



## The Utah Psychology Internship Consortium (UT-PIC)

### Due Process Procedures

#### Performance Issues about Interns

For situations in which a supervisor or other faculty member raises a significant concern about the performance or behavior of a psychology intern:

UT-PIC has developed a Due Process and Resolution process, which focuses on prevention and a timely response to identified problems. This ensures that decisions made by the consortium are not arbitrarily or personally based and identifies specific steps that are applied to all interns. Further, clearly identified steps and a process are provided for an intern to address an issue with some aspect of the Training Program or one of its members.

Doctoral-level psychology interns are expected to maintain the highest standards of personal conduct, integrity and professionalism. They are expected to support and comply with APA Ethical Guidelines and to utilize supervision effectively in order to grow professionally. It also is the responsibility of the intern's clinical supervisor and the UT-PIC faculty to assure that high standards of professionalism are attained by the interns under their supervision. Maintenance of these standards will promote effectiveness of both the professional training provided by the internship and the quality of psychological work provided by the interns to clients/constituent communities of the consortium agencies.

#### GENERAL DUE PROCESS GUIDELINES

Due process includes steps that assure fair evaluation of intern performance, intern awareness of options for resolution of performance issues and clearly defined steps for notice, hearing and appeal. General guidelines for due process at UT-PIC include the following:

- A. The Training Faculty will present UT-PIC's program expectations for professional functioning to interns in writing, at the start of the training period. This is discussed in a group format during orientation and may be followed up individually during supervision. Interns sign an acknowledgement indicating receipt and understanding of, and agreement to abide by, these guidelines and other UT-PIC policies.
- B. The process for evaluation of interns is clearly described during orientation. Interns will be formally evaluated at least twice per year by their primary supervisor. The written evaluation is based on APA criteria and includes the profession-wide competencies of:
  1. Research
  2. Ethical and legal standards
  3. Individual and cultural diversity

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4. Professional values, attitudes, and behaviors
  5. Communication and interpersonal skills
  6. Assessment
  7. Intervention
  8. Supervision
  9. Consultation and inter-professional/interdisciplinary skills
- C. The various procedures and actions involved in decisions regarding inadequate skills or problematic behaviors are described to interns.
- D. The Program Director and/or site clinical supervisor will communicate early and often with academic programs about any suspected difficulties with interns.

#### Definition of Problem Behavior

For purposes of this document, intern problem behavior is defined broadly as an interference in professional functioning which is reflected in one or more of the following ways:

- 1) an inability and/or unwillingness to acquire and integrate professional standards into one's repertoire of professional behavior,
- 2) an inability to acquire professional skills in order to reach an acceptable level of competency,
- 3) an inability to control personal stress, psychological dysfunctions, and/or excessive emotional reactions which interfere with professional functioning.

It is a professional judgment as to when an intern's behavior becomes problematic rather than of concern. Trainees may exhibit behaviors, attitudes or characteristics that, while of concern and requiring remediation, are not unexpected or excessive for professionals in training. Issues typically become identified as problematic when they include one or more of the following characteristics:

- 1) The intern does not acknowledge, understand, or address the problem when it is identified,
- 2) The problem is not merely a reflection of a skill deficit which can be rectified by academic or didactic training,
- 3) The quality of services delivered by the intern is sufficiently negatively affected,
- 4) The problem is not restricted to one area of professional functioning,
- 5) A disproportionate amount of attention by training personnel is required,
- 6) The trainee's behavior does not change as a function of feedback, remediation efforts, and/or time,
- 7) The problematic behavior has potential for ethical or legal ramifications if not addressed,
- 8) The intern's behavior negatively impacts the public view of the agency,
- 9) The problematic behavior negatively impacts the intern class.

#### Administrative Hierarchy and Definitions

UT-PIC's Due Process procedure occurs in a step-wise fashion, involving greater levels of intervention as a problem increases in persistence, complexity, or level of disruption to the training program. Faculty roles included herein are defined as follows:

- Supervisor: Any faculty member who provides direct supervision or teaching to an intern.
- Associate Program Director: A supervisor who functions as a site-level director of training and serves as a voting member of the Training Committee, if applicable.

- Program Director: The supervisor who functions as the program-level director of training. He or she leads the Training Committee and serves as a voting member.

#### Use of Videoconference

Videoconferencing will be utilized for situations that require the meetings of interns and training staff who are located in geographically different areas of Utah.

#### Informal Review

When a supervisor believes that an intern's behavior is or may likely become problematic, the first step in addressing the issue should be to raise the issue with the intern directly and as soon as feasible in an attempt to informally resolve the problem. This process should be documented in writing, but will not become part of the intern's professional file.

#### Formal Review

If an intern's problem behavior persists following an attempt to resolve the issue informally, or if an intern receives a rating below a "2" on a broad domain within a supervisory evaluation at the 3-month or 7-month evaluation or a rating below a "3" at the 7-month evaluation, the following process is initiated:

- A. The supervisor will meet with the Associate Program Director (ATD), Program Director (PD), and intern within two weeks to discuss the problem and determine what action needs to be taken to address the issue. If a Program Director is the intern's direct supervisor, an Associate Program Director will be included in the meeting.
- B. The intern will have the opportunity to provide a written statement related to his/her response to the problem.
- C. After discussing the problem and the intern's response, the supervisor, ATD, and Program Director may:
  - 1) Issue an "Acknowledgement Notice" which formally acknowledges
    - a) that the faculty is aware of and concerned with the problem,
    - b) that the problem has been brought to the attention of the intern,
    - c) that the faculty will work with the intern to specify the steps necessary to rectify the problem or skill deficits addressed by the inadequate evaluation rating, and
    - d) that the problem is not significant enough to warrant further remedial action at this time,
    - e) A written notice will be submitted to the intern and the Director of Clinical Training at the trainee's graduate institution. This notice will be issued within 5 working days of the meeting.
  - 2) Place the intern on "Probation" which defines a relationship such that the faculty, through the supervisors and PD, actively and systematically monitor, for a specified length of time, the degree to which the intern addresses, changes and/or otherwise improves the

problematic behavior or skill deficit. The length of the probation period will depend upon the nature of the problem and will be determined by the intern's supervisors and PD. The probation is a written statement to the intern and to the Director of Clinical Training at the trainee's graduate institution and includes:

- a) the actual behaviors or skills associated with the problem,
- b) the specific recommendations for rectifying the problem,
- c) the time frame for the probation during which the problem is expected to be ameliorated, and
- d) the procedures designed to ascertain whether the problem has been appropriately rectified.

This written statement will be issued within 5 working days of the decision. The PD or primary supervisor will notify the WICHE consultant at this time and will also notify the Human Resources department at the intern's place of employment. At the end of this probation period, the Program Director will provide a written statement indicating whether or not the problem has been remediated. This statement will become part of the intern's permanent file and will also be shared with the intern and sent to the Director of Clinical Training at the intern's graduate institution as well as the Human Resources department at the intern's place of employment. The intern shall receive a copy of the letter to the sponsoring university.

3) Document the problem and take no further action.

- D. Once the Acknowledgment Notice or Probation is issued by the PD, it is expected that the status of the problem or inadequate rating will be reviewed no later than the next formal evaluation period or, in the case of probation, no later than the time limits identified in the probation statement. If the problem has been rectified to the satisfaction of the faculty and the intern, the sponsoring university and other appropriate individuals will be informed and no further action will be taken.
- E. If the problem is not rectified through the above processes the intern's placement within UT-PIC may be terminated.
- F. If the problem represents gross misconduct or ethical violations that have the potential to cause harm, the intern's placement within UT-PIC may be terminated.
- G. If the intern's employment is terminated by the site, the intern's placement within UT-PIC may be terminated.
- H. The final decision to terminate an intern's placement would be made by the entire Training Committee and would represent a discontinuation of participation by the intern within every aspect of the consortium. The Training Committee would make this determination during a meeting convened within a reasonable timeframe following the conclusion of step A or during the

regularly-scheduled monthly Training Committee meeting, whichever occurs first. The PD or primary supervisor will notify the WICHE consultant at this time and will also notify the Human Resources department at the intern's place of employment. The Program Director may decide to temporarily suspend an intern's clinical activities or place an intern on paid administrative leave during this period prior to a final decision being made, if warranted.

- I. UT-PIC will adhere to APPIC's Policies on intern dismissal and secure a release from the Match contract.

#### Appeal and Review Panel

If the intern does not agree with the decisions made from previous Due Process steps, or if he or she wishes to formally challenge ratings received on a formal evaluation, an Appeal may be submitted by the intern to the Training Committee.

- A. This request must be made in writing--an email will suffice--to the Program Director within 5 working days of notification regarding the decision made in step C or D above, or within 10 days after receiving a formal evaluation. The PD or primary supervisor will notify the WICHE consultant at this time and will also notify the Human Resources department at the intern's place of employment.
- B. If requested, the Appeal will be conducted by a review panel consisting of two licensed psychologists and one agency HR/administrative representative selected by the Associate Program Directors with recommendations from the Program Director and the intern involved in the issue at hand. The two licensed psychologists selected will not be on the Training Committee and will not have directly supervised the intern.
- C. The Appeal review will be held over a two week period. The review panel will review all written materials and have an opportunity to interview the parties involved or any other individuals with relevant information. The review panel may uphold the decisions made previously or may modify them. The review panel has final discretion regarding outcome.
- D. In the event that an intern is filing a formal appeal in writing to disagree with a decision that has already been made by the Training Committee and supported by the Program Director, then that appeal is reviewed by the Program Director in consultation with the Training Committee. The Program Director will determine if a new Review Panel should be formed to reexamine the case, or if the decision of the original review panel is upheld.

Reviewed/revised and approved by UT-PIC Faculty on 06/12/2020.

Please sign this acknowledgement page and return to the Program Director

**Acknowledgment**

I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the Due Process procedures of the Utah Psychology Internship Consortium. I agree to abide by the procedures outlined in this document. I have been provided with a copy of the document to keep in my files.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date