

Updated Fall 2009

## Learn more about...

- Internship Responsibilities
- Scheduling
- Mentorship Program
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*“Since 1993, the FTC has provided a valuable internship experience to more than 50 students.”*

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## Background

For thirty years, the **Family Therapy Center (FTC) of Virginia Tech** has offered low-cost, high quality psychotherapy and counseling services to thousands of couples, families, and individuals in the New River Valley and surrounding areas. The FTC also serves as a training center for students in Virginia Tech’s doctoral program in marriage and family therapy. **FTC therapists work with couples, families, and individuals experiencing emotional distress. They also provide consultation to businesses and community organizations.** The FTC offers confidential psychotherapy services to clients of all ages, genders, political or religious views, sexual orientations, and ethnic backgrounds.

## Internship Responsibilities

The Internship Coordinator, Dr. Megan Dolbin Mac-Nab, supervises all undergraduate interns. Internships are typically one academic semester in length and are available during the Fall, Spring, and Summer semesters (pending availability). Internships can be completed as volunteer work, field study (HD 4964) credit for Human Development, or field study credit for another department. When completed for field study credit, most interns enroll for 3 credits, which requires 10 hours of work at the FTC per week.

Time that is spent at the FTC is divided equally between clinical observation and clerical work:

The **undergraduate internship program** provides students interested in careers in mental health with the **opportunity to gain exposure to the process of psychotherapy, specifically marriage and family therapy.** In addition, the internship program exposes students to the **internal operations of a mental health agency.** Previous interns have pursued advanced degrees in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT), Counseling, Social Work, and Law.

**Clinical Observation** involves observing therapy sessions of FTC therapists, via closed-circuit television in another room. Observation occurs only with the permission of the therapist and confidentiality must be maintained. Therapy sessions typically last one hour and interns have the opportunity to discuss the case with the therapist.

**Clerical Work** includes, but is not limited to, managing client files, minor bookkeeping, and assisting with FTC research and marketing. These tasks provide interns with insight into the daily workings of a mental health agency. The office manager, Chris Sokol, supervises intern clerical duties.



*“The step-ahead mentoring program is designed to introduce undergraduates to the field of marriage and family therapy (MFT), to encourage them to consider a career in MFT, and to provide them with individualized attention and support.”*



## Scheduling

Interns have some **flexibility in terms of scheduling**. Clerical hours are scheduled during the same time each week, and are negotiated with Chris Sokol to fit with interns' class and work schedules. The intern, in consultation with the client appointment book, determines their clinical observation hours. There may also be times when therapists request that interns provide coverage for their therapy sessions. It is FTC policy that therapists may not see clients without someone else in the center. **Therefore, all interns are**

**required to provide coverage to FTC therapists at least one evening (i.e., 5pm to 7pm) each week.** Because we cannot guarantee any number of therapy sessions in a given week, it is extremely important that interns do not get behind on their clinical observation hours. If an intern should need to make-up observation hours, videotapes of previously recorded therapy sessions can be viewed, with therapist permission. However, regularly viewing videotapes is not recommended.

## The Mentorship Program

Part of the undergraduate internship program includes a mentorship **between the intern and a doctoral student in the marriage and family therapy program**. The assigned mentor meets with the intern for one hour every other week. Interns decide what to discuss with their mentors **based upon their interests in the realm of therapy and mental health practice**. Previous mentors and interns have discussed play therapy with children, basic therapy techniques, graduate programs in

MFT, ethics, theories of MFT, and characteristics of therapy as a career.

In addition to receiving a mentor, undergraduate interns are given specific strategies for how to make the most of their clinical observations. By providing concrete recommendations for how to conduct effective clinical observations, interns are able to experience a broad, yet rich, introduction to the field of marriage and family therapy.

## The Application Process

Any student interested in an undergraduate internship at the FTC must submit an application by the posted application deadline. **Only those students who submit an application will be considered for an internship position.** After an initial review of the applications, students will be contacted to arrange an interview with Dr. Dolbin-MacNab.

Typically, **1 or 2 students are selected for undergraduate internships** each semester. Please note that, during certain semesters, internships at the FTC can be highly competitive.

## The Application

To be considered for an undergraduate internship at the FTC, all potential interns must submit an application. Please submit the following materials to Dr. Dolbin-MacNab by the posted application deadline:

- The FTC Undergraduate Internship Cover Sheet (see attached)
- A personal statement of 1 to 2 double-spaced pages. The personal statement should outline why the applicant is interested in an FTC internship and why the applicant believes that s/he would be a good FTC intern.
- An unofficial transcript
- A current résumé
- Two letters of recommendation. These letters should be placed in a sealed envelope, with the recommender's signature across the flap. (Include the letters with the rest of the application; do not have them submitted to Dr. Dolbin-MacNab directly.)

Applications for Summer 2010 *and* Fall 2010 internship placements are due **March 26, 2010 at 5pm**. Applications should be delivered to Dr. Dolbin-MacNab's office (see below).

*"Given the need for interns to understand the serious nature of the work at the FTC, responsibility and maturity are taken into consideration when selecting interns."*

## For More Information...

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