Doctoral Internship Guidelines Overview

All students are required to serve a nine to twelve month internship following their completion of coursework, practicum, and prelims. A list of current and previous internship sites is available from the Internship Coordinator, though many students elect to locate their own internships for personal, financial, or geographic reasons. Programs that offer an annual internship typically request applications in November or December of the year prior to the internship's beginning. Other positions may not require an application until a month or two before beginning an internship. Students should, therefore, begin planning where they wish to apply well before the end of their third semester. Any request to consider alternatives or modifications to the internship requirements stipulated below should be discussed with the faculty advisor and be submitted as a formal appeal to the Internship Coordinator.

It is important to note that the internship requirements specified below are subsumed by the program requirements for student clinical work. For example, while there is not a specific ratio of clinical contact to supervision hours specified in the internship requirements, a requirement for the program is that students have an overall 5:1 ratio of client contact hours to supervision hours for the documented 1000 hours of clinical work. Therefore, in order to meet all of the clinical requirements necessary for graduation, it is important that students be aware and mindful of their specific situation in terms of previous clinical work and supervision transferred into the doctoral program, clinical work and supervision during practicum (at the FTC), and clinical work and supervision during their internships.

Internship Requirements

1. Students will receive guidance about the doctoral internship requirements from the Internship Coordinator prior to completing their first year of study. Students may also request this information from the Internship Coordinator at any time.

2. Students may not serve their internships at The Family Therapy Center. Additionally, returning to a previous site of practicum or other employment is not encouraged. If a student is considering returning to a previous site, they must have a different supervisor and/or be working in a different clinical role (e.g., in a different division of the agency). Students may work in multiple internship sites, although working in more than two sites is not encouraged.

3. Internships may not begin before all practicum hours and doctoral course-work, including prelims, are completed. Students must transfer their hours from their master’s programs into the doctoral program prior to beginning their internships. It is the intern’s responsibility to plan for and submit the appropriate forms and paperwork to the Clinical Training Director.

4. Interns must complete an INTERNSHIP AGREEMENT before beginning their internships. If a student begins an internship before completing the Internship Agreement, the hours will not be counted.

5. The student will work approximately 30 hours per week during a nine to twelve month internship, for a minimum of 500 hours.

6. Client contact and supervision requirements:
   a. There should be at least ten client contact hours per week.

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b. A total of 500 direct client contact hours must be conducted. Students must receive a minimum of 100 hours of supervision.

c. At minimum, 250 of the client contact hours must be relational, and a minimum of 50 of the supervision hours must include raw data (i.e., live, video, or audio recording). Additionally, a minimum of 50 supervision hours must be in an individual setting. The student must also meet with their supervisor on a weekly basis.

d. Client contact and supervision hours must be reported by the 15th of each month. Hours can be reported via the ONLINE HOURS FORM at the program website. Additionally, you must keep your own records of your clinical and supervision hours.

7. The supervisor should be an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, or the equivalent. If the supervisor is not an AAMFT Approved Supervisor, then the Internship Coordinator will decide upon equivalency. Equivalency must be determined prior to beginning an internship. Equivalency generally requires documentation of five years’ experience supervising MFTs, specific MFT course work and training as evidenced by licensure or transcripts, MFT supervision training such as courses or workshops, a terminal mental health degree, or an exceptional history of presentations or publications as an MFT scholar. The process of establishing equivalency involves having the potential supervisor complete the APPROVED SUPERVISOR EQUIVALENCY FORM and submitting his or her resume/CV to the Internship Coordinator for review. In some cases, students have more than one internship supervisor. To count hours from multiple supervisors, all supervisors must be AAMFT Approved Supervisors or equivalents and the Internship Coordinator must have their materials on file.

8. Both the on-site supervisor and the intern must send in a Supervisor’s Evaluation and the student's Self-Evaluation halfway through the internship and during the last month of the internship. Evaluation forms are available from the program website, the Internship Coordinator, or the Office Manager.

9. Typically, it is not necessary for most students to pay tuition to the University for their internship hours. However, International students, in order to maintain their visa status, typically need to register for HD 5754 - Internship. International students should speak to an Immigration Specialist with the Graduate School when planning their internship to discuss their specific situation and options. For all students, it is also important to consider the Graduate School and HD policy on continuous enrollment. If you are working on your dissertation during your internship, you should be enrolled in Research and Dissertation (HD 7994) credits. Please consult your advisor for further details.

10. Interns must be insured, and will usually be required to provide their own liability insurance. Documentation of this coverage must be submitted to the Internship Coordinator prior to beginning the internship. Hours will not be counted without this documentation.

11. Students who have already completed the required one thousand hours of client contact and all other clinical requirements may request permission to complete an academic, research or other non-clinical internship. The approval of the clinical faculty is required for this option. Non-clinical internships must also offer appropriate supervision, and the goals and professional opportunities of the internship must be congruent with MFT doctoral training.

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12. Interns must abide by the current AAMFT Code of Ethics.

13. For the internship to be considered complete, the Internship Coordinator must review and sign off on the intern’s clinical and supervision hours. Students are responsible for requesting this review within 30 days of the completion of their internships.

Graduation and Internship Completion
All students must complete at least nine months and 500 clinical hours of their internship in order to be cleared for graduation, along with all coursework and a successful defense of their dissertation. These are the minimum requirements. Students whose nine or twelve month internships began in September or earlier and who have completed at least 450 hours of their internship clinical work may petition in April for a waiver of these minimums in order to participate in May graduation. Program certificates of completion will not be issued, however, until all 500 hours and at least nine internship months have been accrued.