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Doctoral Practicum Training in Psychological Assessment

Practicum at a Glance

Training Focus: Comprehensive psychological and psychoeducational assessment, with emphasis on developing strong clinical reasoning, diagnostic formulation, test interpretation, integration of findings, report writing, feedback, and consultation.

Training Levels: Opportunities for both beginning and advanced doctoral practicum students, with responsibilities individualized according to prior training, demonstrated competencies, professional interests, and doctoral program requirements.

Populations: Children, adolescents, and adults presenting with a broad range of developmental, cognitive, academic, attentional, behavioral, emotional, personality, and diagnostic concerns.

Clinical Experience: Students generally participate in 1–2 evaluations per week, with approximately 50% of training time devoted to direct clinical activities, including testing, clinical interviews, and feedback sessions.

Supervision: A minimum of two hours of face-to-face supervision each week, including at least one hour of scheduled individual supervision with a licensed clinical psychologist and an additional hour of group and/or individual supervision.

Training Environment: Students train as part of a multidisciplinary assessment team that includes clinical psychologists and school psychologists with expertise across clinical, educational, community, inpatient, outpatient, and forensic settings.

Additional Training: Weekly group supervision and assessment training, assessment team meetings, advanced assessment didactics, threat assessment and management training, interdisciplinary consultation, and additional professional development opportunities.

Specialized Opportunities: Depending upon training level, interests, supervisor expertise, and availability, students may gain exposure to forensic assessment, violence and sexual risk assessment, threat assessment and management, school-based consultation, outpatient psychotherapy, telehealth, and professional development activities.

Training Model: Developmental and competency-based, with greater structure, observation, and direct instruction provided early in training and progressively greater independence as students demonstrate readiness.

About Advanced Behavioral Health Group

Advanced Behavioral Health Group (ABHG) is a multidisciplinary behavioral health practice located in South Hadley, Massachusetts, serving children, adolescents, adults, families, schools, and community organizations throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut. ABHG provides a broad range of behavioral health services, including psychological and psychoeducational assessment, outpatient psychotherapy, applied behavior analysis (ABA), school-based consultation and services, clinical supervision, professional development, and consultation. The practice works extensively with community organizations and currently serves more than 55 school districts, companies, and agencies.

The ABHG clinical team includes clinical psychologists, school psychologists, psychotherapists, social workers, behavior analysts, and other behavioral health professionals. This multidisciplinary structure provides trainees with opportunities to learn not only within psychological assessment, but also through interaction and consultation with professionals working across behavioral health and educational settings.

ABHG's assessment clinicians have backgrounds spanning outpatient, inpatient, educational, community, and forensic settings. Assessment services include clinical and diagnostic evaluations, psychoeducational evaluations, independent evaluations, and specialized assessments addressing complex diagnostic and referral questions. Common areas of assessment include ADHD, autism spectrum disorder, learning disorders, intellectual and developmental disabilities, cognitive and executive functioning, emotional and behavioral functioning, personality functioning, trauma-related concerns, anxiety and mood disorders, and complex differential diagnosis. ABHG also regularly completes forensic evaluations, including evaluations related to violence and sexual risk, threat assessment and management, and other court related referral questions.

Doctoral Practicum Training

ABHG offers doctoral practicum training for psychology students seeking supervised experience in comprehensive psychological assessment and diagnostic evaluation. Practicum opportunities are available for students at different stages of doctoral training, including beginning practicum students as well as advanced practicum students. Training experiences, caseloads, supervision, and expectations are individualized according to the student's level of preparation, demonstrated competencies, professional interests, and doctoral program requirements.

Psychological and psychoeducational assessment form the core of the practicum experience. Students have opportunities to work with children, adolescents, and adults while developing skills across the full assessment process. Although assessment is the primary training emphasis, ABHG's broader clinical and community-based services create opportunities for students to understand assessment within the larger context of treatment, education, consultation, and systems of care. In addition, they are able to engage in training, didactics, and clinical work related to therapy, consultation services, and professional development presentations.

Training Philosophy

ABHG views practicum as a developmental, purposeful training experience rather than simply supervised clinical work. Students are trainees first and are not expected to enter practicum

already functioning independently. Clinical responsibilities are selected with consideration of educational value, previous training, current competencies, and readiness for increasing independence. Supervision, direct instruction, modeling, observation, guided practice, and progressively more independent clinical experiences are used to help students develop competence and confidence. Training goals are established collaboratively and revisited throughout the year as students develop.

Beginning practicum students receive greater structure, direct instruction, observation, and guidance as they develop foundational assessment skills. Students with advanced assessment experience are provided opportunities to refine diagnostic reasoning, integration, report writing, case management, consultation, and professional judgment while progressing toward greater clinical independence. Across training levels, students remain supervised and are encouraged to ask questions, seek consultation, reflect on their clinical decision-making, and make active use of the broader clinical team.

ABHG recognizes that professional development involves more than technical competence. Training therefore also emphasizes ethical practice, responsiveness to individual and cultural differences, professional communication, self-reflection, appropriate use of supervision, awareness of the limits of one's competence, and development of a professional identity as a psychologist.

Clinical Training Experiences

Practicum students participate in psychological and psychoeducational evaluations involving a range of developmental, cognitive, academic, behavioral, emotional, and diagnostic referral questions.

Depending upon training level and demonstrated competencies, experiences may include:

- Reviewing referrals and clarifying assessment questions
- Conducting clinical and diagnostic interviews
- Gathering developmental, educational, psychiatric, medical, family, and psychosocial history
- Reviewing educational, medical, treatment, and other collateral records
- Developing an understanding of how related disciplines and systems, including speech-language services, occupational therapy, school-based services, outpatient treatment, residential services, and inpatient care, inform assessment, case conceptualization, and recommendations
- Communicating with parents, schools, treatment providers, and other collateral sources when appropriate
- Developing assessment plans and learning principles of test selection and battery development
- Administering and scoring standardized psychological and psychoeducational measures
- Evaluating cognitive, academic, executive, attentional, behavioral, emotional, adaptive, and personality functioning
- Interpreting findings within the context of the individual's history and presenting concerns
- Integrating findings across tests, interviews, observations, records, and collateral information

- Developing diagnostic formulations and differential diagnoses
- Writing integrated psychological and psychoeducational reports
- Translating assessment findings into practical, individualized recommendations
- Observing and, as appropriate, conducting feedback sessions
- Engaging in school treatment team meetings and discussions to provide feedback with an integrated team
- Consulting with families, schools, treatment providers, and other professionals
- Managing an evaluation from referral through completion as competency develops

A central goal of training is helping students move beyond learning how to administer individual tests toward understanding psychological assessment as an integrated clinical process. Students learn to begin with a meaningful referral question, determine what information is needed to address that question, select appropriate assessment methods, integrate sometimes complex or conflicting data, and communicate findings in a manner that is clinically useful to the individual and referral source and supports effective collaboration with families, schools, treatment providers, and other professionals.

Beginning Practicum

Beginning practicum is appropriate for doctoral students who are developing foundational assessment competencies and may have limited experience independently conducting comprehensive evaluations. Training emphasizes instruction, modeling, observation, and closely supervised practice. Early in the placement, students will observe evaluations, participate jointly with a supervisor or more experienced clinician, or assume responsibility for selected components of an evaluation. As competence develops, students progressively assume greater responsibility for interviewing, test selection, administration, scoring, interpretation, case conceptualization, report writing, recommendations, and feedback. The pace of increasing responsibility is based on demonstrated competency rather than time in placement alone. The goal is to provide sufficient support for students to learn effectively while also creating meaningful opportunities to develop independence.

Advanced Practicum

Advanced practicum is designed for students who have already developed foundational assessment skills and are seeking greater breadth, complexity, efficiency, and independence. Advanced students may assume greater responsibility for managing evaluations from referral through feedback while continuing to receive appropriate supervision. Training places increased emphasis on efficient and hypothesis-driven test selection, complex differential diagnosis, integration of multiple data sources, independent report development, recommendations, feedback, consultation, and professional judgment. Advanced students may also have opportunities to work with more complex clinical presentations and referral questions. Depending upon student interests, previous training, supervisor expertise, and available clinical opportunities, advanced practicum students may also gain exposure to forensic psychological assessment, risk and threat assessment, school-based consultation, outpatient psychotherapy, telehealth services, and other areas of clinical consultation.

Training Leadership and Assessment Team

Practicum students train within ABHG's broader psychological assessment team, which includes licensed clinical psychologists and school psychologists with experience across outpatient, inpatient, educational, community, and forensic settings. Team members bring different areas of expertise, allowing students to gain exposure to a broad range of assessment approaches, populations, and referral questions.

Lindsay De Vries, Psy.D., Director of Psychological Testing and Assessment, provides leadership for ABHG's assessment services and practicum training program. Dr. De Vries is a licensed clinical psychologist with extensive experience in psychological, neuropsychological, psychoeducational, forensic, violence risk, sexual risk, and threat assessment. Her clinical background includes outpatient and community mental health, inpatient psychiatric care, state and federal correctional settings, school consultation, and private practice.

Dr. De Vries has extensive experience supervising and training doctoral psychology students across assessment and broader clinical practice. She currently serves as Psychological Assessment Training Director at Community Services Institute, where she supervises predoctoral interns and leads weekly assessment didactics addressing case conceptualization, psychological assessment, and report writing. Her previous supervisory roles have included supervision of psychology interns and practicum students within the Federal Bureau of Prisons, supervision of predoctoral and master's-level psychology interns within the New York State Prison System, field supervision of Psy.D. practicum students through Antioch University New England, and supervision of predoctoral interns in psychological assessment within a community mental health setting. Across these roles, her supervisory experience has included psychological assessment, individual and group psychotherapy, diagnostic evaluation, case conceptualization, crisis work, report writing, and professional development.

Dr. De Vries also brings extensive graduate-level teaching and program leadership experience to the training program. She is a full-time graduate psychology professor and the Academic Program Director for a master's program in Forensic Psychology, with a specialization in Threat Assessment and Management. In addition, she serves as Internship Coordinator for the program, assisting students in identifying non-clinical field placements. Her teaching has included psychological assessment and measurement, ethics, forensic psychology, clinical psychology, developmental psychology, and related areas. She has also developed and presented didactic training for doctoral interns, school districts, and other clinicians on psychological and forensic assessment, diagnostic evaluation, suicide risk assessment, risk and threat assessment, and other clinical topics.

Additional Assessment Team Members

Christopher Rose, Psy.D., is a licensed clinical psychologist specializing in psychological assessment and consultation with children, adolescents, and adults. His experience spans inpatient, outpatient, residential, and educational settings and includes clinical, academic, and forensic evaluations. Areas of expertise include cognitive, emotional, and personality assessment; diagnostic clarification; learning disorders; ADHD; autism; trauma; anxiety; and co-occurring conditions.

Amanda Ryan, Ph.D., is a school psychologist with more than two decades of experience conducting psychoeducational evaluations and consulting with schools and families throughout Massachusetts. Her work emphasizes understanding students' learning and social-emotional needs and translating assessment findings into effective educational supports and interventions. She also has extensive experience in school-wide systems of support, literacy, social-emotional intervention, and Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). Dr. Ryan is also a faculty member at UMASS Amherst in the School Psychology PhD program, where she is the Practicum Director. Dr. Ryan also supervises school psychology doctoral students in their practicum experiences through ABHG.

Molly Alvin, Ph.D., is a licensed school psychologist with extensive experience in public education. Her work includes psychoeducational assessment, counseling, consultation with families and school personnel, and evaluation for special education eligibility. Her professional interests include social-emotional learning, mental health and wellness in schools, positive behavioral interventions and supports, mindfulness, and stress reduction.

The assessment team also includes experienced school psychologists with advanced graduate training, including clinicians with Ed.S. degrees and clinicians currently pursuing doctoral degrees. Their backgrounds include psychoeducational assessment, special education eligibility, curriculum-based measurement, response to intervention, academic intervention, and school consultation. Collectively, the team provides students with opportunities to learn from professionals whose backgrounds span clinical and school psychology and to consider assessment findings within the broader educational, clinical, family, and community systems in which individuals function.

Supervision and Clinical Oversight

Each practicum student is assigned a primary supervisor who is a licensed doctoral-level clinical psychologist and maintains clinical responsibility for the student's supervised activities. If a secondary supervisor is assigned, that individual will also be a licensed doctoral-level clinical psychologist. Students may additionally have opportunities to learn from and consult with professionals from other disciplines, including LICSWs, BCBAs, and doctoral-level licensed school psychologists, when relevant to their training goals and the broader services offered at ABHG. These additional learning experiences supplement, rather than replace, required supervision by a licensed psychologist.

Students receive a minimum of two hours of face-to-face supervision each week. At least one hour consists of scheduled individual supervision with the student's primary supervisor. The second hour is provided through weekly face-to-face group supervision and/or additional individual supervision with a licensed psychologist. Additional individual supervision and consultation are provided as needed based on the student's clinical activities, developmental level, and doctoral program requirements. ABHG will work with individual doctoral programs when their supervision requirements exceed these minimums.

Supervision is individualized to the student's developmental level and clinical activities. It may include review of test protocols and scoring, observation of clinical work, case conceptualization, test selection, interpretation, differential diagnosis, report review, feedback

preparation, ethical and professional issues, and broader professional development. Supervisors incorporate direct knowledge of the student's clinical work into training and evaluation. Depending upon the activity and applicable requirements, this may include direct observation, joint participation in clinical activities, review of assessment protocols and recordings when appropriate and permitted, review of written work, and observation of interviewing, feedback, or consultation. Supervision becomes progressively less directive as students demonstrate competence, while appropriate supervisory oversight and clinical responsibility are maintained throughout the practicum, including meeting required supervision hours per school and licensure requirements.

Professional Engagement and Additional Learning Opportunities

Practicum students are considered members of the broader ABHG professional community rather than being limited solely to interactions with their individual supervisor. Students have opportunities to interact with psychologists, school psychologists, psychotherapists, social workers, behavior analysts, and other behavioral health professionals across the practice. This provides exposure to different professional perspectives and opportunities for interdisciplinary consultation, case discussion, mentorship, and professional development.

Practicum students will participate in weekly group supervision which also includes assessment training. This supervision includes not only practicum students but also pre-doctoral interns, post doctoral fellows, and other licensed psychologists. Students will also participate in assessment team meetings, have the opportunity to participate in weekly didactics addressing neuropsychological assessment with post doctoral fellows, and attend trainings in the field of threat assessment and management. Depending upon availability and the student's schedule, additional training experiences may include case consultation, educational presentations, didactic activities, practice meetings, professional development programs, and opportunities to observe clinicians with different areas of expertise.

ABHG also has substantial involvement with schools and community organizations. The practice provides consultation, assessment, behavioral services, professional development, and other supports to school systems and agencies. This allows trainees to gain exposure to the ways psychologists communicate and collaborate across clinical, educational, and community systems.

Hours and Scheduling

ABHG recognizes that practicum requirements vary considerably across doctoral programs and stages of training. Weekly hours and the duration of practicum are determined collaboratively based on the student's doctoral program requirements, training goals, availability, and ABHG's ability to provide the necessary clinical experiences. In general, practicum students participate in approximately one to two evaluations per week. Direct clinical activities—including testing, clinical interviews, and feedback sessions—typically comprise approximately 50% of the student's training time. The remaining time includes test scoring and interpretation, record review, report writing and documentation, individual and group supervision, didactic and professional development activities, case consultation, and other approved training experiences. When appropriate and consistent with university, supervisory, confidentiality, and clinical requirements, selected activities such as report writing may be completed remotely. Telehealth experiences are also available when clinically and educationally appropriate.

Students are expected to maintain accurate documentation of their training activities and hours consistent with their doctoral program and applicable internship-training requirements. ABHG will work with individual doctoral programs to establish schedules and training experiences that satisfy applicable program requirements whenever feasible.

Individualized Training Goals and Agreements

At the beginning of the training experience, the student and supervisor identify the student's existing competencies, areas for growth, professional interests, and anticipated training experiences. ABHG recognizes that universities differ in practicum expectations. The practice works collaboratively with the student and doctoral program to complete required practicum agreements and establish an appropriate training plan before clinical training begins. Training agreements may address the student's schedule, anticipated clinical activities, supervision arrangements, training objectives, methods of evaluation, and other university-specific requirements. The training plan is intended to remain developmental. Goals and responsibilities may be modified during the year as the student demonstrates new competencies or identifies areas in which additional experience would be beneficial.

Evaluation and Feedback

ABHG views evaluation as an ongoing component of supervision rather than an activity that occurs only at the end of a semester. Students receive regular feedback regarding their developing competencies, with attention to both strengths and areas for continued growth. Formal evaluations are completed at designated points during the training year and/or according to the student's doctoral program requirements. Areas considered may include professionalism and reliability, ethical practice, responsiveness to supervision, interviewing skills, test administration and scoring, clinical reasoning, test interpretation, integration of findings, diagnostic formulation, report writing, feedback skills, interpersonal effectiveness, cultural responsiveness, and development toward appropriate independence.

Direct observation or other direct review of clinical work is incorporated into supervision and evaluation when required by the student's doctoral program and when appropriate to the student's activities. Students are also encouraged to provide feedback regarding their supervision and overall training experience. Concerns regarding training or performance should be addressed early and collaboratively whenever possible so that additional supervision, clarification of expectations, or modification of training goals can occur.

Ethical and Professional Practice

Practicum students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with applicable ethical, legal, professional, university, and ABHG requirements. Students work only within the scope of activities for which they have received appropriate training and supervision. Clinical responsibilities are expanded as competence is demonstrated.

Students are expected to protect patient confidentiality, maintain appropriate professional boundaries, complete documentation responsibly, use supervision appropriately, and promptly bring clinical, ethical, or professional concerns to their supervisor.

Students must maintain their own professional liability insurance as well as any other documentation required by their doctoral program, ABHG, or applicable training agreement.

Preparing for the Next Stage of Training

The goal of practicum training at ABHG extends beyond accumulating assessment hours. Training is designed to help students develop the clinical judgment, assessment competence, diagnostic reasoning, communication skills, and professional responsibility needed for increasingly advanced levels of training and practice. Ultimately, ABHG seeks to develop psychologists who approach assessment thoughtfully: understanding not simply how to administer psychological tests, but why particular questions are being asked, what information is needed to answer them, how findings fit within the context of the whole person, and how assessment can provide meaningful guidance to patients, families, schools, treatment providers, and other professionals.

Application Process

ABHG accepts applications from doctoral students seeking beginning or advanced practicum training in psychological assessment. Applicants should be enrolled in a doctoral program in clinical or counseling psychology program and should confirm with their doctoral program that the proposed practicum experience is appropriate for their training needs and requirements.

Interested students should submit:

- A current curriculum vitae (CV)
- A cover letter describing their current level of doctoral training, previous assessment and clinical experience, areas of interest, training goals for the practicum year, and interest in completing practicum training at ABHG

Application Deadline: December 15

Interviews: January

Notification of Decisions: Early February

Practicum Year: Summer or Fall start through June, with specific start and end dates coordinated with the student's doctoral program.

Selected applicants will be invited to interview with members of the ABHG team. The interview provides an opportunity to discuss the student's previous training, current competencies, professional interests, and goals for practicum, as well as to learn more about ABHG's assessment services, supervision model, training opportunities, and expectations. Placement offers are contingent upon coordination with and approval by the student's doctoral program and completion of any required university and ABHG training documentation.

Application materials should be submitted to:

Lindsay De Vries, Psy.D.

Director of Psychological Testing and Assessment

Email: ldevries@abhgrp.com

Learn More About ABHG

Additional information about our assessment clinicians, multidisciplinary team, clinical services, school-based programming, and other areas of practice is available at www.abhgrp.com.

Prospective students and doctoral programs are encouraged to review the website for current information about ABHG's clinicians and services.