

# **Psychology Externship Training Program Brochure**

## **Sunset Terrace Family Health Center at NYU Langone**

**OVERVIEW.** The Psychology externship program at the Sunset Terrace Family Health Center at NYU Langone is committed to teaching culturally sensitivity psychological practice. The externship has 4 available positions focusing on service delivery to adult or child/adolescent patients or a mixed caseload. Across all service delivery areas, externs provide individual therapy, psychological testing and intake assessment. The Sunset Terrace Family Health Center is proud of its contribution to cross-cultural research literature since it is the site where two culturally innovative clinical methods were developed as well as a culturally sensitive projective instrument. The clinical goals of the externship are achieved through a core set of supervision experiences, clinical practice, and didactic seminars.

**BACKGROUND.** The Family Health Centers at NYU Langone is comprised of a network of federally qualified health centers providing both primary and specialty medical care. The Sunset Terrace site houses the ambulatory behavioral health program. Located in Sunset Park, a multi-ethnic neighborhood near the Brooklyn waterfront and one of the largest urban historic districts in the northeast, the clinic has served the community since its inception in 1967. The Family Health Center has developed into one of the largest and most comprehensive federally supported community health centers in the nation.

The diverse demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the clinic's local community has necessitated the development of an integrated network of comprehensive mental health services to meet the needs of its diverse patient population. Currently the Sunset Terrace Family Health Center prides itself on providing a variety of culturally sensitive treatment programs, including adult outpatient treatment, child and adolescent services, on-site school mental health services, a treatment program for co-occurring disorders, and a Wellness Support program among other services. The center has had a strong, innovative treatment and clinical research program that has involved both staff and students in projects that typically have led to data collection, presentations and publications. Past projects have included: The Cuento Therapy and Frieda Kahlo Narrative Therapy Projects, and TEMAS (Tell-Me-A-Story), a multicultural projective test. In addition, Sunset Terrace recently developed programs of integrated care for those with SMI called ENTRY and On Track. These programs focus on whole health.

**PROGRAM DESCRIPTION.** There are 4 externship positions available requiring a time commitment of 16 hours per week at a minimum. While the positions focus on specific specialty areas (child or adult), each extern participates in a core program. The program

provides comprehensive services to its patient population, thereby giving externs the opportunity to develop clinical skills. Services include intake and assessment, psychological testing, psychotherapy and crisis intervention. The patient population includes children, adolescents and adults, and spans a broad range of psychiatric diagnoses. Treatment modalities include individual psychotherapy, couple's therapy, family therapy, filial (parent-child) therapy and psychoeducation. The clinic services a caseload of close to 7,000 patients, making it among the largest outpatient mental health programs in New York City. Externs are expected to participate in the intake process, psychological testing, and to carry a small caseload of individual therapy patients. The intake evaluation process entails an extended and in-depth clinical interview by the extern leading to a provisional DSM-V diagnosis as well as organization of the clinical findings. Externs' immersion in intakes, a process that requires continual on-the-spot clinical evaluations and decisions, helps develop the capacity to make clinical judgements with confidence and sensitivity.

**PSYCHODIAGNOSTIC TESTING.** Externs are expected to complete 3 full psychological batteries during the externship year. Using a standard battery of intelligence and projective tests, externs evaluate patients to answer the referral questions of referring providers. Externs receive supervision on all aspects of psychodiagnostic assessment. Training in dealing with issues of culture in psychological assessment is a distinctive aspect of testing supervision.

**OUTPATIENT PSYCHOTHERAPY.** The therapeutic approach focuses on a comprehensive and intensive understanding of the patient, the psychodynamics of personality and character development, the development of patient-therapist relations, the impact of individual psychopathology on the family and social systems in which the patient lives, and finally, the interaction between culture and the individual.

**SERVICE DELIVERY SPECIALIZATIONS.** 1. Child/Adolescent Outpatient Program. Externs working with Child and Adolescent Services receive training in a variety of functions performed by psychologists in an outpatient clinic setting. Externs provide comprehensive services to a small caseload of child and adolescent clients spanning a broad range of diagnoses. The services provided include individual and collateral contacts with parents/guardians, provision of concrete services, psycho-diagnostic testing, and intake interviews. 2. Adult Outpatient Program. Externs choosing to emphasize adult outpatient treatment, will receive training in a wide variety of functions performed by psychologists in a community-based mental health clinic. The adult outpatient extern provides comprehensive service to adult clinic patients spanning a broad range of psychiatric diagnoses. These services include individual psychotherapy and as well as the provision of

psychodiagnostic testing, and intake interviews. In both the child and adult tracks there is an opportunity to work with clients across the lifespan. Child track applicants can elect to work an adult patient if they choose and adult track externs can elect to work with a child client if they choose. There is also the opportunity to work with a mixed child and adult caseload.

**DIDACTIC PROGRAM.** The educational component of the externship takes place on Tuesdays. Externs participate in didactic seminars, a child clinical team meeting, and administrative and staff training meetings. Required seminars include a seminar of rotating clinical topics and a seminar in Motivational Interviewing. There are two optional seminars that externs can participate in if they are on-site when these seminars meet, and they include: Child and Adolescent Treatment and Rorschach and Projective Techniques. There may also be an optional seminar in DBT skills offered by the clinic's medical director.

**CLINICAL SUPERVISION.** Externs receive two hours of individual supervision per week with a licensed staff psychologist. One hour focuses on the supervision of psychotherapy cases and the other hour focuses on the supervision of psychological testing and assessment. Additionally, externs participate in a one-hour weekly of group supervision.

**TIME COMMITMENT.** Externs are required to make a time commitment of at least 16 hours per week. The time commitment includes Tuesdays. The remaining time is worked out with the extern's supervisor.

**APPLICATION PROCEDURES.** Applications are accepted in accord with NMS guidelines. Externs are required to be matriculated in a doctoral program in clinical, counseling or school psychology. Because the externship at Sunset Terrace is a front-line clinical position requiring a high degree of patient contact, it is best suited to second, third, and fourth-year externs. The required application materials include: 1. A curriculum vitae, 2. A writing sample, 3. A cover letter indicating which track the applicant is applying to, 4. Two to three letters of reference, and 5. A letter indicating the applicant is in good standing in their doctoral program and is ready for externship.

Questions regarding the externship should be directed to:

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