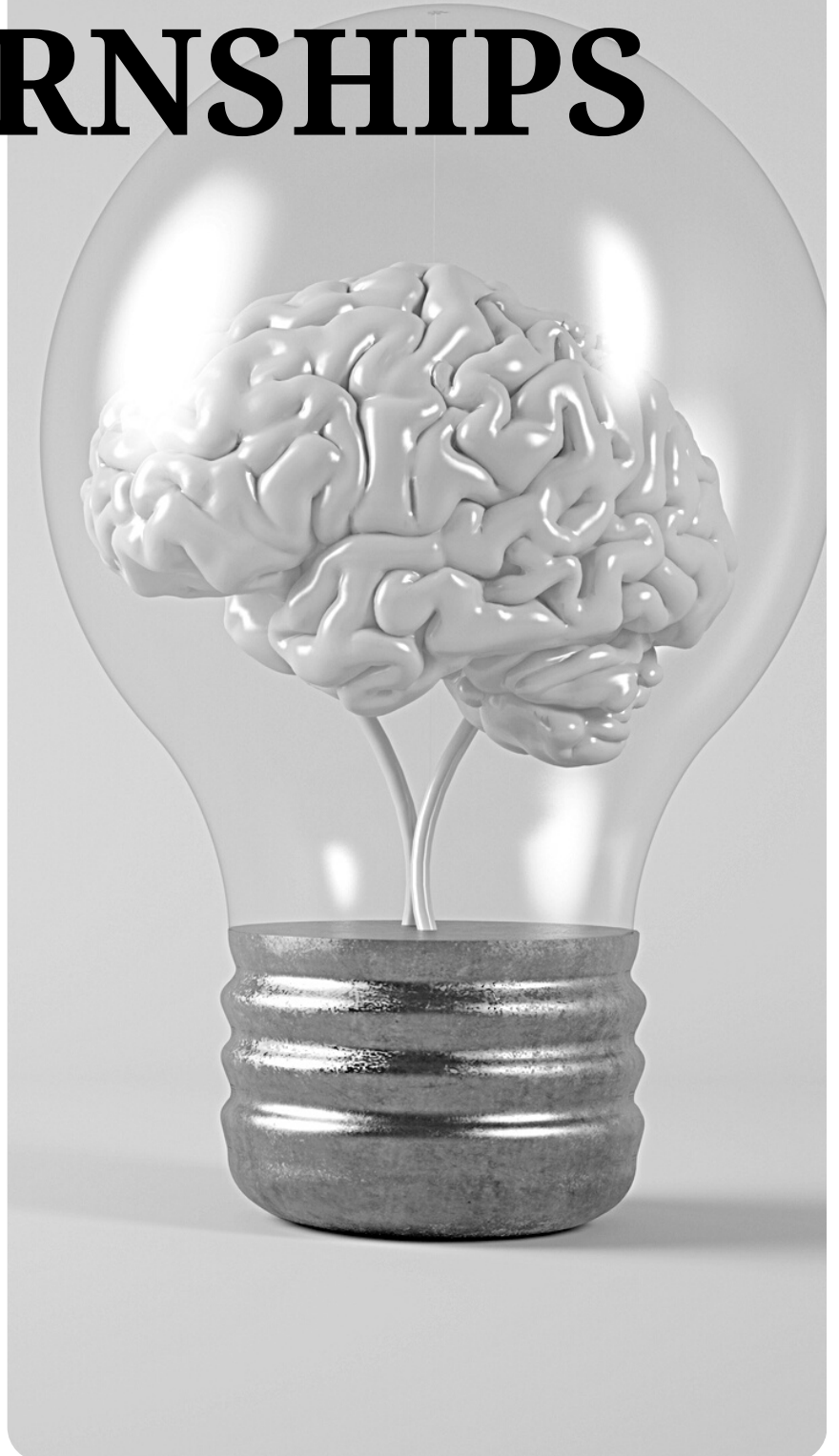


*[Unofficial] Guide for*  
**PSYCHOLOGY  
INTERNSHIPS**



## Disclaimer

*This guide is based on my own experience & not affiliated with any institution or organization.*

*Information is based on personal experience and not meant to substitute guidance or recommendations of any institution, program, faculty, or advisor. I am not a sponsor for any organizations or affiliations that owe second-party resources. Please use at your discretion.*

## Internship Tentative Timeline

### JUNE

- Identify 3–4 writers for letters of recommendation [LORs].
  - *Note: some sites will require LORs from at least 2 previous clinical supervisors.*
  - Aim to identify faculty members, clinical supervisors, and/or research advisors you feel confident will write you *strong* LORs.
  - APPIC refers to these letters as Standardized Reference Form (SRF).
    - Read more on SRF policies (including recent changes) [here](#).
- Consult with your DCT to determine application eligibility deadlines (e.g., dissertation proposal, comprehensive exams, AAPI DCT verification materials) for your program.
- Subscribe to the [APPIC Match-News E-Mail List](#) to get official up-to-date info.
- Become familiar with the [overall process](#), including [cost of applications](#) & [match fee](#).
- Become familiar with [AAPI written materials](#) (e.g., cover letters, essays, CV) & [supplemental materials](#).

### JULY

- APPIC applicant portal site opens (*usually around the middle of the month*).
  - Create [account](#) & sign up.
    - Here is a [video](#) on how to fill out the AAPI application.
    - Here is a [sample](#) of what the application looks like once you submit it.
- Develop your CV (make sure all recent accomplishments are included).
  - Consider using tutoring/career center services & having your CV reviewed.
  - Here is a [free template](#).
- Start brainstorming ideas for essays ([go over prompts](#)).
- Submit transcript requests as soon as summer semester grades are conferred.
  - Add transcripts to your APPIC portal site once you receive them. More on transcripts [here](#).
- Start doing a preliminary browse on the [internship directory](#).
  - *Note: some information may change or may not be updated yet.*
  - Think about what factors are important to you, such as:
    - Training philosophy/workplace culture
    - Training area/focus/concentration/rotation
    - Location
    - Type of site/setting & accreditation status
    - Stipend/Benefits
    - Legal requirements (e.g., some sites require U.S. citizenship, immunizations, background checks, etc.)
- Ask for LORs (in-person preferred) before the end of summer semester.

## AUGUST

- If required by your program/internship sites, aim to have your doctoral project/dissertation proposed by the end of this month.
- Double-check Time2Track hours.
  - Here is a [video guide on T2T](#).
  - Here is a [sample](#) of what your T2T will look like once submitted through the AAPI.
  - Remember to include all assessments & integrated reports.
  - If you are still completing practicum, keep logging hours as you go & make sure to include all projected hours.
- Work on drafts for essays (check page 5 for some tips & considerations).
- Go back to the [internship directory](#) & begin developing a list of potential sites.
  - Consider using a [spreadsheet](#) to organize this information.
- Register for [National Matching Services \(NMS\)](#).
- Develop a generic template for cover letters ([here is a sample](#)).

## September:

- Polish essay drafts.
- Make sure to check on LOR writers: remind them of upcoming deadlines.
- Finalize list of sites.
  - Include contact info of DCTs, deadlines, requirements, etc.
  - Identify information you will add in each cover letter for each site (*be careful with specific instructions such as word count, bolding/underlining name of programs/rotations, clarifying if your program is APA-accredited, etc.*)
  - Identify whether you will need supplemental material.
    - Contact supervisors if needed.
- Add sites to your APPIC portal.
  - Make sure to send requests for LORs.
- Work on cover letters throughout the month.

## OCTOBER

- Finish all essays & finish preparing all necessary supplemental material.
  - Remember all supplemental material must be de-identified per HHS guidelines.
- Make sure you are cleared/verified by your program's DCT to apply.
- Work on finishing cover letters throughout the month.
- Keep tabs on LORs being uploaded to your portal.
- Review all material before submitting it to the portal.
- Aim to have most applications ready a few days before deadlines.
  - It is always better to have some "spare" days just in case something comes up last minute.
- Submit applications! (Breathe & get some rest!)
  - *Note: ALL internship sites' portals will close on 11:59pm EST on their specified deadline date in the AAPI portal regardless of the time zone of the internship program.*
  - Remember to thank recommenders & other mentors.

## NOVEMBER/DECEMBER

- Notifications will begin to come in (practice self-care & be in contact with your support system).
- Practice interviewing skills & do mock interviews.
- Add updated list of interview(s) notification(s) date(s) to your spreadsheet.
- When scheduling interviews, be mindful of time zones!
- Identify list of potential questions for sites (check page 8 for samples).
- Become familiar with who will interview you if possible & review brochures again.
- Some sites will ask you to prepare a case sample.
  - Make sure to prepare & practice.

## DECEMBER/JANUARY

- Continue completing interviews.
  - After interviewing, consider writing notes on impressions.
    - Here is a sample spreadsheet to organize post-interview impressions.
- Consider sending thank you email post-interview (some sites may discourage this).
  - Here are some samples.

## FEBRUARY

- Submit your rank list for Phase I!
  - Information on how to submit ranks can be found [here](#).
- Wait for match day!
  - Aim to have a plan for match day that includes self-care.
- Post-match day:
  - If you match, congratulations! Make sure to touch base with your internship site.
    - For international students, consider initiating CPT/OPT process asap.
    - Remember to touch base with sites regarding other requirements (e.g., background checks, immunization records).
  - If you do not match, do not get discouraged. You can re-apply for Phase II, which usually opens the same day as match day.
    - Make sure to connect with your DCT & any other advisors before making any decision(s).

## Internship Essays: Tips & Considerations

The prompts for the essays are the following:

1. **Autobiography** - Please provide an autobiographical statement.
2. **Case Conceptualization** - Please describe your theoretical orientation and how this influences your approach to case conceptualization and intervention. You may use de-identified case material to illustrate your points if you choose.
3. **Diversity** - Please describe your experience and training in work with diverse populations. Your discussion should display explicitly the manner in which multicultural/diversity issues influence your clinical practice and case conceptualization.
4. **Research** - Describe your research experiences and interests.

### General Considerations

- Have all four essays in the same document.
  - Consider saving & uploading them as a PDF file.
- Include your name in the header of all four essays (can also include your match number).
- Remember all essays have a 500-word limit.
- Make sure to revise for grammatical errors.
- Make sure you stay focused on answering the prompt (specifically for essays 2-4).
- Use active voice.
- Use first-line indentation to make a distinction between the start of new paragraphs.
- Use a header to separate essays.
  - There is no need to include the prompt (all sites are familiar with these).

## Essay 1 Considerations

- Aim to be authentic & creative.
  - It can be challenging to do creative writing after spending the past years with scientific/academic writing. Consider looking for inspiration & researching strategies for improving creative writing skills.
- Consider telling a story about what makes you/how you are unique.
  - This essay is the opportunity for sites to get to know you on a more personal level.
- Have a personal tone, but also remember to discuss professional goals.
  - You do not need to tie every single point of the essay back to psychology, but remember this is part of an application for a psychology internship.
- This essay is not about reinstating your CV/cover letters.

## Essay 2 Considerations

- Discuss your theoretical orientation & why you use this approach.
  - State your orientation at the beginning of the essay (be clear and straightforward; you should be answering the prompt).
- Choose a theoretical orientation you genuinely believe in & feel comfortable discussing.
  - Consider researching & using terms you understand (you can assume that the reader(s) will understand jargon, but make sure you are using it accurately).
- You can use case study(ies) to exemplify your point(s), but be careful to not just “dump” examples without connecting them back to the theoretical orientation or showing how you conceptualize based on your theory of choice.
- Discuss how you approach treatment.
- Consider discussing how you approach assessment.
- Include a brief summary of growth areas:
  - What would you like to obtain further experience with?
  - Are there any other theories/interventions you would like to learn during internship?



### Essay 3 Considerations

- Reflect on what diversity means to you.
- Consider the following topics: intersectionality, visible vs. invisible identities, identity development.
- Consider clinical examples and how diversity impacts your clinical work (intervention/conceptualization/assessment).
  - How do you integrate diversity and your theoretical orientation?
- Consider your training goals related to diversity.
  - Are there any populations or presentations you would like further experience with, or are you looking forward to working with during internship?
  - Are there any areas of growth?
  - Cultural competency?

### Essay 4 Considerations

- Discuss your research interests.
- You can discuss your dissertation/doctoral project.
- Reflect on how research informs your intervention/treatment.
- You can discuss previous/current research experience/initiatives (e.g., publications, presentations, assistantships, etc.).
- Consider discussing the role you want research to play during your training/internship year.

## Internship Interviews: Tips & Considerations

*Questions you could be asked/to prepare for*

### General Questions

- Why do you want to be a psychologist?
- Why did you apply to X?
- What is your interest in X rotation/specialization?
- Tell us about yourself.
- Tell us about your training experience (e.g., practicums, employment, types of clients)
- What is your theoretical orientation?
- What are your goals during internship? After internship?
- What do you do in your spare time? Hobbies? Self-care?
- How do you manage stress?
- What else would you like me to know that isn't apparent from your application?

### Site-specific Questions

- How do you see our training program fitting with your goals?
- Why did you apply to this particular internship program?
- Why do you think you are a "fit" with our program?
- What are the advantages to you about this program? Disadvantages?

### Clinical Work/Experience Questions

- Give us an example of a difficult client you've had to work with and why?
- Tell us about a good experience you've had with a client.
- Tell us about an ethical dilemma and how you went about it.
- What is your theory of change?
- Tell us about your crisis assessment experience.
- Describe a clinical mistake you made and what you learned from it

*Questions you could be asked/to prepare for*

### **Dissertation/Doctoral Project Questions**

- Tell us about your dissertation.
- What stage are you in/when will you be done?

### **Diversity Questions**

- What diverse populations have you had experience with?
- What diverse populations do you want more experience with?
- What diverse populations are hard/challenging for you to work with?
- What does diversity mean to you?
- How does your background/culture influence the way you view/conduct therapy/your training?

### **Supervision Questions**

- How do you view supervision?
- What do you find useful in supervision?
- Tell us about a challenging experience you had in supervision.
- How do you take feedback?
- Describe a good/meaningful supervision experience?
- What styles of supervision are you accustomed to? What style of supervision would you prefer and why?
- What has been the best feedback that you have received in supervision? The most difficult feedback? And why?
- What are you looking for in a supervisor?

*Questions to ask internship faculty*

- What is a typical day like for an intern here?
- What are you looking for in an intern?
- Do you anticipate changes in your program in the next year (rotations, staff)?
- What do you think the strengths of this internship are?
- What do interns usually do after internship?
- What kind of professional guidance is offered?
- How does this site prepare interns in regard to professional development?
- How is the rapport among faculty?
- Is there ever a need to travel to satellite clinics or off campus events?
- What is the most valuable experience/aspect of your training program?
- What is the intern evaluation process? Frequency? By whom?
  - How are supervisors assigned?
  - Individual/group?
  - Hours per week or case?
  - Live? Video? Audio?
  - How many supervisors does each intern have?
  - Theoretical orientation of supervisors?
- Treatment opportunities
  - Individual/group/families/couples/age ranges?
  - Specific populations?
  - Typical referral questions on a specific rotation?
  - Proportion of inpatient and outpatient?
  - Continuity of care? Can you follow the patient from inpatient stay on an outpatient basis?
  - How are patients assigned to treatments? Flexibility in assignments?

*Questions to ask internship faculty*

- Assessment opportunities
  - Site's assessment philosophy?
  - Availability?
  - Typical frequency?
  - Emphasis?
  - Neuropsychology? Personality? Psychoeducational?
  - Opportunities outside of rotations?
  - Projective tests?
  - Proportion of assessment to therapy?
- Research opportunities
  - How strong of an emphasis do you place on research?
  - What are the opportunities for research?
  - How are research topics selected?
- Resources
  - Computer/Tech support?
  - Office?
  - Treatment rooms?
  - Referral agencies?
  - Are interns ever on call after hours?
  - How are emergencies managed? What is the typical frequency of emergencies?
- Didactics
  - I would like to learn more about the didactic training offered. What is the format? Topics?
  - Are they applied/theoretical? Interdisciplinary?
  - What types of seminars are provided? Typical topics?
  - What is required? Optional?
- Post-doctoral
  - What types of positions do your interns typically take following internship?
  - Are there post-docs at site?

*Questions to ask current interns/trainees*

- Example of a workday/week: Typical activities? Hours per day/week? Meetings? Didactics?
- Amount of work you take home?
- Role of interns at site? With faculty?
- Relationship between interns and faculty?
- Strengths of the program? Best thing?
- Limitations of the program?
- Support among the interns? Hours?
- Cost of living? How have you found [the city]?
- What has your experience at the site been like?
  - What has helped and what has impeded your adjustment to the site?
- What is the work-life balance like here?
- Why did you choose this site? Would you choose it again?
- What didn't you ask during the internship interview process you wished you would have?
- What has surprised you most about this site?
- How helpful is the site/faculty with helping secure placements post-internship?
- Is there anything I haven't asked that you think I should know, good or bad?

## Internship Resources

- [APAGS Workbook](#) (edition may change)
- [APPIC information for students](#) (review all links)
- [APPIC Step-by-Step](#) (timeline)
- [Time2Track Possible Interview Questions](#)
- [Time2Track: Entering Hours](#)
- [Internship Resources by Rita M. Rivera](#) (resources & coaching services)
- [Internship Application Tips by Psych Grad Corner](#) (resources & coaching services)
- [From Scratch to Match: Russ & Noah's Guide to the Internship Application Process in Clinical and Counseling Psychology](#) (resources)
- [NMS: How the Matching Algorithm Works \(NMS\)](#) (video)