



SEATTLE PACIFIC
UNIVERSITY

PSY 4940
INTERNSHIP HANDBOOK

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is a psychology internship?

PSY 4940 INTERNSHIP integrates practical experience in the workplace with academic theory. It enables students to participate in a psychological setting in a “hands on” capacity by actually working in that setting. Students apply learned concepts and methods while under the direction of faculty and on-site supervisors. Students explore career options or obtain career-related professional work experience before graduating.

Why is a psychology internship helpful?

An internship provides experiential learning, extending beyond classroom theory and knowledge. It often offers the opportunity to serve the community. It provides invaluable experience for today’s job market and may help students interested in applying for graduate school to be more competitive candidates. Students also develop confidence in professional interaction. Internships serve as great opportunities to connect with psychology professionals in desired disciplines and network with them. Students can earn credit and fulfill psychology course requirements while on an internship. In some cases, students may even earn money.

When am I eligible for a psychology internship?

You may participate in the internship program as a Junior or Senior Psychology major, after completing

at least one quarter (12 credits) as a matriculated student at SPU. However, the internship is designed to be an advanced experience that builds on course preparation in psychology. For example, if you are seeking a placement working with individuals struggling with mental illness, it will help to have successfully completed the course, *Psychological Disorder*. If you are seeking an internship working with children, our courses in *Developmental Psychology* are highly recommended.

What are the criteria for an internship site?

An internship setting, and the activities students perform, must be psychological in nature. In other words, interns must not be completing work that is exclusively administrative in nature.

Interns also need supervision by an on-site supervisor, with whom the intern meets at least $\frac{1}{2}$ hour per week. These supervisors must have successfully completed at least master's level training in psychology or a psychology-related field (such as human resources, education, or social work) or they must possess comparable work experience or expertise. On-site supervisors must also provide ongoing formative evaluations and a formal final evaluation of your work. Finally, the site must provide at least fifty hours of experiential learning during the quarter. (However, to earn credit toward the PSY major, students need 3 credits or at least 75 hours of work during the quarter).

How many credits can I earn?

Students can take 1-5 credits of psychology internship each quarter, for a maximum of 15 credits overall. Keep in mind that only 3 internships credits are required for psychology majors.

5 hrs/wk (50 total hours) = 1-2 credits (When you apply for this level of internship, please specify whether you want 1 or 2 credits in your application. Either is acceptable for 50 hours.)

7.5 hrs/wk (75 total hours) = 3 credits

10 hrs/wk (100 total hours) = 4 credits

12.5 hrs/wk (125 total hours) = 5 credits

SECURING AN INTERNSHIP

When looking for an internship site, **plan ahead!** Securing an internship takes time. It means updating your resume, investigating potential internship sites, contacting those sites, and allowing sites the time they need to get back to you, interview you, and work with you to complete the necessary paperwork. So, **start looking for internships at least 2-3 months prior to your desired internship quarter.** Here are some other guidelines for securing an internship:

1. Review this *Internship Handbook* and read the criteria for internships (in the FAQ section). Read through the available list of sites where students have found PSY internships in previous quarters. You may also review the internship and job sites listed on SPU's online Handshake program. Some of these Handshake opportunities may also meet the requirements for a PSY internship. If you have any questions about whether a site will meet our requirements, contact the Director of Internship.
2. The Learning Contract that you need to complete for a PSY internship is online in the Handshake program. See the link on the SPU PSY Internship webpage for directions about how to access it on the program Handshake.

Through the experiences' tab on the Center for Career and Calling pages on the Handshake program, you will have the option to complete a

PSY internship form. Do not use any other form. Use only the PSY internship form because it has information specifically for PSY internships. Read through the form very carefully as you consider what internship you are seeking.

You will need to know what information you must acquire from the site and your site supervisor to complete this form. You will also need to consider what you will learn (which you will describe in the Learning Objectives section of the form). Consider also what you will do at the site (which you will describe in the Learning Activities section). Review this form before you meet with a potential site supervisor for an internship.

Note well: Students do not enroll for PSY 4940 Internship credits on Banner. Instead, students apply for an internship through this Handshake PSY Internship form. Once a student's application is submitted, it is sent electronically to various persons and departments for approval, including the site where the student applied. The site supervisor approves the application first, and then it returns to SPU for approvals. Finally, if the application is completed correctly and approved, it reaches Student Academic Services, this office enrolls the student in the PSY 4940 Internship. It is critical that students complete every section of the application accurately in order to ensure it

passes smoothly through the approval and enrollment process.

3. Contact potential sites that interest you for an internship. In your emails and phone calls, be professional and enthusiastic. Let potential sites know who you are, your academic year, and your major in psychology. Tell sites that why you are interested in working with them, that is, what you like about their site. Ask if you may meet with someone who can help you secure an internship and work with you as a supervisor. Keep in mind that supervisors must have at least a master's degree in psychology (or a related field, such as social work, sociology, education, human resources, etc.) or comparable work experience or expertise. And they must meet with you in supervision (either in a group or individual setting) for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ hour weekly.
4. Remember that you may need to be persistent. After all, these sites are often busy places. If you send an email and you do not hear back in a week, send another email and call the site directly. Mention that you emailed them and you want to make sure they received the email. Did you send it to the right person? Is there any other information they need? Let them know what you like about their site and why you are interested in doing an internship there.
5. When you meet with a potential supervisor, talk about why you want to do an internship there,

and why you believe you would be a good fit for the site. What skills do you have to offer? Let the supervisor at the site know that if they offer you an internship, they will receive an online invitation to approve your Handshake contract from SPU once you have completed. They will also need to provide $\frac{1}{2}$ hour of supervision a week and to complete a brief survey form evaluating your performance at the end of the quarter.

6. Once you have a site in mind and you have talked with the supervisor and that person agrees to your internship, return to Handshake and complete each section of the PSY internship learning contract. As specified on the form, include information about the training of the supervisor, the number of internship hours per week, the amount of supervision per week, the specific number of credits sought, the learning objectives, and the learning activities. Ensure that the supervisor can meet with you every week for at least $\frac{1}{2}$ hour for supervision.

(Note: if you will be doing only 50 hours at your site, you can choose between 1 or 2 credits for enrollment. Be sure to specify whether you want 1 credit or 2 credits on the form.)

You must submit this application by the first day of the quarter in which you hope to complete your internship.

Here are a few more guidelines to help you fill out the sections about Learning Objectives and Learning Activities:

I. Learning Objectives

In this section on Handshake, you describe what you hope to learn from this internship—the skills you hope to acquire and the knowledge base you hope to build during your experience. Your objectives should build on your knowledge of psychology and be discussed with your on-site supervisor. Some examples of appropriate internship objectives may be:

- ✓ to obtain a basic understanding of the role of a case worker in a homeless shelter;
- ✓ to gain a sense of whether a career in school counseling is a good fit for your strengths;
- ✓ to observe and support the treatment of children in a psychiatric ward;
- ✓ to develop communication skills in a clinic setting; or
- ✓ to learn how a non-profit organization functions and serves its community,
- ✓ to understand how HR departments serve organizations, etc.

II. Learning Activities

Here you list the SPECIFIC tasks you will engage in in order to meet your general Learning Objectives. Consult with your on-site

supervisor to establish these activities. One of these activities must be a weekly supervision meeting (1/2 hour per week) with your on-site supervisor.

7. When you have finished the Contract on Handshake, it will be reviewed by the Center for Career and Calling, your site supervisor, the PSY Director of Internships, and finally, Student Academic Services, before Student Academic Services enroll you in the course.
8. Once you are enrolled, the PSY Director of Internships will contact you with information about the on-campus seminar that you are required to attend while an intern. This supervision is usually at 3 pm on Tuesdays during the quarter. There is a syllabus and various assignments that you will be expected to complete during the quarter.

Note: If you are not officially enrolled in the course by the beginning of the quarter because you are waiting for the approval process to complete, you must contact the PSY Director of Internships to request a syllabus for the course. You are required to attend the seminar even while you wait to be approved and enrolled.

9. Congratulations! You have secured an internship!

SUPERVISION

PSY 4940 interns work with on-site supervisors who have earned at least a master's degree in psychology or a related field (social work, education, human resources, etc.) or who have comparable work experience in their field. Supervisors must be on-site so they are available to interns as needed, and supervisors must meet with interns for at least ½ hour weekly during the internship quarter.

As PSY 4940 Interns, it is expected that students will follow the rules and regulations of the agency and will report to the internship site at agreed upon times and dates. Failure to adhere to agency policy may result in the loss of the internship placement or a reduction in PSY 4940 course grade. Interns are also expected to maintain the community expectations and behavioral standards of SPU while working at an internship site. These are described in the Seattle Pacific University *Student Handbook*.

Interns also meet on campus for a seminar with the Director of PSY Internships approximately every other week throughout the quarter. After you are enrolled for the PSY Internship course, you will receive information about meeting times and places for this on-campus course experience, but generally these meetings occur on Tuesdays at 3 pm, with the first meeting scheduled for the 2nd week of the quarter.

The Director of PSY Internships wants to support PSY interns and ensure that interns have rich and rewarding learning experiences. If interns have

concerns or questions about their internships between their normally scheduled meetings, they are encouraged to contact the Director of PSY Internships as soon as possible. If, for any reason, interns believe they are receiving inadequate, unethical, or non-professional treatment at their internship sites, they are expected to report this immediately to the Director of PSY Internships. The Director can meet with interns individually, as needed, to assist interns with these concerns.

A FEW SAFETY AND ETHICAL PRECAUTIONS

Seattle Pacific University is not responsible for the conditions or the events that occur at various sites, and we do not influence the training or experiences students have while working as interns. Students may not hold SPU liable for events occurring at, or as a result of working at, internship sites.

However, we want students to understand that they are not required to participate in activities at sites that are dangerous in order to earn internship credit. If students are asked by sites to perform duties which seem risky or inappropriate, they may choose not to complete those requirements without suffering grade or credit losses in the course. Instead, interns are required to inform the Director of PSY Internship of these situations as soon as possible.

Consider the following *safety and ethical precautions* when securing an internship site:

- Internship sites must meet minimum requirements for the type of work conducted and for supervision. Beyond these requirements, however, the selection of sites is at the discretion of the intern. As an intern, you may want to consider safety issues regarding the locale of your site. Interns are not required to select sites that are in high-crime neighborhoods or that feel risky for other reasons. Be aware of the parking and lighting

around your site and take any precautions you need to make regarding parking or other travel plans (buses, etc.). You may also want to restrict your work to times when more staff are available at your site or during daylight hours.

- While at an internship site, keep in mind that clients, due to a variety of factors, may behave in ways that are unexpected or even aggressive. Be alert and ask your supervisor whether this situation may occur and how to respond. (*Clients* are defined here as persons who are receiving services from an internship site. In some cases, clients may also refer to the parents, relatives, or others associated with those who are receiving services from the site.)
- Interns are advised not to use client names or identifying information outside of the site, or with persons not authorized by the site to have this identifying information. Interns are advised instead to discuss issues related to client confidentiality with supervisors at the beginning of their internships.
- Interns are advised not to visit client residences without the presence of staff members or outside the context of official site business.
- While at the internship site, interns are advised not to meet with clients, or family members of clients, for any other reason than to conduct intern responsibilities.

- Interns are advised not to transport clients in their cars to any location.
- Interns are advised not to be at clinics or agencies without the presence of staff members.
- Interns are advised not to give their personal contact information to clients at intern sites (including last names, home addresses, email addresses, social media account information, etc.) Interns may want to change their privacy settings for social media accounts prior to starting their internships. Interns are also advised to discuss these matters with on-site supervisors.
- Interns are advised not to meet with staff off-site or for any reason other than intern responsibilities.

This list is not exhaustive of the types of situations that may require interns to take safety or ethical precautions. If your site supervisor, or any other site staff, is concerned about your unwillingness to participate in certain activities due to safety or ethical concerns, or if you suffer some harm at your site, please let the Director of Internships know immediately. The Director of PSY Internships is willing to be an advocate for you and to problem-solve with you around these issues.