours. The intern engages in research activity which includes the evaluation of services delivered and the effectiveness of the intern's own training.
3. The internship agency provides a dated written statement, brochure, or website that describes the goals and content of the doctoral internship program, states clear expectations for the quality of trainees' work, training, and supervision, and is made available in advance to prospective interns. The internship agency, preparing institution, and intern have a written agreement that describes the goals and content of the internship including clearly stated expectations for the nature of experiences offered in the agency and for the quantity and quality of the work. Each intern is given a written statement that includes salary, benefits, reimbursable travel, holidays, and other relevant data.
4. Interns receive a formal written evaluation minimally at the end of each university semester or grading period. The format for that evaluation is agreed upon in advance by the internship agency and the intern's university training program. The areas evaluated are consistent with the doctoral program objectives and competencies. Communication between doctoral training programs and internship programs is of critical importance to the overall development of competent psychologists. The doctoral internship is a required part of the doctoral degree, and while the internship supervisor assesses student performance during the internship year, the doctoral program is ultimately responsible for evaluation of the student's readiness for graduation and entrance into the profession. Therefore, intern performance is discussed among the training partners – the internship site and the university.
5. Due process procedures for interns are made available to interns prior to the beginning of the training period. If due process procedures are initiated related to intern behaviors, intern activities, or internship conditions, the university-based director of the program is notified by the supervisor at the internship site.
6. Full-time internships are completed in no less than 10 months; part-time internships may extend to no more than 24 months. The internship includes a minimum of 2000 hours in activities described above. Interns and university training programs should consult relevant credentialing (e.g., state licensure, certification) requirements to determine the number of internship hours required for licensure or other desired credentials. For those seeking licensure/credentialing to practice in school-based settings, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has established requirements for internship (e.g., completion of at least 600 hours in a school setting). For more information, consult the relevant NASP standards and credentialing documents.
7. Internship agencies and the intern's university training program jointly issue to the intern written documentation (e.g., a certificate, letter, or "Certificate of Completion") reflecting successful completion of the psychology doctoral internship.
8. The internship agency employs a clearly designated doctoral-level psychologist who: a) is currently licensed by the state regulatory board of psychology to practice at the independent level and b) is responsible for the integrity and quality of the internship program. The internship agency has at least two

- psychologists on staff available as supervisors, at least one of who is actively licensed as a psychology by the state regulatory board of psychology. However, internship agencies such as school districts that have the capacity for only one staff psychologist may meet the spirit of this criterion (breadth of training experience) by entering into consortium agreements with other agencies, such as other school districts or university doctoral programs. Such consortium agreements must ensure supervision of the intern by two or more psychologists, one of whom is actively licensed to practice at the independent level by the state regulatory board of psychology and who provides at least half of the required internship supervision.
9. The full-time internship includes at least two hours per week of regularly scheduled individual supervision by a doctoral level psychologist licensed for practice at the independent level with the specific intent of evaluating the psychological services rendered directly by the intern and supporting the intern in the role of psychological service provider.
  10. In addition to the individual supervision (as described in #9 above), the intern spends at least two additional hours per week in scheduled group or individual supervision, conducted by a doctoral level psychologist who is either licensed for practice at the independent level or certified by the relevant psychological regulatory agency.
  11. The intern has regularly scheduled, supervised, and documented training activities with other doctoral psychology interns such as professional development/in-service training; case conferences involving a case in which an intern is actively involved; seminars dealing with professional issues; or observing delivery of psychological services. These activities may be in conjunction with appropriate credentialed professionals other than psychologists. The internship agency has two or more interns engaged in training at the same time. However, agencies having the capacity for only one intern may meet the spirit of this criterion (i.e., the socialization of doctoral-level psychology interns) by having regularly scheduled and documented training activities with psychology interns at other sites in the immediate geographic area, or, when internship sites are at a significant distance from each other, by making arrangements for regularly scheduled meeting of interns for several hours on a monthly basis.
  12. Internship supervision may be provided through synchronous audio and video format where the supervisor is not in the same physical facility as the intern. Supervision through electronic means may not account for more than one hour (50% of the minimum required two weekly hours of individual supervision (as described in #9 above), and two hours (50%) of the minimum required four total weekly hours of supervision (as described in #9 and #10 above). The use of telesupervision should be consistent with the program's overall model and philosophy of training, with assurance that relationships between supervisors and trainees are established prior to engaging in telesupervision. The rationale for the use of telesupervision with interns at a particular site, and the scheduling and means for telesupervision should be clearly articulated. As with usual forms of supervision, the supervisor will retain full professional responsibility for all clinical services provided by the intern(s). Programs utilizing any form of telesupervision have a formal policy that includes procedures to address issues of non-scheduled

- consultation, crisis coverage, and handling of privacy and confidentiality. These policies and procedures are established in advance and shared among the training program, the internship site, and the intern(s). Technology and quality requirements, as well as training in the use of the technology, are available for the supervisor and the intern. Internships using telesupervision adhere to best practices and ethical, legal, and professional guidelines.
13. Reports and documents prepared by the doctoral intern for consumers, other agency or school personnel, or other relevant publics are co-signed by the licensed psychologist supervisor for the intern.
  14. The trainee has a title such as "intern," "resident," or other designation of trainee status.

### **Assessment and Benchmarks**

Students are assessed during every semester they are in a practica experience. If a student's performance is not enough to pass internal practicum (PSYC 7038) or if the instructor does not believe the student is prepared to go on external practicum, the student will be asked to repeat practicum (or possibly be dismissed from the program for major ethical/clinical difficulties). If upon repeating practicum, the student does not obtain satisfactory evaluations, they will be dismissed from the program. Beyond these global requirements, students are required to meet clinical benchmarks to show successful progress through the clinical training of the program.

### **Clinical Benchmarks:**

#### **Benchmark 1: Internal Practicum**

To meet the first benchmark, students need to successfully complete the internal practicum, with supervision ratings of a 2 or above on 100% of the items on the *Practicum, Internship, and supervision Competency Evaluation (PISCE)*.

#### **Benchmark 2: External Practicum**

To meet their second benchmark, students need to successfully complete the external practicum, with supervision ratings of a 3 or above on 100% of the items on the *PISCE*.

#### **Benchmark 3: Advanced Practicum: Supervision and Consultation**

To meet their fourth benchmark, students need to successfully complete the advanced practicum, with supervision ratings of a 3 or above on 100% of the items on the *PISCE*.

#### **Benchmark 4: Doctoral Internship**

To graduate, all students need to complete a year-long internship. Students are not able to apply for internship until they have completed academic benchmarks 1-2, and they need to be in good standing to achieving academic benchmark 3 (successfully proposed dissertation). *All students need to pass internship to complete the final clinical benchmark of the program.* All internship supervisors complete evaluations of the intern, and the results of all evaluations are submitted to the DCT and placed in the student's file. To successfully complete the internship, students need to receive PISCE and Annual Competency Evaluation (ACE)

ratings of a 4 or above on 100% of the items on the *PISCE*. Should a doctoral internship site not agree to use the *PISCE*, faculty will utilize the competency evaluation provided by the internship site to evaluate the student on the ACE to the extent possible.

## **Evidence of Students' Competency**

Students need to demonstrate their abilities in each of the nine Profession-Wide Competencies outlined by the program and APA. Students are formally assessed on these competencies every year of the program through the Annual Competency Evaluation (ACE). This formal assessment is the criteria for whether or not students are meeting appropriate and effective levels of competency as they move through the program. This formal evaluation is informed by multiple activities, where students have had the opportunity to demonstrate these competencies. These activities occur in multiple areas, including practicums, research labs, presentations, the Qualifying Exam Paper, dissertation proposals and defenses, and classes.

## **Annual Evaluation of Students**

After completing each year of the program, students meet with their mentor after the spring semester (usually in May/June) to review their progress in the program. Formal evaluations are conducted at a Doctoral Training Committee meeting by all core faculty. These evaluations are based on the student's complete file including transcripts and evaluations (based on clinical work, teaching duties, and research progress). Evaluations include ratings completed by the student's mentor, in conjunction with the PsyD program faculty. Students are evaluated on personal, professional, and academic skills. The **Annual Competency Evaluation** (ACE) includes the required program benchmark and all nine Profession-Wide Competencies that are trained by the program.

To assist with the evaluation process, students submit an updated copy of their curriculum vitae, complete a survey related to their yearly activities, and accumulated practicum hours to the Director of Clinical Training by the end of May. Once all the data is completed, each faculty member discusses each student's ACE with the other faculty at the yearly ACE meeting. Scores and comments are a reflection of the faculty members' ratings and thoughts about the student's competencies.

Once the evaluations are completed, the student receives feedback from their advisor that incorporates the strengths and limitations identified during the evaluation meeting of the Doctoral Training Committee. Further, if the student would like to address any concerns or issues related to the evaluation, besides their research mentor, the student can meet with the Director of Clinical Training. Students are rated (no opportunity, not evident, beginning, intermediate, developed, and advanced) on their competency level in each domain.

Students' ratings on the Annual Competency Evaluation determine if further action is necessary to address weaknesses needs to occur. Further action takes place if the student does not pass at a level of competency for their year in training. Further action

will include a note in the student's annual evaluation letter and may include a remediation plan developed by the mentor and a Remediation Committee, with feedback considered from the student.

Overall, students are deemed competent and making adequate progress if they receive a 3 or above on all assessed areas during their years prior to the Doctoral Internship. Interns should receive ratings of 4 or above in all areas.

All students meet with their advisors to review their ratings on each item. With regard to a student who needs remediation, the advisor meets with the student, and the student is told what specific behaviors need to be addressed and how the student needs to address these issues. The student's progress is closely monitored and reevaluated based on the timelines identified in the remediation plan. If the student complies with the plan and is able to effectively address the problem area(s), they are removed from the remediation plan. Immediate action may be taken for ethical violations up to and including termination.

### **Other Issues Related to Curriculum:**

#### **Registration**

Students are required to register for courses each long semester (and likely most summer semesters). Most courses are open for only a specific number of students. Thus, students are encouraged to check with the Financial Aid Office and the DCT to determine any possible consequences of repeating courses. As previously stated, students may only repeat graduate courses once (with the exception of practicum/internship courses). Failure to pass a course (B- or above) with two attempts will result in dismissal from the program. Students must be continuously enrolled in at least one PsyD program course for each semester until they graduate from the program. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment may be cause for termination in the program; however, in specific and necessary circumstances, students can request a leave of absence (see below).

#### **Thesis Requirements**

The program also requires completion of a thesis as part of the graduate program. Students can waive the thesis by waiving a research project or thesis. For waivers, each thesis or project must be approved by the student's assigned research advisor. To have the thesis or project approved, a student must complete *the Waiver of Research Project/Thesis Form*.

Students, with a Master's or Specialist degree, lacking completion of a thesis or formal research project upon admission are required to complete a thesis as part of required coursework.

To complete the thesis, a student needs to start the consult with their research advisor to begin the thesis process, as this will allow the student time to complete their thesis by the end of their second year. To start the process, students should have an idea of the research area they wish to pursue. Students should meet regularly with their mentor to discuss research ideas throughout the first year.

**Students are not able to take their Qualifying Exam Paper until they have completed a research project.**

### **Qualifying Exam Paper**

Students must complete the Qualifying Exam Paper (QEP). The purpose of the QEP is for students to demonstrate their ability to integrate and apply multiple discipline specific content areas (e.g., affective, biological, cognitive, developmental, and/or social bases of behavior) to an applied behavioral health psychology topic and population. To complete this exam, students must write a literature review paper pertaining to a population/topic within health service psychology (i.e., pediatric diabetes, adult bariatric surgery, learning disabilities) that discusses the impact and integration of two or more domains in relationship to practice and research. As noted above, this is a literature review of the research. Thus, this is an empirically-supported synopsis of the literature for the chosen topic which aims to integrate two or more areas. It is recommended that students choose a topic related to their dissertation, as it is designed to facilitate development of their dissertation topic.

Preparation and completion of the Qualifying Exam Paper is a seven step process:

- 1) In consultation with their advisor, students will select a broad area of health service psychology. The topic should address:
  - a. At least two (2) discipline specific knowledge areas (e.g., affective, biological, cognitive, developmental, and/or social aspects of behavior), and the paper must integrate these two areas into the broad topic. The student needs to choose two discipline specific knowledge areas for which they have completed coursework,
  - b. Clinically relevant topics (assessment, diagnosis, treatment, consultation) into the overall broader topic and the discipline specific areas, and
  - c. If needed, a specific population to serve as a reference when writing the paper.
- 2) Students will work with their advisor to create a QEP Review Team.
  - a. The review team must include the student's advisor and an additional core PsyD faculty member. The additional faculty member must agree to serve as a reviewer. It is recommended that students choose a faculty member who will likely serve on their dissertation committee.
- 3) Independently, students create an outline of the paper and write a letter of intent to complete the exam
  - a. The outline will serve as the basis of the paper and requires approval from the student's committee. This outline should be in-depth and demonstrate a logical flow and structure to the paper. Further, it should demonstrate how each area will be address and how the discipline specific content will be integrated.
  - b. The letter of intent should briefly describe the paper and note the request to begin writing the paper. The Letter of Intent should not exceed 1 page (single space).

- 4) Students submit via campus e-mail an outline and letter of intent (LOI) to their QEP Review Team. Within two weeks of the submission, reviewers will either approve, approve with conditions, or reject the LOI and outline.
  - i. Approve = Student can begin writing their paper and there are no changes required to the structure or topic of the paper.
  - ii. Approved with conditions = Student can begin writing their paper, but must address required changes or additions within their paper.
  - iii. Reject = Students may not begin working on their paper. Instead, the student must revise their outline and letter of intent. The student has two weeks to complete and resubmit his or her outline and letter of intent revisions. Failure to complete revisions within two-week time period will result in the student having to restart the process the following semester.
- 5) Once a letter of intent and outline are approved, students have 60 calendar days to complete the paper and submit it via email to their review team. When writing their paper, students should adhere to the following guidelines:
  - a. Students must write this paper completely on their own. Thus, students should not discuss or seek input on their paper from others (e.g., students or faculty members). However, students are permitted to use UHCL's Writing Center to help with general writing style and grammar.
  - b. The final paper should be no longer than 35 pages including a title page, abstract, and text. Reference and tables can exceed the 35 page limit.
  - c. The student must follow APA writing and formatting guides.
- 6) After submitting your QEP, the review team will have no more than 3 weeks (21 calendar days) review it and provide the student with feedback.
  - a. The paper is graded as "Pass" or "Fail" using the QEP Rubric.
  - b. Both reviewers must agree on the final outcome. In the event that reviewers cannot come to a consensus, a third reviewer selected by the Doctoral Training Committee may read the paper and will cast the deciding vote.
  - c. If the student fails the exam, they must restart the process at step 1. However, the outline and letter of intent should describe how the student plans to address deficiencies in your original paper.
  - d. Failing the exam twice will result in dismissal from the PsyD program.

## **Dissertation Requirements**

The dissertation represents the student's original contribution to research and scholarship prior to completing the PsyD. In the tradition of psychology, this has usually implied an empirical approach (broadly defined) and a contribution of new knowledge or understanding.

After passing the QEP, students develop a proposal for their dissertation. The student registers for three dissertation credits per semester (see *Dissertation Manual* for detailed instructions), with 9 hours of dissertation required for graduation. Enrollment in dissertation credits is continuous until the student successfully defends the dissertation.

### *Committee Composition*

There are two principles that guide the program's requirements for the dissertation. First, the student needs a primary mentor who has the expertise to aid the student in carrying out the dissertation research and writing. Second, the dissertation should pass the scrutiny of and be comprehensible to a broader community of scholars. The following composition of a dissertation committee is true to those principles and represents a practical arrangement. The dissertation committee must have at least three voting members (and not more than six) and be composed of:

1. A chairperson, who is a member of the doctoral program core faculty.

It should be noted that a faculty member from outside the program faculty or a person in the UHCL community may co-chair the dissertation, if the individual is judged by the dissertation committee to be the most appropriate mentor for the student. This decision must be approved by the Director of Clinical Training.

2. Two other departmental faculty members;

In most cases, the dissertation committee must have at least one other program faculty member and one non-program faculty member.

A faculty member from outside the university may serve as a member of the student's dissertation committee (and constitute the non-program faculty member), if the individual is judged by the dissertation committee to be an appropriate mentor for the student. This decision must be approved by the Director of Clinical Training, the Chair of CHAS, and the Dean of HSH.

The role of the chairperson of the dissertation committee is to provide the primary guidance of the student's work throughout the project. The role of the other members is to supplement this guidance with feedback and suggestions; the members also participate by scrutinizing the research design, evaluating the quality of the research, and approving the proposal and the dissertation.

### *Dissertation Proposal*

The student must formally ask a faculty member to serve as chair of the dissertation committee. Upon consultation and approval by the dissertation chair, the doctoral student asks other faculty members to be on their committee. Once the dissertation committee is formed, the *Dissertation Committee Approval form* is submitted and approved by the Director of Clinical Training prior to the proposal defense. Replacing committee members requires approval of the Doctoral Training Committee and submission of a new *Dissertation Committee Approval form*.

The student works on drafts of the proposal with the dissertation chair, and once approved to send to the committee by the chair, the document is distributed to all committee members.

The dissertation chair has to review each draft of the proposal; however, students should be aware that faculty are not on 12-month appointments, and therefore, they

may require additional time when not officially working for the department. Students should negotiate their proposed timeline with their faculty mentor in order to clarify expectations regarding document reviews. It is typical for proposals to go through multiple revisions before being approvable.

Dissertation committee members must have at least two weeks to review the document before stating if it is ready to be formally proposed. Given the difficulty with scheduling, a tentative meeting can be scheduled in advance (3-4 weeks after distributing the document), as long as faculty still have at least two weeks to review the document, and the dissertation chair confirms with the committee that the document is ready for the proposal meeting. Students can expect faculty members to raise issues, give feedback, or provide suggestions related to the document prior to the proposal meeting. It should be noted that it is the student's responsibility to coordinate the committee members' schedules for the two-hour proposal defense.

After an oral presentation and defense of the proposal and when all members of the committee are satisfied with the proposal, the committee members sign the *Dissertation Proposal Approval form*. The completed form is given to the Director of Clinical Training for review and approval. A copy is placed in the student's file.

**All doctoral research involving human subjects must have approval from the University's Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS). STUDENTS MAY NOT BEGIN TO COLLECT DATA UNTIL THEY HAVE OBTAINED INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL.**

This is a committee comprised of faculty across the university community. Students submit proposals and the CPHS Review forms to this committee. For details on the forms and policies, visit the UHCL Office of Sponsored Programs.

#### *Academic credit for the dissertation*

Typically, students begin registering for dissertation credit during the semester they are hoping to defend. However, in order to register for dissertation credits, they need to have successfully completed the Qualifying Exam Paper. Nine dissertation credits are required. Students will receive a grade change for these dissertation credits once they have orally defended the dissertation successfully (the grade will remain IP, in progress, until the successful defense).

#### *Dissertation Defense*

The student works closely with the dissertation chair to develop the final dissertation document. Students typically have several revisions based on ongoing input from the dissertation committee, before a draft is deemed acceptable. It is the sole judgment of the committee to determine whether a dissertation is adequate, ethical, and feasible. The dissertation must follow APA Style, while the format of the manuscript must conform to the requirements of the UHCL Library. The student will need to meet with and get approval from the Library Advisor before it is submitted to the Dean's Office. Typically, this approval would occur prior to the defense.

Once the advisor (with consultation with the committee) agrees that the dissertation is in good form, the student distributes the dissertation to the other committee members. The committee must have at least three weeks to review the document. Given difficulty with scheduling, a tentative meeting may be scheduled in advance (3-4 weeks after distributing the document). The dissertation chair confirms that the committee agrees the document is ready for the defense. Students can expect that faculty will raise significant issues related to the document prior to the oral defense meeting. Students should anticipate delays during summer and early fall when not all faculty members are working for the department, and it should be noted that preference is given to internship applicants completing their dissertation proposal.

Oral examinations of dissertations are open to the HSH community; however, only the dissertation committee determines the adequacy of the defense. Notice of the upcoming defense must be posted through the college two weeks in advance. The student has the responsibility of coordinating committee members' schedules for the two-hour formal defense of the completed dissertation.

Additionally the student notifies the Program Administrative Assistant of the date, time, and location of the defense, as well as of the dissertation title. The Program Administrative Assistant notifies the college of the oral defense.

The final defense of the dissertation is a meeting open to the public. After a 45-60 minute overview of the study, there is approximately a 15-30 minute question/answer session. This part of the defense is open to the public. After this portion, the student and any public attendees are excused, and the Dissertation Committee decides if the dissertation is approved in executive session. Only the committee members vote on the dissertation. Unanimous approval is required by committee members.

If the dissertation is not approved, a discussion of needed changes and a timetable for completing these changes is developed.

Students should modify the *Dissertation Oral Defense Approval* form with their relevant information prior to the defense. Approval of the dissertation is indicated by each committee member's signatures on these forms. Students provide the Program Administrator a copy of these forms and dissertation for their student file. Further, the student submits one copy of the dissertation to the Associate Dean's office, along with the signature page.

### **Applying for Doctoral Internship**

After obtaining approval of the dissertation proposal and obtaining approval of the DCT, a year of internship is required of all students.

Internship normally takes place in the fifth year and is an academic requirement of the program. An internship is usually 2,000 hour (one year full time; 1750 hours at the least) placement at a school or multidisciplinary treatment facility. Students receive in-depth clinical experiences in assessment and treatment, working with specific treatment populations. There are several APA-accredited internships available in the greater

Houston area, but, given the highly competitive nature of these internships, it is highly recommended that students plan to apply to internships all over the country.

The Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC; <https://www.appic.org/>) is the organization that provides access to accredited and APPIC member internship and postdoctoral training programs in professional psychology (i.e., Clinical, Counseling, and School Psychology). National Matching Service (NMS; <https://natmatch.com/psychint-landing.html>) offers a professional psychology internship placement through a match process. A list of internship sites can be obtained from the APPIC website. Students should be aware, a limited number of internships may be APA accredited but may not be members of APPIC. Also, many psychological associations (APA, ABCT, ABA, SRCD, APS, and SBM) sponsor program events at their meetings to bring together internship sites and potential applicants. Students should consider attending at least one of these meetings prior to applying for internship. Students apply for internship through APPIC. Then, NMS attempts to “match” students to placement sites across the country. This matching process occurs in February of each year. A second match process is offered in March for any students registered for the first match and not placed with an internship site. Finally, a Post-Match Vacancy Service is available for students who remain unmatched. The internship application form and the Match Policy are available on the APPIC Web site. It should be noted that a student can obtain an internship from a non-APA or APPIC approved site however, the student needs permission of the Director of Clinical Training for those sites prior to applying and accepting.

**Students must have passed the Qualifying Exam Paper and successfully completed the dissertation proposal meeting by October 1st of the year before they plan to go on internship.** Many internship programs have application deadlines as early as October and most are due in November. The Director of Clinical Training must complete APPIC’s “Verification of Internship Eligibility and Readiness”, which certifies the student’s amount of clinical experience and verifies the readiness to apply to internship as determined by the Doctoral Training Committee faculty during the annual evaluation process. The internship application is fully online.

The process of applying for an internship is a very demanding one, and it helps to get started during the summer of the year students plan to apply. Students should review the APPIC online directory that describes programs and visit program websites for additional information the summer before applying. It helps to be very organized in the approach to the application process, which is similar to when students applied to graduate school. The Director of Clinical Training meets with prospective internship students before the application process begins. The meeting serve to help students revise their vitae, choose internship sites, write the required essays and cover letters, and understand the match process. Students and alumni who have completed internship recently are more than willing to talk with students about specific internship programs and the application process. Students need to plan for travel expenses to interview at the sites. Most sites do not make offers to students without first going through an interview process. Interviews typically take place during December and January.

Here is a typical internship application timeline:

*First year:*

Review requirements  
Organize and record previous hours accrued in MA/SSP programs and in doctoral Practicum I

*Second year:*

Review APPIC online directory for potential internships  
Review the requirements of the sites that are of interest  
Organize & record previous hours accrued in doctoral Practicum II

*Application Year*

July – August:	Attend internship meetings to finalize vitae, complete first draft of essays and cover letter, select sites, and obtain information about the application, letters of recommendation, and Director of Clinical Training verification.
September:	Begin to complete the AAPI online and submit official transcripts.
By October:	Finalize any remaining program requirements
Oct. – Nov.:	Submit applications to selected sites
December:	Receive notification of interviews
Dec. – Jan:	Interviews
Early February:	Submit ranking list
Late February:	Match results
Early March:	Submit materials for Match 2 (if needed)
Late March:	Be notified of Match 2 results (if needed)
April – Sept.:	Review openings in the Post-Match Vacancy (if needed)

***Detailed Process***

Students intending to apply for internships meet with their advisors in the spring before the application year to discuss their readiness for internship. They then work with their advisors and the DCT to select internship sites that best meet their training needs. In the summer and fall of the application year, students work with their advisors and the DCT to finalize their applications and prepare for interviews.

One of the application forms requires a detailed accounting of specific clinical experiences. Completion of this form is much easier if the student keeps a running log of clinical experiences and hours beginning in their first semester. **Please note also that one of the forms is a verification of readiness for internship that must be signed by the DCT.** Students usually receive invitations for interviews by internship programs during December. Interviews start in December, but more typically occur in

January. Both internship programs and student applicants then submit rankings expressing their preferences, usually in early February. These rankings are submitted to a computerized Matching Program coordinated by APPIC. The results of the computerized Matching Program are released in late February on a single designated Match Day. At that time, students are informed of the internship site with which they have been matched, and then must contact the site to accept and make arrangements for the internship year. Students also should inform the DCT and their advisors about the results of their internship application.

Applicants not matched through this process then participate in a second phase of the Matching Program (which mirrors the same process as the first phase, only with phone interviews and a shorter timeframe). Any applicants who do not match during the second phase may participate in the APPIC Post Match Vacancy, which provides information on programs that still have vacancies to applicants who have not matched. The Post Match Vacancy is less formalized, with applicants and sites able to make decisions about offers and acceptances on a case-by-case basis with no set timeline.

A student may not arrange his/her own internship outside of the APPIC matching or Post Match Vacancy process without prior consultation with and permission of the student's advisor and the DCT.

Evaluations of the student's performance are provided by internship supervisors during each semester they are enrolled in internship. These evaluations are reviewed by the DCT and clinical faculty and placed in the student's file. Internship directors are asked to use the program's PISCE form for competency evaluation, but may use their own evaluation forms.

### **Other Required Activities and Deadlines**

A full list of major activities, requirements, and associated deadlines follows below. This can be a helpful resource.

#### **Prior to First Year**

- Attend Orientation and sign disclosure statements and CPS
- Complete criminal background investigation before beginning the fall semester
- Paperwork for TA/RA positions

#### **Every Year**

- Prior to fall semester
  - Register for courses
  - Sign contracts for research and teaching assistantships as needed
- Prior to spring semester
  - Register for courses
- End of the Year
  - Research Activity Report (online)
  - Evaluation of the Program
  - Meet with Mentor about Annual Evaluations

### **Other Doctoral Policies**

### **The Advisor-Advisee Relationship**

The PsyD program operates on a mentor model; whereby, each student enters the program with a faculty advisor already assigned. Upon admission, students are matched with a faculty mentor based on research interests, and typically the student stays with their mentor throughout their academic career. The student's research advisor plays a significant role in training and guiding the student in developing their own research plans for research projects and dissertation work.

Further, the advisor serves a number of other functions, including:

- a. approving the student's schedule of classes
- b. answering questions about the program
- c. serving as the student's advocate
- d. helping the student develop a Program of Study
- e. helping the student in decision-making regarding externship and internship applications
- f. helping with the formation of the Dissertation Committee
- g. providing feedback to the student following departmental student evaluations made at the end of each year
- h. serving as the first point of contact if problems arise
- i. serving as the liaison between a student and the DTC
- j. informing the student of program changes

As stated above, the advisor also serves as the student's research mentor and dissertation supervisor. This begins with the first semester of the first year, as the advisor works with the student to select and develop research interests and skills. The advisor serves as the primary mentor for the research project and dissertation, and often on additional research projects. In some cases, a student may enter the program with "co-advisors," whereby, two clinical faculty members serve as the student's research advisors. Such situations require close collaboration and communication among the student and faculty members to ensure that all are aware of each other's expectations and progress. The faculty members can also agree to split specific elements of the advisor relationship (e.g., one serving as the primary research mentor, the other serving as the primary advisor with regard to program requirements and milestones). Regardless of the specific arrangement, one faculty member must be designated as the *primary advisor* of record.

Each advisor has his/her own approach to mentorship in research, program, and other professional activities. **The student shares in the responsibility for developing a relationship within which they may achieve their academic and professional goals.**

### **Switching Mentors**

Although most students stay with the same research mentor throughout their time at UHCL, there is no requirement to do so and there is no stigma associated with changing mentors. Students may request a change in mentor as they matriculate through the program. We encourage students to stay with a mentor for a minimum of two years to provide depth in their training experience and continuity in the training program. Every

effort is made to accommodate student requests within reason.

Students, who are interested in changing mentors, may approach other faculty members to discuss the available options. However, the student should involve his or her original research/academic advisor in these discussions early in the process. There are a number of reasons a student may wish to switch advisors, including new research interests, working relationships, or absence of current advisor. Whatever the reason for change, it is the student's responsibility to arrange for a new advisor.

In initiating a change, there are some guidelines to follow. The possibility of changing advisors should be discussed at about the same time with both the prospective advisor and the current advisor. Neither the prospective nor the current advisor should be uninformed or receive information about the switch from a third party. It is important to make plans to complete any ongoing projects with the current advisor so that neither the student's work nor the advisor's work suffers. The elements of this policy model appropriate professional courtesy. For changes due to an advisor's leave/retirement, alternatives and plans should be discussed with the advisor.

Early in the process, the student should inform the DCT about the potential change and discuss with the DCT the best ways to handle the change. Or, if the DCT is the advisor involved, the DCT should be consulted. In general, the DCT are available for consultation about such changes at any step in the process.

Once the student has finalized the decision to change advisors, the student needs to complete the *Change of Advisor* form. Once the form is complete and signed by all parties, a copy of the form should be given to the DCT, who files a copy in the student file.

### **Troubleshooting**

In the event that problems develop in the research collaboration, both the advisor and student are encouraged to discuss the difficulties together first. If this discussion fails to resolve the problems, the student may speak with the Director of Clinical Training to determine reasonable next steps.

### **Engagement in the Program and Professional Service Contributions**

Aside from satisfactory grades and completion of area requirements, there are many indicators of success for doctoral students. These include, but are not limited to, development of clinical skills and engagement in clinical training within the program. Students have opportunities to complete practica with supervisors both within and outside the program. Students are expected to be active consumers of clinical training, which includes being prepared for therapy and assessment sessions and supervision, completing relevant readings, and seeking concrete feedback in the development of clinical skills specific to a given practicum experience.

Students are expected to be present at local and national activities (e.g., invited speaker presentations, lab meetings, classes). Students are encouraged to present throughout their time in the program.

**Presentation at regional or national meeting(s):** Students are expected to present empirical research projects at regional and/or national research conferences. Submissions are typically those in which the student has played a significant role as an investigator. Meeting attendance and conference presentations introduce the students to and facilitate their involvement with the national research communities of psychologists. Completion of multiple conference presentations prior to the award of the PsyD is strongly advised so that students will be competitive applicants for internship and future employment opportunities.

Students can also make important contributions to the profession. In general, there are many ways students can be involved including:

- Being a student representative committee member
- Presenting at a formal colloquium or brown bag
- Assisting with visiting speakers
- Attending area or departmental talks and meeting with speakers
- Attendance at scientific meetings and conferences
- The PsyD faculty members may nominate students for membership on the Division 12 (Clinical) and 38 (Health) committees, and the Division 54 (Pediatric) and 16 (School Psychology) committees
- Helping to review manuscripts

It should be noted that all service should be recorded for future applications and for the Annual Report of Involvement.

### **Doctoral Fellowships**

To help ensure the success of students in the program, every student receives a doctoral fellowship for full time study. The fellowship stipend is approximately \$17,000 per year. The fellowship is an annual salary that will be paid equally for 9 or 12 months of the year. Fellowship duties are assigned during the summer each year. You will be notified of your fellowship duties in early to late summer. Although student preference is taken into account, not all students will get their main preference.

Each year you will need to complete paperwork through the HSH Business Office. Further, when teaching for the first time, you will also need to complete other paperwork through the Dean's office.

Fellowships require 20 hours per week of professional obligations to the program, during the fellowship award period. Continued support and renewal requires maintenance of a 3.60 or higher GPA, satisfactory progress toward degree completion, and adequate performance evaluations.

The fellowship is a 9-month position. Students are permitted up to four weeks of vacation each year. Students should talk with their advisor about the requested time. If the advisor agrees to the request, the student should submit requests for vacations to the business office at least one month in advance of the vacation. Students should *not* make travel plans without first consulting with their advisor. If fellowships include teaching responsibilities, students are not able to take vacation during their scheduled teaching activities.

Some fellowships consist of research activities with an assigned research advisor. For these research fellows, the research advisor designates activities required for the fellow. For most first-year research assistants, the experience will also include a pre-practicum clinical experience completing brief supervised intakes (titled, "clinic assistant"). Some fellowships consist primarily of teaching activities. If a student fellowship includes teaching a class, the student is required to attend mentorship meetings. Students have a teaching mentor, who is typically a general psychology faculty member. However, each student is also "set-up" with a faculty member who has experience teaching the class that the student is assigned to teach. This faculty member is important in the initial formation of the class, and they will help the student develop the course syllabus and lecture material. Further, the teaching mentor is an assigned professor that mentors all of the fellows. Students meet with the teaching mentor on a regular basis to address teaching strategies, problems, and teaching outcomes. Students in the class also complete formal evaluations of the fellow's performance. All evaluations of teaching performance are placed in their student file. A full teaching load for doctoral students includes two courses for the year (one per long semester). Exceeding this limit requires approval by the Doctoral Training Committee for each semester.

If the student receives unsatisfactory teaching ratings, a remediation plan is developed. The teaching mentor works with the student to develop this plan and to ensure that the student adheres to the plan. If the student receives a second unsatisfactory rating, the teaching mentor and PsyD faculty members discuss the follow-up plan, which may include reassignment of fellowship responsibilities.

The doctoral fellowship does not cover health insurance. Additionally, the doctoral fellowship does not cover tuition, student fees, or any late registration or late payment fees. Students are responsible for any other non-registration related fees as well as any fees assessed for dropping or switching classes (e.g., program adjustment fee).

The main intent of the fellowship is to provide the time and support essential for the professional development of the fellow into a well-trained, doctoral-level psychologist. Since such training involves classroom instruction, research endeavors, and clinical experiences, duties of the fellowship are designed to provide relevant training and experiences in all these areas. Fellows may be asked to help with class preparations, as well as assist in data collection, preparation, and analysis.

**NOTE:** Students MUST be registered EVERY SEMESTER for which they have fellowship. Additionally, students must register for nine credits each semester (fall/spring). Failure to register for a semester will result in the termination of fellowship pay.

### **Outside Employment/Assessment for Pay**

Full-time coursework and fellowship duties are significant. In order to avoid compromising performance, employment outside of the fellowship is generally discouraged and is prohibited without expressed approval of the DTC. A student who seeks employment outside of the university must submit a petition to the DTC that must be approved prior to accepting such a position. Further, if the work is to continue beyond one semester, the student will need to petition the DTC each semester to

continue working outside the program. This request must include

1. a description of the job tasks
2. the number of hours per week the student plans to work, and
3. the contact information for the supervisor of such activity

Students cannot begin such employment without the approval of the advisor and the DTC. Students are encouraged to consult with their advisor and the DTC prior to entering into discussions with outside employers. Further, if these activities seem to be disrupting students' progress in the program or in their fellowship, the DTC can prohibit the student from continuing with these activities.

Further, students can get involved in other activities within the university (assisting professors in classes, consulting with professors). If a student would like to do these activities, they need to talk with their major advisor. If both agree it would be helpful, then the student can make a request to the DTC through a petition.

**It is considered a conduct violation, if the student is found to be working outside the program without proper approval.**

### **Requests/Petitions**

Throughout students' time in the program, requests (i.e., outside employment, change of advisors) are made by students that need an approval by the DTC. These requests should be sent on the formal petition document to the student's advisor via email, with all appropriate paperwork attached. Petitions are reviewed at the monthly program meeting (during long semesters). The DTC will talk about the petition as an entire faculty. All discussion and votes related to requests occur at first DTC meeting that occurs following when the request was made. Therefore, in most cases, the student should hear about the request within a week of the DTC meeting. Once a decision has been made, the student will be notified via email the outcome of their request.

### **Clinical Experiences and Recording Hours**

Students are given ample opportunities to practice clinical assessment and treatment skills in the onsite Psychological Services Clinic. Fully licensed psychologists, who are either part of the faculty or who are adjunct supervisors, supervise all practica experiences.

Students are responsible for recording their practicum hours accurately and in accordance with the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) application standards. All students are required to purchase Time2Track (<https://time2track.com/>) to track their hours. Students are encouraged to become familiar with the tracking requirements prior to starting the internal practicum. Students submit their accumulated clinical hours each May for the annual evaluation.

Students are responsible for maintaining all paperwork on clients, scheduling appointments, identifying treatment goals, and obtaining supervision (See *Clinic Policies and Procedures Manual* for details of student responsibilities at the clinic). In the fourth year of the program, students are assigned to supervise Master's and Specialist's students. Both individual and group supervision will be provided on a regular basis.

Student supervisors and supervising faculty conduct evaluations of students' clinical work.

There is a chance that students can continue seeing clients in the clinic during the second year of the program. The ability to see clients will depend on issues associated with the client's needs, the amount of clients in the clinic, and the student's needs. Outside of the second year, students can only see clients under special circumstances and with approval by the Director of Clinical Training and their clinical.

There are guidelines about how many hours of practica experiences doctoral students need to appear competitive either for internship sites or for clinical jobs. Generally, doctoral students have between 600-750 direct contact hours. Given this range, we recommend that students obtain a minimum of 800-1000 hours (direct and indirect hours) of practica experiences. Students document their hours and the amount of time devoted to assessment, treatment, supervision, and other clinical tasks. Many states require this information for licensing.

### **Academic Advising**

Students are matched with a faculty advisor who assists with advising on course selection and progress through the program. Advisors are responsible for keeping track of the student's research and academic progress. A student may choose to do research with someone other than their research advisor, and as stated previously, paperwork needs to be completed if students want to switch to a new advisor.

### **Problematic Personal and Professional Behavior**

It should be noted that the program has adopted The Comprehensive Evaluation of Student-Trainee Competence in Professional Psychology Programs (see Appendix A) model policy in relation to evaluating performance.

The following two ethical principles from the American Psychological Association Ethical Principles of Psychologists (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code2002.html>) guide deliberations. **Principle A: Beneficence and Nonmaleficence**, requires psychologists to balance the welfare and rights of patients, clients, supervisees, and students. This includes concern for harm that may derive from impaired or incompetent students. **Principle B: Fidelity and Responsibility**, expresses concern for the community and society in which psychologists work. This includes the responsibility to insure adequate interpersonal and professional skills in all graduates.

Additionally, consistent with the ethical guidelines [2.03, 2.06(b), and 10.10(a)], and in the interest of client safety, students are required to take steps to maintain their own physical and mental health. Impairment refers to diminished functioning whereas incompetence refers to insufficient skills to provide adequate professional care. Impairment and incompetence can stem from interpersonal and intrapersonal problems as well as inadequate theoretical understanding and insufficient clinical proficiency in assessment and treatment.

## **Ethical Clinical Behavior**

First, the progress of students completing their internal practicum is reviewed during both of the semesters they are enrolled in the internal practicum. Serious concerns regarding clinical competence will result in a remediation plan. Such concerns among the clinical faculty could lead to immediate removal of clinical cases, a possible leave of absence to address the concerns, and/or immediate termination.

Second, at any time, if a student comes to believe that he or she is not able to serve effectively in a clinical setting, he or she must immediately notify their clinical supervisor and DCT and suspend their clinical, research, or teaching activities as appropriate (with the help of their clinical supervisor, research mentor, or the Department Head). If the Doctoral Training Committee discovers or suspects a student has personal problems of any kind that may be impairing clinical competence or professionalism, the Doctoral Training Committee reserves all rights to initiate a dialogue with this student and make reasonable inquiries to ascertain the student's competence or ability to practice. These personal problems can include, but is not limited to, social, situational, physical, or psychological difficulties. During the conversation with the faculty, the student is expected to be forthright about any condition interfering with the successful execution of their clinical work. The Doctoral Training Committee does not discriminate against any disability and provides reasonable accommodations where appropriate, as outlined and approved by the university's Accessibility Support Center.

If there is sufficient evidence supporting a student's impairment due to, but not limited to, an emotional, neuropsychological, or substance abuse condition, the faculty may (a) recommend that the student take a leave of absence until the student is no longer impaired, (b) recommend potential support services, (c) recommend that the student discontinue the program, or (d) formally dismiss the student from the program. For students exhibiting these problems, they may or may not receive a remediation plan from program (based on the clinical judgment and expertise of the faculty).

It should also be noted that students also share a responsibility to take action if we believe that a person's personal problems may be harmful to patients, clients, or colleagues. The appropriate action would be to bring the concern to the attention of the person whom is believed to be impaired. If that does not result in a corrective response and there is still a perceived risk, it would be appropriate to consult with one's faculty advisor or the Director of Clinical Training.

Interpersonal skills and intrapersonal characteristics are considered essential to functioning as a psychologist; therefore, deficiencies in these areas may result in disciplinary action. When a student's behavior or performance raises concerns about the student's ability to perform satisfactorily as a psychologist, that behavior or performance is considered as grounds for academic discipline and/or removal from clinical, research, or teaching responsibilities. Students must adhere to the laws and regulations relating to the practice of psychology in whichever jurisdiction they are working. Given that students work in clinical settings, they are held to the same ethical and professional

standards of conduct within professional psychology environments. As noted previously, students exhibiting these problem may or may not receive a remediation plan prior to dismissal from the program (based on the clinical judgment and expertise of the faculty).

### **Other Expectations of Behavior**

Outside of expectations of behaviors in clinical experiences (see above), there are overall expectations of students while in their program. In general, students are expected to behave in a professional and responsible manner, which is much of the basis for the annual evaluation of each student. Students are expected to be responsible in every manner, including attending all classes, completing all assignments and turning them in "on-time," responding to feedback, treating other students and faculty in the program with respect, engaging in ethical behavior, and being prepared (i.e. reading outside of class; self-directed behaviors related to client contact).

To reiterate, both faculty members and students share a responsibility to take action if they believe that a person's personal problems may be harmful to patients, clients, colleagues, or other citizens. The appropriate action would be to bring the concern to the attention of the person believed to be impaired. If that does not result in a corrective response and a perceived risk remains, it would be appropriate to consult with a faculty member or the Director of Clinical Training.

### **Consequences of Problematic Behavior**

There are multiple consequences that could occur due to problematic behavior. First, if there is sufficient evidence supporting a student's personal impairment in program responsibilities due to an emotional, neuropsychological, or substance abuse condition, the faculty may (a) recommend that the student take a leave of absence until the student is no longer impaired, (b) recommend potential support services, (c) recommend that the student discontinue the program, or (d) formally dismiss the student from the program.

If personal or professional problematic behavior occurs, a remediation plan is likely to occur. Remediation of deficiencies includes, but is not limited to, repeating coursework, repeating practicum or internship experiences, increasing supervision, or taking a leave of absence. Failure to benefit from remediation may be followed by counseling toward voluntary withdrawal from the program or formal termination. Any student who, in the judgment of the clinical faculty, lacks the competencies necessary for effective service delivery and/or progress through the program will be advised orally and in writing as to the necessary remediation required.

### **Recognizing and Remediating Personal Difficulties**

We understand that students may experience difficulties during their time in the program. Unfortunately, the potential range of problems is vast, and may include illness, problems with romantic relationships and family members, financial pressures, confusion about career choices, personality conflicts, and others. Such difficulties may lead to the erosion of the student's professional performance. When students experience stressors that adversely affect them, we hope that they feel comfortable approaching any faculty member to discuss their concerns. Students are encouraged to set some limits on the

extent of detail they want this faculty member to share with colleagues, but not be so restrictive that the faculty member cannot serve effectively as the student's advocate. Ultimately, issues that negatively impact a student's academic or professional competencies is shared with the faculty, as faculty members cannot guarantee confidentiality with regard to your training. Faculty advisors (and faculty in general) do support privacy and confidentiality as outlined through FERPA.

There are certain types of activities that create special difficulties for students. The most blatant difficulties stem from activities that are clearly unethical. Students are expected to abide by the ethical standards of the profession.

A second blatant stance involves dishonesty. Professionals operate by making and honoring commitments; they understand their reputations are priceless in keeping their standing in the community. A good reputation is painstakingly built, but can be quickly ruined; dishonesty ruins one's reputation quickly and thoroughly.

Avoidance is a third pattern that creates special problems. People may tend to avoid onerous or difficult life tasks. Such avoidance is very expensive psychologically. Avoidance also feeds on itself, breeding further avoidance. This difficulty often manifests itself in failure to complete research objectives in a timely way. Its negative effects are magnified if students remain away from campus or avoid contact. Faculty encourage the students' learning and involvement, but it is students' responsibility to get their work done in a timely way.

A final area of special concern is when students manifest patterns of poor judgment or interpersonal problems. In this scenario, no single problem in and of itself constitutes a blatant violation of ethics or blatant disregard of others, but a student accumulates a history of engaging in troublesome peculiar responses in a wide variety of situations. Individuals who manifest such behavioral patterns may be unable to recognize their existence, and often may not view them as problems. Lack of recognition about how one generally affects others can create problematic interpersonal relationships with faculty and peers—problems that are not easy to address directly.

### **Reasons for Termination from the Program**

Faculty members and administration at UHCL and the PsyD program expect conduct of all students that is consistent with the law, all relevant University policies and rules, including the University Student Conduct Code:

<https://www.uhcl.edu/policies/documents/student-affairs/student-rights-and-responsibilities.pdf> and the American Psychological Association Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (<http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/>).

**Single episode violations or patterns of recurring behavior could result in termination** as determined by the Doctoral Training Committee and/or by the Administration of the College of Human Sciences and Humanities or University.

The conditions under which a student may be terminated from the program include, but are not limited to:

- 1) Having a cumulative GPA of less than 3.00 for more than one semester. Fellowships require a cumulative GPA of 3.60. Students have one semester to raise their GPA, if the GPA remains below 3.60, the fellowship is terminated. The fellowship may be reinstated if the GPA is raised above 3.60 within the fellowship period – the first 3-4 years in the program.
- 2) Obtaining less than a B- grade in any program required course after taking the course for the second time.
- 3) Failing the Qualifying Exam Paper twice.
- 4) Engaging in unethical, unprofessional, threatening, criminal behavior (plagiarism, cheating, violation of APA ethical guidelines, or the University policies or governmental law, including harassment) or consistent inability or unwillingness to carry out academic or practicum responsibilities. These activities include, but are not limited to, refusing to work with a particular group of clients; missing classes, departmental activities or client appointments; failing to complete clinical paperwork or class assignments; failing to attend mandatory meetings; or failing to complete mandatory requirements.
- 5) Experiencing problems that affect the student's functioning in the program, including performance or behaviors that demonstrate poor interpersonal skills and an inability to effectively communicate with others or form an appropriate therapeutic relationship with clients; lack of insight into negative consequences of own behavior; frequent blame of others or external factors for failures or difficulties; and inability to tolerate different points of view, constructive feedback or supervision.
- 6) Failing to make timely and satisfactory progress on program requirements (including clinical work, clinical competencies, thesis and dissertation research, Qualifying Exam Paper, professional development, internship, etc.), responsibilities, and activities.
- 7) Demonstrating conduct that is a violation of the University Student Conduct Code (such a violation can result in a referral to the office for Student Conduct and Community Standards for campus disciplinary action, including possible dismissal from the University as well as possible action by the Doctoral Training Committee). Conduct violations by a student off-campus in university related activities (e.g., external practicum, internship, etc.) will be handled the same as if the violation occurred on-campus.
- 8) Failing to respond to a remediation plan or failure to make adequate progress while under remediation.

Although it is expected that initial attempts to resolve issues occurs between the faculty advisor and student, a formal remediation plan specifically outline requirements for successful completion. Inability to resolve and complete the remediation plan satisfactorily is followed by counseling toward voluntary withdrawal from the program or formal termination. Students who are dismissed from or leave the program are not eligible to reapply or return.

It should also be noted that there may be some instances (i.e. unethical or illegal behavior) that do not warrant a remediation plan, and instead, the behavior warrants an immediate dismissal. In those instances where a student has engaged in such conduct, the program faculty members meet and discuss the behavior and a majority of members need to vote for the dismissal of the student.

Remediation plans are separate from academic or university probation. Students receiving academic or university probation have this indicated on their applications for internship. Successfully completed remediation plans are not listed as probation for these purposes. Students suspended from the program for any reason have this noted on their internship applications.

### **Remediation Plan Procedures**

When a student exhibits difficulties that impact her or his progress and matriculation within the program, a remediation plan must be developed. In general, remediation plans can be implemented at any time; however, remediation plans are typically formally triggered if:

- a. The student fails a class
- b. Scores poorly on the annual evaluation
- c. Scores poorly on an evaluation by a supervisor
- d. Does not meet benchmarks on schedule
- e. Engages in unprofessional conduct

Outside of these formal means, if a faculty member has concerns, the PsyD faculty member presents her or his concerns regarding the student's difficulties to the DTC. This concern may be related to difficulties in meeting program benchmarks in a timely manner (taking courses needed, passing comprehensive exam, failing to progress in dissertation/research), poor academic performance in coursework or clinical work, demonstration of unprofessional work characteristics, or other difficulties noted by one or more faculty. Once the faculty member presents his/her concerns, the Doctoral Training Committee will discuss the student's performance and decide one of the following:

- a. There is insufficient documentation or difficulties present to warrant further action,
- b. The student may receive an informal letter of concern (outlining specific, behaviorally defined concerns and inform the student that a Remediation Plan may be required should her or his performance decline) from the Director of Clinical Training regarding the student's performance, OR
- c. A Remediation Plan will be created for the student.

### *Remediation Plans*

When a Remediation Plan is required, the following shall occur:

1. A Remediation Committee will be formed consisting of at least two PsyD program faculty members, with one faculty member appointed as the chair. The student's advisor will serve on this committee, but the advisor cannot serve as the chair.

2. The Remediation Committee will review the student's performance related to the noted concerns (possibly including academic transcripts, annual competency evaluations, evaluations of practicum/internship, and other data as needed).
3. Within two weeks of the recommendation of the formation of the Remediation Committee, the Remediation Committee will create a Remediation Plan for the student to complete. This plan may include diverse activities to assist the student in remediating her or his difficulties within the program.
4. The Remediation Plan will be presented to the student by the student's faculty advisor. The student may respond to the plan (not to exceed 5 calendar days from receipt of the draft Remediation Plan) by suggesting changes or additions into the plan; however, the final plan will be approved by the Remediation Committee.
5. The student will then be presented with the finalized Remediation Plan and sign that they have received the plan and understand that they must satisfy all requirements of the Remediation Plan by the outlined dates with accompanying penalties for failure to satisfactorily comply with the Remediation Plan.
6. Once all signatures are obtained, the form is delivered to the Administrative Assistant, and they will convert it to PDF and file it in the student file on the shared drive.
7. It is the student's responsibility to inform the Chair of the Remediation Committee and their advisor of the progress/completion of the Remediation Plan.
8. The Remediation Committee will meet with the student no later than the date by which all remediation activities were to be completed to assess the student's performance.
9. Should a change be needed in the course of the Remediation Plan, a written amendment document must be attached to the original Remediation Plan, with accompanying signatures from the Remediation Committee and student.

If a student fails part of or the entire remediation plan, which includes not making progress or meeting deadlines on the remediation plan, the student will most likely be **terminated from the program**.

### **Grievance Policies and Procedures**

When the grievance pertains to grades, the grade appeals procedure can be found in the current Graduate Catalog available online (<https://catalog.uhcl.edu/current/graduate/>). When the grievance pertains to student employment, the student employment grievance policy must be followed (<https://www.uhcl.edu/policies/documents/human-resources/grievance-appeal-policy-non-faculty-employees.pdf>).

Outside of grades and employment, the following policy and procedures are provided by the UHCL PsyD program for investigating and resolving cases of alleged violation or grievances by doctoral students that do not involve grades or employment issues.

In most instances, a grievance may be resolved to everyone's satisfaction informally between or among the individuals involved. The informal process involves only those people directly impacted; there is no written grievance filed, and the resolution of the problem is acceptable to all parties. Students and faculty are encouraged to keep the lines of communication open and to protect the rights and needs of each individual. More specifically, if a student has a grievance with a particular person, then the student needs to address the issue with that person. If the issue is not resolved, the Director of Clinical Training may be contacted to help mediate the communication between the two parties. If the grievance is against the Director of Clinical Training, then the chair of the department should be consulted for direction.

While the Psy D program fosters open communication and encourages an informal resolution between parties, we recognize that in some instances this is not possible. In such cases, the formal grievance policy and procedures below must be followed.

**Step I.** To initiate formal procedures, the student submits a written grievance (within 20 working days following the issue or the failure to resolve the issue informally) with a full and concise statement of the facts (as perceived by him or her) to the Director of Clinical Training. The DCT will review the letter and redact any personal information. Once the letter has been reviewed and personal content redacted, then the copies of the letter will be sent to all those involved. The written statement must (1) indicate that a grievance is being initiated, including the parties involved (an individual or a list of committee members), and (2) state the grounds for the grievance. The grievant must provide a clear and complete description of the issue(s), and not just the grievant's unsubstantiated opinion. Grounds for a grievance will ordinarily fall into one of the following categories:

1. Error in ratings
2. Disagreement concerning the rating delivered for clinically relevant products, research related products, or professional behavior
3. Disagreement regarding the program faculty member's directions for the completion of and final rating of grievant's clinically relevant products, research related products, or professional behavior.

The written statement must specify which of the three grounds for grievance. The written request for a grievance hearing must be initiated during the 45-day period after the date when the ratings were received by the student. Once the grievance letter is received, the individual(s) involved will submit a written response to the student's grievance. The written grievance, responses, and substantiating documentation, including meeting notes, will be kept in a secure location.

Written grievances and responses will be given to the Director of Clinical Training, and all responses will be distributed to the Doctoral Training Committee in advance of that group's next regularly scheduled meeting. At separate times, the student and the representative of the committee will be allowed to address the entire committee. Committee members may ask questions of the student or representative to gather additional information. All parties will then be dismissed from the meeting, after which a formal vote will be taken to determine the outcome of the grievance. A majority vote is needed for a final decision (reject or accept the grievance).

**Step II.** If the grievance is denied within 15 business days from the date of the decision, the student may submit a written appeal to the Department Chair (or to the Dean if the grievance is against the DCT, since the Chair replaces the DCT in such grievances). In this document the student will identify a UHCL faculty member to represent him or her on the Grievance Committee. The Director of Clinical Training will ask the individuals being grieved to select an UHCL faculty member to sit on a Grievance Committee. The Director of Clinical Training directs the two representatives to arrange a meeting. At that meeting, the two members select a third member to complete the Grievance Committee. (No more than two Grievance Committee members may be members of the Department of Psychology). The Grievance Committee members must have no prior involvement in the case, must be impartial, and must be capable of rendering a just and fair decision. A member not able to do so should disqualify him or herself from the grievance review. The three representatives will meet with those involved separately or collectively to resolve the grievance. The student may be accompanied by an advocate who is a member in good standing of the University community (student, faculty or staff). At a minimum, the committee must interview the student and may choose to interview others as needed. The claimant and the respondent(s) may recommend witnesses. Attorneys may not be present. Within 10 business days, the committee will render a decision in writing.

A detailed record will be kept of the hearing along with a sound recording. The record will be signed by the Grievance Committee attesting to the fact that the written record is a true record of the hearing proceedings. The written grievance and any subsequent documents, including meeting notes and audiotapes, will be kept in a locked file in the Department Chair's office for a period of 5 years.

In its deliberations, the grievance committee will determine whether the previous decision involved a lack of due process, was arbitrary and/or capricious, or contributed to unfair treatment of the student. Note that the grievance committee is not charged with resolving the problem that led to the grievance, but with determining whether if there are grounds to support it.

**Step III.** Within 10 business days of the completion of Step II, if the student wishes to appeal the outcome of that process, s/he may do so by writing to the Dean of the College of Human Sciences and Humanities. The appeal must include (1) the grounds for the appeal; (2) the original grievance; and (3) the Grievance Committee's report from Step II. The Dean may request additional documentation or call witnesses to respond to the claims. The Dean will render a decision within 10 business days working days after all the necessary information has been gathered. This decision is final and may not be appealed.

*Note - It is a violation of University policy to take action against a member of the university community for filing a grievance.*

### **Grade Appeals for HSH**

HSH affirms the right of faculty to evaluate student performance. However, students have the right to appeal a grade. In general, the grounds for appeal must be

demonstrable in writing; more than the student's unsubstantiated opinion must be presented.

Grounds for grade appeal will ordinarily fall into one of the following categories:

1. Instructor error in computing grades
2. Disagreements concerning the number of student assignments submitted for evaluation
3. Disagreements concerning the instructor's instructions submitting work or performing tasks

**NOTE:** The committee will not re-grade individual assignments. The focus of the review is on the grade for the entire course.

*Process:*

Students considering a grade appeal are responsible for familiarizing themselves with this policy, available in the HSH Advising Office. Questions concerning the policy may be referred to the Associate Dean.

*Initiating the Appeal:*

The student must first attempt to resolve the grade dispute with the instructor of record or the relevant department chair. If such conversations do not lead to a resolution, the student sends a written statement detailing the grounds for the appeal to the Associate Dean. The statement must specify which of the three grounds for appeal (see above) the student will address. The written request for an appeal must be received within the 45-day period after the date when grades are available to students. Appeal letters must include appropriate and concise documentation to substantiate the appeal claim. The instructor will also be contacted to submit a written response to the student's appeal, a course syllabus, and any other relevant documentation. The Appeals Committee will review all written requests in a closed meeting of committee members only. Appeals judged to be unsubstantiated, undocumented, or outside the grounds for appeal will be rejected. Such decisions will be communicated to the student and instructor by the Associate Dean via UHCL email. Appeals not so judged will move to the second phase of the process, an appeal hearing.

A student granted an appeal hearing will be notified of the hearing date and time. The committee may require the instructor and/or student to submit additional written materials; both the instructor and student may submit written documents bearing directly on the course or coursework for committee consideration. All written documents must be delivered to the Associate Dean at least 3 working days in advance of the hearing. The student will be notified by UHCL email of the committee's decision within 2 working days of the committee review.

If the committee decides a further hearing is warranted, the committee will meet separately with the student and the instructor and consider any additional written

documentation. This is not a legal procedure, and attorneys may not attend the hearing. The following principles will apply to the conduct of the hearing:

- reasonable standard of civility must be maintained during presentations or the hearing will be ended by the Associate Dean and the offending party will forfeit the appeal;
- each party should be prepared to present his or her position and answer the committee's questions for a period that normally will not exceed 20 minutes;
- the committee will judge on the basis of preponderance of the evidence; and
- the committee may decide to raise or lower the grade or to leave the grade as is.

If the student fails to appear at the scheduled hearing, the hearing will proceed to a binding decision without the student's participation.

#### *The Appeal Decision:*

The committee's decision will be recorded by the Associate Dean who will in turn notify both the instructor and the student via UHCL email. Any grade change to be made will be made by the Dean. The student may appeal the committee's decision to the Dean in writing within 15 working days of notification. The Dean's decision is final on all grade appeals.

#### **Time Limit for Program Completion**

The time limit for completion of the doctoral program in Health Service Psychology is **seven years**. Students who have not completed their courses, dissertation, internship, and all other requirements for the degree within seven years are terminated from the program unless they file for an appeal. If a student is actively involved in completing his or her dissertation or internship in the seventh year, his or her faculty advisor may appeal to the Dean of HSH for an extension of one calendar year. UHCL requires courses to be repeated after ten years and an extension is not granted beyond ten years from the start of the program. Students unable to fulfill all requirements within this timeframe or if denied an extension are dismissed from the program.

#### **Leave of Absence**

A student-initiated leave of absence can range from one semester to one year. Students must gain approval from the Doctoral Training Committee to take a leave of absence, and must show satisfactory progress in the program to that point (as demonstrated on competency evaluations). Only one personal leave is allowed while in the program and an extension beyond one year usually is not permitted. Students with a documented disability/illness or a University imposed leave may receive additional time. Students forfeit their fellowship and tuition remission during a voluntary leave of absence. If students are on a disability or University imposed leave of absence, fellowship and tuition remission replacement is at the discretion of the Dean of HSH. Students should submit a written petition at least one month before it takes effect, at the first program meeting following the request, the DTC will vote on the request. The DCT will inform the student whether or not the request was granted. Return to the program is based on approval by the Doctoral Training Committee.

Any leave of absence for students with an F-1 visa should be submitted to the DCT. Further, the DCT and student should also consult with the Office of International Admissions and Programs. The advisor in this office will also have to approve the leave of absence.

### **Graduation and Degree Conferral**

An application for graduation is required at the beginning of the semester a student intends to finish. PsyD degrees are conferred approximately three weeks after the graduation date, and the degree is posted on the transcripts at this point. Participating in the graduation ceremony is not the same as finishing the program and having the degree officially conferred.

### **Malpractice Insurance during Internship and Practicum**

During the first three years of the program, students are covered under the liability insurance of UHCL (see *Clinic Policies and Procedures Manual*). Coverage is also provided for the time students are in a practicum placement offsite. However, this coverage is rather limited and does not cover all allegations that could be made against a student. In addition, when students leave for the internship or matriculate beyond the three years, both university and clinic malpractice coverage cease. Consequently, all students should have insurance through APA or a provider of their choice on internship; however, most internship sites cover an intern's insurance.

### **Licensing**

The Board of Examiners of Psychologists of each state (or other appropriate licensing agency), through licensing laws and regulations, establishes requirements for licensure. Some state boards require that specific courses appear on the transcript. If such courses do not appear on a transcript by title, the applicant for licensure is required to document that a course or courses with suitable content were completed as part of training. If that is not possible, the Board may deny an applicant the privilege of taking the licensing examination.

The documentation is typically in the form of the syllabus from the course(s). Sometimes a letter from the faculty member who taught the course can be substituted, but Boards may require documentary evidence. Therefore, **STUDENTS NEED TO KEEP THE SYLLABI from their graduate courses (NOT JUST PSYD COURSES) FOREVER.** Some states do not have reciprocity for licensure. Thus, students may need this information many years from now.

Alternatively, students may choose to "bank" their credentials with ASPPB (see <http://www.asppb.net/>) so that proper documentation is available in case students want to switch licensure jurisdictions during their career.

### **Professional Development**

Students are encouraged to join the American Psychological Association (APA), the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP), the American Psychological Society (APS), and other national/international organizations relevant to research and clinical interests upon entry to graduate training. Students are also encouraged to join their state associations (e.g., Texas Psychological Association, Texas Association of School

Psychologists). Membership in these organizations provides access to graduate student advocacy and opportunities for research and clinical training. Students must be members of APA to receive student liability insurance. The American Psychological Association Graduate Student organization (APAGS) provides useful and important information for students. Students may also consider receiving memberships in specialty organizations (e.g., Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, Society for Research in Child Development, Society of Behavioral Medicine, and Gerontological Society of America) and specialty areas of APA (e.g., Society for Pediatric Psychology, Clinical Neuropsychology, Educational Psychology, School Psychology, Society for Clinical Psychology, Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race).

Students are also encouraged to attend professional conferences. Students are expected to submit poster and/or paper presentations at relevant conferences and participate in the Graduate Student Research Symposium here at UHCL. Travel money for graduate student presenters may be available through the Student Government Association, HSH Dean's Office, and the Psy Dawks Student Organization. The department also provides professional development opportunities in the form of guest lecturers, webinars, brown bag lunch topics, and support for local clinical training workshops as funds are available.

### **Yearly Information Needed from Students**

It is imperative that students inform the Director of Clinical Training of their address and telephone number. We must be able to find the student in case of a problem or emergency. Students also need to inform the Clinic Director how they can be contacted at any time.

Each year students need to provide data regarding their accomplishments throughout the previous year (*Annual Student Actives Survey*). More specifically, in the Annual Student Activities Survey, students are annually asked about:

1. Number of workshops, oral presentations, and/or poster presentations at professional meetings.
2. Number of books, book chapters, and articles in peer-reviewed professional/scientific journals.
3. Membership in a professional or research society (including student affiliate)
4. Involvement in grant-supported research (including working as a Research Assistant)
5. Involvement in teaching (on an ongoing basis such as a Teaching Assistant)
6. Involvement in the delivery of professional services on or off campus (including externship and practicum placements; excluding internship)
7. Leadership activities
8. Attendance in professional and diversity workshops or trainings

Students are sent this questionnaire (along with other questions relevant for the APA report and annual student evaluation information) in April-May. Students should begin thinking about involvement in the various scholarly activities and organizations early in the program.

Further, each year the students complete an *Annual Evaluation of the Program*. The evaluation addresses the student's evaluation of how the program is meeting their training needs and professional development.

### **Guidelines for Students' Online Presence**

Most students will have an online presence through social media accounts, personal web pages, and/or blogs or podcasts. It is likely that individuals (clients, parents of clients, supervisors, potential internship and externship sites, and future employers) may search out information about each student. The purpose of this policy is to provide some guidelines about any public representation of the student or the program over the web. While all of the information that may exist about the student may not be within the student's control, students are urged to exercise caution and restraint as well as utilize safeguards when possible. Although this policy applies to individuals' online presence, nothing here is intended to limit it to only these public presentations.

Obviously if a student's online accounts do not include any mention or indication of the fact that they are a PsyD student at UHCL, then the student's social media pages and posts are not the program's responsibility. However, students need to be aware that increasingly, universities, internship sites, and even clients may seek out information about people on the web before they make faculty offers, final match decisions, or even decide to see someone clinically. There are now numerous anecdotes of well-qualified doctoral graduates that did not get post-doc or faculty offers because someone viewed something that was considered to be inappropriate or objectionable on the candidate's webpage; similar stories about internship sites deciding not to match someone also exist. It is in the best interest of students to seriously consider how material that is public may be viewed by future employers, internship sites, or clients.

If students' online accounts identify them as a PsyD student, then the program does indeed have some responsibility for how the students are portrayed. Thus, social media pages and posts must meet all legal and ethical guidelines from the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychology and the American Psychological Association (e.g., individuals cannot represent themselves as a "psychologist" in the State of Texas). Further, social media pages and posts must be professional in content and must not contain objectionable material, particularly information that is publically available.

Outside of these directives, keep in mind the ideals of the preamble to the APA Ethics Code in which we aspire to do no harm to our clients, our research participants, or the profession with our actions. With this in mind, students are encouraged to consider the following cautions and suggestions:

- 1) When posting something that may be publicly accessible, students need to consider the possibility that each of those groups listed may view it, judge it, and evaluate it from their own perspective.
- 2) With social networking sites such as Facebook, students need to utilize privacy settings to limit access to pages and personal information. Students need to use thoughtful discretion when considering "friend" requests and consider the boundary implications. For example, it is not advisable for students to become

- virtual “friends” with clients, former clients, or undergraduates, especially for those relationships where there are supervisory or evaluative responsibilities.
- 3) Students should not post or comment online about clients, research participants, or students. The desire to consult about stressful interactions is understandable, but such conversations should be off-line, in a thoughtful and sensitive manner, taking ethical guidelines about respect and confidentiality into account.
  - 4) With email, students need to keep in mind that everything they write may exist perpetually or be retrievable. Emails sent via the UHCL email system are considered public records and the property of UHCL. Participation in listservs include the peril of inadvertently writing things to a much more public audience than intended, so be cautious with posts to such forums. Email is not an appropriate venue to discuss confidential information, so if such communications are necessary, make sure any information is non-identifiable.
  - 5) Email “signatures” should be professional and appropriately represent one’s status and credentials. Students are encouraged to consider adding a confidentiality disclaimer to email signature files - and are required to do so for any email communication with clients. Any communication with clients’ needs to be done from students’ UHCL email account and should remain limited to scheduling only.
  - 6) Students need to be mindful of voicemail greetings, if they utilize a private phone for any professional purposes (clinical work, teaching, or research). Students should make sure that such messages reflect a maturity and professionalism that should be portrayed to the public.
  - 7) Online photo and video sharing, including within social networking sites, should be posted with discretion, since these are considered very public venues.
  - 8) As an employee of UHCL, students must be careful to make sure their personal communications and postings are not perceived to be associated with the university, and that they do not violate UHCL policy.

It is not the intention of the program faculty to interfere in students’ personal life or to limit their ability to enjoy the benefits of online activities, express their personality or opinions, or have fun. Further, the program faculty members will not actively search out students’ web pages. However, if the program faculty members become aware of a page or blog that identifies a student as a PsyD student and that page or blog is considered by the Doctoral Training Committee to be unethical, illegal, or in violation of any relevant UHCL, APA, or Texas licensing policy, the student will be asked to modify or remove the problem material and may be considered for remediation. Should the student choose not to modify or remove the material, the Doctoral Training Committee will follow the existing procedures for dealing with student misconduct and/or unethical behavior including possible termination from the program.

### **General Policies and Procedures Not Covered Elsewhere**

### *Student Input*

Student input is always welcomed and encouraged. Further, all program faculty are willing to talk with students as needed. Students have input in several ways into the program. First, we encourage any student to directly talk with their advisor or a program director about any topic. Following the guidelines of APA, if a student has any issues within the program, we ask that they first talk with the party involved and the program director. Second, there is an annual survey for students to provide formal feedback about the program. Third, every class has formal student evaluations. Finally, students should have ready access to program decisions and a way to provide input in the policy developments of the program. Toward that end, there are several elected student representatives that serve on different committees.

First, one elected student serves on the Doctoral Training Committee. The ***Doctoral Training Committee*** is the entire faculty of the PsyD program, and it is responsible for the entire program. The committee develops and implements all curriculum, policies, and procedures for the program. The student representative attends all meetings of the Doctoral Training Committee, and she/he is allowed to vote as one member of the committee. The student representative is not present for the discussion of issues pertaining to specific students or other sensitive matters. A student representative is elected by the students.

Second, one elected student serves on the Admissions Committee. The ***Admissions Committee*** is comprised of one faculty from each specialty area and a member of the Diversity Committee. One faculty member serves as Chair of this committee. The Admissions Committee is responsible for organization of applications and the development, organization, and implementation of the on-site interviews. The student assists the faculty members on this committee in this task, and they help throughout the on-site interviews.

Third, one elected student serves on the Diversity Committee. The ***Diversity Committee*** is composed of three program faculty and two student representative. The Committee's overarching objective is to promote a culturally sensitive, respectful, inclusive, and culturally competent program climate by increasing awareness of diversity-related factors, resources, and needs among faculty and students. Members have knowledge, experience, and interest regarding diversity-related topics. The Committee identifies diversity-related resources and encourages faculty and student participation in training and cultural activities that expand awareness, knowledge, and skills related to diversity issues. Students and faculty are encouraged to consult with the Diversity Committee regarding suggestions or concerns related to diversity, cultural awareness and inclusivity, prejudice, intolerance, or discrimination.

These formal feedback mechanisms are very important, and it is main way that we address needs and changes needed in the program. Therefore, given that these formal mechanisms exist and are reviewed annually, we need students to do the following things as a requirement to the program:

1. Complete the annual survey
2. Complete an evaluation for every class

3. Use their student representatives to convey an concerns or needs of the program

#### *Inappropriate Professional Relationships*

The American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (provided during orientation) guide our policies and practices in the UHCL doctoral program. Students should familiarize themselves with this code of ethics and use it as a guide in their professional and educational practices. The following are areas that often raise ethical dilemmas for students.

#### *Relationships with Undergraduate Students*

When students serve as a teaching assistant, they are sometimes in a position of authority with the undergraduate students. Doctoral Fellows are governed by the same standards of conduct in the performance of their academic responsibilities as are members of the faculty. For purposes of emphasis, the university considers it inappropriate conduct for a teaching assistant or assistant lecturer to have a dating, intimate, sexual, or financial relationship with one of his/her students. All Doctoral Fellows shall respect the rights and opinions of students and uphold all academic standards of the university in the classroom, clinic, or laboratory setting. University policies on sexual harassment are available on the UHCL Human Resources website, and all Doctoral Fellows must successfully complete training on sexual harassment and provide documentation of successful completion for their student file.

#### *Relationships between Graduate Students and Faculty*

We aim for collegial, mutually respectful relationships between faculty and students in the PsyD program. Maintaining this ambiance requires a high level of professionalism and integrity on the part of everyone. In collaborative research: (a) faculty and student should discuss ownership of data and authorship on presentations/publications early enough in the process so that each is aware of his/her role; and (b) faculty and student should publicly acknowledge one another's contributions at conferences, in written work, etc. Guidelines about authorship and authorship order are addressed further in the APA Ethical Standards.

A dual relationship between a faculty member and student exists when the individuals fill roles beyond what is typical in faculty-student relationships and/or the relationship is exclusionary from other faculty-student relationships (see Ethical Standard 3.05 Multiple Relationships). Examples of dual relationships include, but are not limited to, romantic/sexual involvement, financial partnerships, long-time personal friendships, and family relations. The effects of the dual relationship are not limited to the two individuals involved but potentially affect many persons in the program. Ideally, dual relationships should be avoided. In the event that a dual relationship arises; however, it is important that these relationships become known to others in the program rather than be kept a secret. Psychotherapeutic relations between faculty and student must be avoided altogether.

The Ethical Principles of Psychologists explicitly state that, "Psychologists do not engage in sexual relationships with students or supervisees in training over whom the psychologist has evaluative or direct authority, because such relationships are so likely to impair judgment or be exploitative" (Ethical Standard 3.08 Exploitative Relationships).

Should an intimate or multiple role relationship with a faculty member exist, the guidelines are as follows: a faculty member involved in a dual relationship should not be: (a) instructing or supervising that student, (b) participating in the research or clinical guidance of the student, or (c) participating in the evaluation process of the student.

Depending upon the nature of the dual relationship, these guidelines may also be applied even if the dual relationship is terminated. The current ethical guidelines indicate that even if a faculty member does not have evaluative authority over a student, personal or intimate relationships are inappropriate and unethical.

#### *Definition of Inappropriate Relationships*

For relationships between Doctoral Fellows or Adjunct Faculty and undergraduate students or Faculty and graduate students, unethical relationships include those that are non-professional, particularly those of an intimate, financial, or sexual nature. Such relationships create an unequal playing field or unavailable opportunities for other students or may create an environment where it is difficult for the individual to say no to the person in a position of power. Engaging in such a relationship could result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the program for current doctoral students and employee disciplinary actions for faculty.

#### *Selective Service Registration*

All male doctoral students should confirm that they have registered with the selective service (<https://www.sss.gov/RegVer/wfVerification.aspx>) prior to the age of 26. Failure to do so will prevent males from obtaining positions in the government or VA systems including internship, postdoctoral fellowships, and employment.

**Appendix A**  
**UHCL Health Service Psychology PsyD Program Timeline**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Benchmark (BM)</b>	<b>Pisces/ACE Ratings</b>	<b>Tasks</b>
1	BM1 = Complete Required Coursework Hours		Start Thesis Development Finish Waivers (End of Fall)
2		Ratings of 2 or higher	Complete Thesis
3	BM2: Pass Qualifying Exam Paper	Ratings of 3 or higher (required to be able to apply for Doctoral Internship)	Start Dissertation Development (Proposal only after Passing QE)
4		Ratings of 3 or higher (required to be able to apply for Doctoral Internship)	Propose Dissertation by October 1 Apply for Internship
5	BM3: Defend Dissertation BM4: Complete Doctoral Internship	Ratings of 4 in all domains	

\* An academic year is Fall/Spring/Summer

Note: For students entering with prior graduate credit, the dates for benchmarks and PISCE/ACE ratings will be outlined by the student's advisor.

## **Appendix B**

### **The Comprehensive Evaluation of Student-Trainee Competence in Professional Psychology Programs**

#### **I. Overview and Rationale**

Professional psychologists are expected to demonstrate competence within and across a number of different but interrelated dimensions. Programs that educate and train professional psychologists also strive to protect the public and profession. Therefore, faculty, training staff, supervisors, and administrators in such programs have a duty and responsibility to evaluate the competence of students and trainees across multiple aspects of performance, development, and functioning.

It is important for students and trainees to understand and appreciate that academic competence in professional psychology programs (e.g., doctoral, internship, postdoctoral) is defined and evaluated comprehensively. Specifically, in addition to performance in coursework, seminars, scholarship, comprehensive examinations, and related program requirements, other aspects of professional development and functioning (e.g., cognitive, emotional, psychological, interpersonal, technical, and ethical) will also be evaluated. Such comprehensive evaluation is necessary in order for faculty, training staff, and supervisors to appraise the entire range of academic performance, development, and functioning of their student-trainees. This model policy attempts to disclose and make these expectations explicit for student-trainees prior to program entry and at the outset of education and training.

In response to these issues, the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC) has developed the following model policy that doctoral, internship, and postdoctoral training programs in psychology may use in their respective program handbooks and other written materials. This policy was developed in consultation with CCTC member organizations, and is consistent with a range of oversight, professional, ethical, and licensure guidelines and procedures that are relevant to processes of training, practice, and the assessment of competence within professional psychology (e.g., the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards, 2004; *Competencies 2002: Future Directions in Education and Credentialing in Professional Psychology*; *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*, 2003; *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation of Programs in Professional Psychology*, 2003; *Guidelines on Multicultural Education, Training, Research, Practice, and Organizational Change for Psychologists*, 2002).

#### **II. Model Policy**

Students and trainees in professional psychology programs (at the doctoral, internship, or postdoctoral level) should know—prior to program entry, and at the outset of training—that faculty, training staff, supervisors, and administrators have a professional, ethical, and potentially legal obligation to: (a) establish criteria and methods through which aspects of competence other than, and in addition to, a student-trainee's knowledge or skills may be assessed (including, but not limited to, emotional stability and well being, interpersonal skills, professional development, and personal fitness for practice); and, (b) ensure—insofar as possible—that the student-trainees who complete

their programs are competent to manage future relationships (e.g., client, collegial, professional, public, scholarly, supervisory, teaching) in an effective and appropriate manner. Because of this commitment, and within the parameters of their administrative authority, professional psychology education and training programs, faculty, training staff, supervisors, and administrators strive not to advance, recommend, or graduate students or trainees with demonstrable problems (e.g., cognitive, emotional, psychological, interpersonal, technical, and ethical) that may interfere with professional competence to other programs, the profession, employers, or the public at large. As such, within a developmental framework, and with due regard for the inherent power difference between students and faculty, students and trainees should know that their faculty, training staff, and supervisors will evaluate their competence in areas other than, and in addition to, coursework, seminars, scholarship, comprehensive examinations, or related program requirements. These evaluative areas include, but are not limited to, demonstration of sufficient: (a) interpersonal and professional competence (e.g., the ways in which student-trainees relate to clients, peers, faculty, allied professionals, the public, and individuals from diverse backgrounds or histories); (b) self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-evaluation (e.g., knowledge of the content and potential impact of one's own beliefs and values on clients, peers, faculty, allied professionals, the public, and individuals from diverse backgrounds or histories); (c) openness to processes of supervision (e.g., the ability and willingness to explore issues that either interfere with the appropriate provision of care or impede professional development or functioning); and (d) resolution of issues or problems that interfere with professional development or functioning in a satisfactory manner (e.g., by responding constructively to feedback from supervisors or program faculty; by the successful completion of remediation plans; by participating in personal therapy in order to resolve issues or problems).

This policy is applicable to settings and contexts in which evaluation would appropriately occur (e.g., coursework, practica, supervision), rather than settings and contexts that are unrelated to the formal process of education and training (e.g., non-academic, social contexts). However, irrespective of setting or context, when a student-trainee's conduct clearly and demonstrably (a) impacts the performance, development, or functioning of the student-trainee, (b) raises questions of an ethical nature, (c) represents a risk to public safety, or (d) damages the representation of psychology to the profession or public, appropriate representatives of the program may review such conduct within the context of the program's evaluation processes.

Although the purpose of this policy is to inform students and trainees that evaluation will occur in these areas, it should also be emphasized that a program's evaluation processes and content should typically include: (a) information regarding evaluation processes and standards (e.g., procedures should be consistent and content verifiable); (b) information regarding the primary purpose of evaluation (e.g., to facilitate student or trainee development; to enhance self-awareness, self-reflection, and self-assessment; to emphasize strengths as well as areas for improvement; to assist in the development of remediation plans when necessary); (c) more than one source of information regarding the evaluative area(s) in question (e.g., across supervisors and settings); and (d) opportunities for remediation, provided that faculty, training staff, or supervisors conclude that satisfactory remediation is possible for a given student-trainee. Finally, the

criteria, methods, and processes through which student-trainees will be evaluated should be clearly specified in a program's handbook, which should also include information regarding due process policies and procedures (e.g., including, but not limited to, review of a program's evaluation processes and decisions).

\*\* It should be noted that this document was developed by the Student Competence Task Force of the Council of Chairs of Training Councils (CCTC) (<http://www.apa.org/ed/graduate/cctc.html>) and approved by the CCTC on March 25, 2004. Impetus for this document arose from the need, identified by a number of CCTC members that programs in professional psychology needed to clarify for themselves and their student-trainees that the comprehensive academic evaluation of student-trainee competence includes the evaluation of intrapersonal, interpersonal, and professional development and functioning.

**Appendix C**  
**Council of Directors of School Psychology Programs (CDSPP)**  
**Doctoral Level Internship Guidelines**

*Initial Version Approved by the Membership, May, 1998*

*Revised Version approved by the Membership, November, 2012*

<https://sites.google.com/site/cdspphome/2012guidelines>

The doctoral internship is an important culminating professional practice experience in doctoral level education and training in school psychology. Following are guidelines for school psychology doctoral internships that will provide the basis for high quality internship experiences.

Although these guidelines set forth basic quality standards for doctoral level school psychology internships, internship requirements for licensure and certification are set at the state level and vary from state to state. Therefore, graduate students and training programs should consult relevant state licensure and certification requirements when considering the nature of a specific internship.

CDSPP is an organization of doctoral level school psychology programs. It is not an official accrediting body and does not evaluate, approve, or accredit internships or training programs. CDSPP guidelines may be useful for prospective interns who are evaluating the quality of school psychology doctoral internships. These guidelines may also be useful to doctoral training programs in making program development and internship approval decisions. They may also be used by organizations authorized to approve or accredit internships or training programs. Doctoral training programs and internship sites that are interested in accreditation by the American Psychological Association should refer to the Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation of Programs in Professional Psychology published by the APA Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation.

In the absence of special circumstances, a doctoral internship program in School Psychology meeting these guidelines will also be considered as meeting the "Guidelines for Defining an Internship or Organized Health Service Training Program in Psychology" developed in 1980 by the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology to identify an acceptable internship, which is one of several requirements for credentialing by The National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology.\*

1. A School Psychology doctoral internship is an organized training program that, in contrast to supervised experience (e.g., practica) or on-the-job training, is designed to provide the intern with a planned, programmed sequence of training experiences. The internship is the culminating supervised professional practice training experience prior to the granting of the doctoral degree. It follows a programmed sequence of coursework, practica, and field experiences and occurs after the substantial completion of the coursework leading to the degree. Its primary focus and purpose is ensuring breadth and quality of training, meeting the needs of the graduate student/intern, and providing an extension of education and supervised training from the university program. The internship

consists of a range of activities including assessment, evidence-based intervention, consultation, program development and program evaluation, supervision, and research designed to meet the psychological, educational, and health needs of the clients. Interns should have experiences with prevention and development of system supports, as well as with direct intervention for client problems, and should have experiences dealing with cultural and individual diversity.

2. The intern, whether full-time or part-time, spends at least 25% of his or her time in providing direct (face-to-face) psychological services to clients, patients or consultees, such as teachers or other mental health service providers, which translates to a minimum of 375 hours out of 1500 doctoral internship hours. The intern engages in research activity which includes the evaluation of services delivered and the effectiveness of the intern's own training.
3. The internship agency provides a dated written statement, brochure, or website that describes the goals and content of the doctoral internship program, states clear expectations for the quality of trainees' work, training, and supervision, and is made available in advance to prospective interns. The internship agency, preparing institution, and intern have a written agreement that describes the goals and content of the internship including clearly stated expectations for the nature of experiences offered in the agency and for the quantity and quality of the work. Each intern is given a written statement that includes salary, benefits, reimbursable travel, holidays, and other relevant data.
4. Interns receive a formal, written evaluation minimally at the end of each university semester, trimester, or quarter course grading period. The format for that evaluation is agreed upon in advance by the internship agency and the intern's university training program. The areas evaluated are consistent with doctoral program objectives and competencies and include evaluation of intern skills in assessment, intervention, consultation, program evaluation, and ability to deal with issues of cultural and individual diversity. Communication between doctoral training programs and internship programs is of critical importance to the overall development of competent psychologists. The doctoral internship is a required part of the doctoral degree, and while the internship supervisor assesses student performance during the internship year, the doctoral program is ultimately responsible for evaluation of the student's readiness for graduation and entrance into the profession. Therefore, intern performance is discussed among the training partners: the internship site and the university.
5. Due process procedures for interns are made available to interns prior to the beginning of the training period. If due process procedures are initiated related to intern behaviors, intern activities, or internship conditions, the university-based director of the school psychology doctoral program in which the intern is enrolled is notified by the supervisor at the internship site.
6. Full-time internships are completed in no less than 10 months; part-time internships may extend to no more than 24 months. The internship includes a minimum of 1,500 hours in activities described above. Interns and university training programs should consult relevant credentialing (e.g., state licensure, certification)

requirements to determine the number of internship hours required for licensure and other desired credentials. In addition, the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) has established requirements for internship (e.g., completion of at least 600 hours in a school setting). For more information, consult the relevant NASP standards and credentialing documents.

7. Internship agencies and the intern's university training program jointly issue to the intern written documentation (e.g., a certificate, letter, or "Certificate of Completion") reflecting successful completion of the psychology doctoral internship.

8. The internship agency employs a clearly designated doctoral-level psychologist, who: (a) is currently licensed by the state regulatory board of psychology to practice at the independent level and (b) is responsible for the integrity and quality of the internship program. The internship agency has at least two psychologists on staff available as supervisors, at least one of whom is actively licensed as a psychologist by the state regulatory board of psychology. However, internship agencies such as school districts that have the capacity for only one staff psychologist may meet the spirit of this criterion (breadth of training experience) by entering into consortium agreements with other agencies, such as other school districts or university doctoral programs. Such consortium agreements must ensure supervision of the intern by two or more psychologists, one of whom is actively licensed to practice at the independent level by the state regulatory board of psychology and who provides at least half of the required internship supervision.

9. The full-time internship includes at least two hours per week of regularly scheduled individual supervision by a doctoral level psychologist licensed for practice at the independent level with the specific intent of evaluating the psychological services rendered directly by the intern and supporting the intern in the role of psychological service provider.

10. In addition to the individual supervision (as described in #9 above), the intern spends at least two additional hours per week in scheduled group or individual supervision, conducted by a doctoral level psychologist who is either licensed for practice at the independent level or certified by the state department of education to practice as a school psychologist in schools.

11. The intern has regularly scheduled, supervised, and documented training activities with other doctoral psychology interns such as professional development/in-service training; case conferences involving a case in which an intern is actively involved; seminars dealing with professional issues; or observing delivery of health, educational, and/or child/adolescent services. These activities may be in conjunction with appropriately credentialed professionals other than school psychologists. The internship agency has two or more interns engaged in training at the same time. However, agencies having the capacity for only one intern may meet the spirit of this criterion (i.e., the socialization of doctoral-level psychology interns) by having regularly scheduled and documented training activities with psychology interns at other sites in the immediate geographic area or, when internship sites are at a significant distance from

each other, by making arrangements for regularly scheduled meetings of interns for several hours on a monthly basis.

12. Internship supervision may be provided through synchronous audio and video format where the supervisor is not in the same physical facility as the intern. Supervision through electronic means may not account for more than one hour (50%) of the minimum required two weekly hours of individual supervision (as described in # 9 above), and two hours (50%) of the minimum required four total weekly hours of supervision (as described in #9 and #10 above). The use of telesupervision should be consistent with the program's overall model and philosophy of training, with assurance that relationships between supervisors and trainees are established prior to engaging in telesupervision. The rationale for the use of telesupervision with interns at a particular site, and the scheduling and means for telesupervision should be clearly articulated. As with usual forms of supervision, the supervisor will retain full professional responsibility for all clinical services provided by the intern(s). Programs utilizing any form of telesupervision have a formal policy that includes procedures to address issues of non-scheduled consultation, crisis coverage, and handling of privacy and confidentiality. These policies and procedures are established in advance and shared among the training program, the internship site, and the intern(s). Technology and quality requirements, as well as training in the use of the technology, are available for the supervisor and the intern. Internships using telesupervision adhere to best practices and ethical, legal, and professional guidelines.

13. Reports and documents prepared by the doctoral intern for consumers, other agency or school personnel, or other relevant publics are co-signed by the licensed psychologist supervisor for the intern.

14. The trainee has a title such as "intern," "resident," or other designation of trainee status.

\*This statement may be included in these Guidelines pending review of the final version of the Guidelines by the Executive Officer of the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology.