

## Practicum in Clinical Psychology (PSYC 369)

### What is Practicum in Clinical Psychology?

Practicum in Clinical Psychology (PSYC 369) is designed to allow students to gain first-hand experience in the mental health field while under the supervision of a mental health professional. The course permits students to integrate academic and practical skills through the semester-long clinical practicum experience. In practicum placements students interact directly with individuals who are receiving clinical or social support services. Students are *not* the direct providers of assessment or treatment programs, as graduate work and licensure are requirements for providing these services. Students can, however, observe these services, have one-on-one conversation with clients, and co-facilitate interviews and treatment or psychoeducational groups.

### Is Practicum in Clinical Psychology right for me?

Students who are considering a career in the mental health field may benefit from participation in the Practicum in Clinical Psychology course. Through practicum, students can obtain first-hand experience in the field of mental health, which may help to inform students' clinical interests and future career goals. Further, students who are considering applying to psychology graduate programs or other related programs in the mental health field (e.g., clinical psychology, counseling, social work, school psychology, etc.) may benefit from participating in direct or observational clinical work, which can help to enhance a curriculum vita. Additionally, participation in PSYC 369 requires students to enroll in the co-requisite Clinical Supervision in Psychology (PSYC 371, see below), which offers students professional development opportunities that may assist with graduate school or post-graduation job planning.

### When is the best time for me to take Practicum?

For most students, the best time to enroll in practicum is **during junior year, or first semester senior year**. Although sophomore students meeting the course prerequisites and seniors in their second semester can enroll in practicum, the experience and content of PSYC 371 (Clinical Supervision in Psychology) is most useful during junior or early in senior year.

### What is the difference between Practicum (PSYC 369) and Internship (PSYC 368)?

In Practicum placements, students interact directly with individuals receiving clinical or social support services. In contrast, students who are enrolled in an Internship experience are involved in **non-clinical** work, for example, research, undergraduate teaching assistant for psychology courses, personnel work, or work with animals in labs. Internship students are **not allowed** to do clinical work. Thus, for students who are more interested in non-clinical psychology work (e.g., research, teaching, human factors, industrial organizational psychology, experimental psychology, etc.), PSYC 368 may be a more appropriate route.

### What is Clinical Supervision in Psychology (PSYC 371)?

Students enrolled in PSYC 369 must enroll in the corequisite course Clinical Supervision in Psychology (PSYC 371). This course focuses on practicum-related issues such as ethics and professional development in psychology and related fields. Further, PSYC 371 offers students an opportunity to prepare for graduate school or jobs post-graduation through the use of the faculty advisor, graduate student teaching assistant, and the personnel and resources afforded by the Career Development Services (CDS) office. This is a one-credit course that meets in-person, once a week for two hours.

## Types of Practicum Sites and Clinical Populations

Options for practicum sites include, but are not limited to:

- School settings and after school programs
- Community-based programs
- Domestic violence shelters
- Homeless shelters
- Hospitals and medical centers
- Inpatient programs
- Legal and forensic settings and programs

Populations that students might work with include, but are not limited to:

- Children and Adolescents
- Adults
- Domestic violence and abuse survivors
- Homeless adults and children
- Severe mental illness
- Individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Patients with dual diagnoses

## Practicum Course Prerequisites

Students must be Psychology majors, have 14 hours in psychology at the 300 or 400 level, and have achieved Junior standing (60 credit hours). Students must have completed **PSYC 317** with a grade of C or better, and either have **PSYC 318W** completed with a C or better, or be co-enrolled in PSYC 318W during the semester they are enrolled in Practicum. Students must also successfully complete a Practicum Readiness Interview with the course instructor or graduate teaching assistant in order to receive instructor approval to register.

## Course Requirements & Information

- Students must accumulate a minimum of 120 hours during the semester (8-10 hours/week) at their practicum placement.
- PSYC 369 is a 3 credit course, graded on a pass/fail basis.
- PSYC 371 is a 1 credit course, and students will receive a letter grade.

## Securing a Practicum Placement

**Before** securing a practicum site, students interested in this course should contact the course instructor at [ugpsycpracticum@odu.edu](mailto:ugpsycpracticum@odu.edu). The course instructor and TA will assist with the selection of a site. However, it is the student's responsibility to apply for, interview with, and secure a practicum placement prior to the start of the semester in which they will be enrolled in PSYC 369 and PSYC 371. Securing a practicum placement takes time and it is highly recommended that students start this process **during the academic semester prior to enrolling in the course**, as there are multiple steps to complete before students are granted permission to apply to sites (see below: Steps for Enrolling in PSYC 369/PSYC 371).

## Steps for Enrolling in PSYC 369/PSYC 371

\_\_\_\_\_ **Step 1:** Interview with Course Instructor and/or Graduate Teaching Assistant

*The first step in the process is to interview with the course instructor and/or graduate teaching assistant to evaluate your readiness for the Practicum course. You will need to email [ugpsycpracticum@odu.edu](mailto:ugpsycpracticum@odu.edu) to schedule this interview.*

\_\_\_\_\_ **Step 2:** Resume Review with Career Development Services

\_\_\_\_\_ **Step 3:** Receive Practicum Site Information and Contact Sites

\_\_\_\_\_ **Step 4:** Interview with Sites and Secure a Placement

\_\_\_\_\_ **Step 5:** Return Contracts to and Register for Courses