DOCTORAL PRACTICUM TRAINING IN PSYCHODYNAMICALLY-ORIENTED PSYCHOTHERAPY

Counseling and Psychological Services
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Introduction

Stony Brook University is located 60 miles east of New York City on Long Island’s North Shore. The University was built to serve the metropolitan New York City region and provides access to higher education for the area’s richly diverse population. Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) serves an undergraduate, graduate, and professional student body of 24,000. Approximately 1500 individual students received counseling services for a total of 12,200 contacts. In all, the university is an ideal setting for practicum training, offering the opportunity to work with clients of diverse backgrounds, varied presenting problems, and multiple possibilities.

Program Purpose and Description

The primary training goals for the externship program at CAPS are two-fold:

1. Improvement of clinical skills for clinical and counseling doctoral students in working with a diverse population of young adults;
2. Development of the training psychologists’ professional knowledge, skills and attitudes, in preparation for their internship year.

The 10-month externship will begin September 6, 2010 and end May 20, 2011. Externs carry a caseload of approximately eight clients. Half of these clients may be seen in long-term psychotherapy (one year); the other half will be seen in brief (10-session) therapy. Externs will also have the opportunity to co-lead groups and participate in outreach activities. In the Spring semester externs will have the opportunity to conduct intake interviews. Each extern will have two supervisors, one a senior staff clinician and the other an intern from an accredited doctoral program. Up to four externs are accepted each year.

Externs’ Anticipated Weekly Schedule

8: Individual psychotherapy (maximum)
2: Intakes (Spring semester)
1.5: Group therapy and supervision
2: Individual supervision
1-2: Team meetings, staff development
1.5: Seminar
Approximately 16 hours total

The one day of the week all practicum trainees are expected to attend is Tuesday.
Program Philosophy

The primary theoretical orientation of the majority of supervising clinicians at SBU’s CAPS is contemporary psychodynamic. In practice and training we have integrated alternate treatment modalities, so that we now consider ourselves an integrative psychodynamic program. While there is variety in supervisory technique, the depth, intensity, and consistency of exposure to psychodynamically-informed theory and practice is one of the strengths of our program. Thus, while we have added mindfulness meditation training and services, and offer training and supervision in solution-focused and cognitive techniques (among others), these are woven into our psychodynamic philosophy of understanding clinical phenomena.

Our integrative approach to treatment is reflected in practicum training as follows: during the psychotherapy seminar, externs review Object Relations and Self Psychological theories, leading to a strong foundation in contemporary analytic theory. While understanding personality development and psychopathology from this perspective, training also focuses on principles of change and varieties of therapeutic technique. Through didactics and supervision, trainees learn how to hold true to a central philosophy of mind while at the same time expanding their technical repertoire, taking into consideration the presenting problems, deficits, and capacities of the individual client.

This approach is especially fruitful in working with a student population, whose developmental trajectories are still unfolding and whose diversity challenges clinical categorizations: some may come in simply needing solution-focused reminders of their strengths; others may need practice at challenging negative cognitions. Some present with complex interplays of history, culture, language and sexual orientation; while others need corrective relational experiences to challenge maladaptive internal representations of self with other. What is most exciting is that, as college students, they often have the mental capacities – and the willingness – to change. Thus, trainees have the opportunity to actually witness the impact of their interventions: to see what works, and what doesn’t.

Application Procedures

All clinical and counseling doctoral students may apply. Early trainees are welcome, as long as they have had some sort of clinical experience prior to attending. Qualified applicants will be invited to interview with CAPS staff.

Interested applicants should send the following:

1. Curriculum Vitae  
2. Letter of interest  
3. One letter of recommendation  
4. Statement of readiness from academic program  
5. Sample report (Intake preferred, other reports will be accepted)
Applications should be mailed to:

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