

VA GULF COAST VETERANS HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Practicum Overview

In addition to Predoctoral Interns, we typically train Psychology Externs each year. These students are usually enrolled in one of our local psychology graduate programs. Students wishing to apply for practicum training must be enrolled in a program accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), the Council on Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP), the Master's in Psychology and Counseling Accreditation Council (MPCAC), or in a program that is actively pursuing such accreditation. We do not accept bachelors-level students at this time.

Practicum training at the VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System is available year round. The application review period is as follows:

Pensacola, JACC:

February 1 – March 1, 2013 for training to begin in May 2013 - April 2014.

Biloxi:

January 15 - February 15, 2013 for summer rotation (May-August) or fall rotation (August-April).

Applicants are encouraged to submit their materials as early as possible during the selected review period, using our [standard application form](#). Training slots are limited. Supervisor availability may vary from year to year. Placements are determined by a match between students' interests and experience and supervisors' expertise and availability. Please refer to our predoctoral internship description for examples of possible training opportunities.

In terms of hours, practicum students need to dedicate at least 1 day per week to on-site practicum training. Total on-site hours range from 8 to 40 hours per week. Some supervisors may also require offsite work consisting of readings relevant to the practicum.

Although graduate programs often instruct students to complete either an "assessment" or an "intervention" practicum, many of the training experiences at VA Gulf Coast do not lend themselves to doing just assessment or intervention. Therefore, some flexibility in terms of graduate program and practicum student expectations is needed.

Practicum placements are unpaid at this time.

Application Process

In order to apply for practicum training at the VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System, please follow the sequence listed below:

1. Complete an [application](#) which can be downloaded from our web page.

E-mail the application, a vita, and letter of intent to Practicum Coordinator, Pensacola: Kellee Bivens, Ph.D. at Kellee.Bivens2@va.gov or Director of Training, Biloxi: Shannon K. S. Fussell, Ph.D. at Shannon.Fussell@va.gov no later than March 1, 2013 for Pensacola or February 15, 2013 for Biloxi.

2. Submit of a letter of readiness for practicum training. Letter should be completed by your Director of Training and should be e-mailed directly to the Practicum Coordinator (Pensacola) or Director of Training (Biloxi) during the selected review period. An additional letter of recommendation (optional) by a clinical supervisor may be submitted in a similar manner as well.
3. Applications will be reviewed by supervisory staff and selected applicants will be invited for interviews. Depending upon academic and clinical experience and other factors, applicants may be interviewed by telephone or in-person.
4. All applicants not selected to be interviewed will be notified by e-mail.
5. Additional federal employment forms and processes will be required for trainees who serve without compensation (WOC). Selected applicants will be required to complete finger printing and a physical examination at any VA medical center.

Further information regarding Psychology Practicum Training at the VA Gulf Coast Veterans Health Care System may be obtained by contacting:

Pensacola, JACC
Kellee Bivens, Ph.D.
Telephone: 228-523-2305
E-mail: Kellee.Bivens2@va.gov

Biloxi
Shannon K. S. Fussell, Ph.D.
Telephone: 228-523-5045
E-mail: Shannon.Fussell@va.gov