

APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP

THE 2023 SSCP GUIDE

THIS GUIDE INCLUDES

General Tips	2
Application Material Overview	3
Identifying Goals for Internship	4
Timeline for Applying	4-5
Clinical Hours Breakdown	6-8
Internship Director Q&A (from 2022)	9

Resources

The information provided in this resource has been sourced from multiple locations, including many of the resources listed below. We encourage students to check out the following for more information [clickable hyperlinks below]:

[Internships in Psychology: The APAGS Workbook for Writing Successful Applications and Finding the Right Fit, Fourth Edition](#)

[From Scratch to Match: Russ & Noah's Guide to the Internship Application Process in Clinical and Counseling Psychology](#)

[APAGS Website](#)

APPIC resources:

<https://www.appic.org/Internships/Internship-Application-AAPI-Portals/AAPI-For-Applicants>

<https://www.appic.org/Training-Resources/For-Students>

******Additionally, many conferences (e.g., APA, APS, ABCT) host internship-related sessions such as Q&A's or meet-and-greets. As convention schedules are posted, be on the lookout for any relevant sessions!***

APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP

General Tips

Join the [MATCH-NEWS Email List](#) to stay up to date

Use your resources - ask your DCT, mentors, faculty, and fellow graduate students about their experiences and whether they are willing to share application materials with you

Consider creating a separate email address for your applications, this way it is easier to keep track of interviews and site information (all in one place)

Create a tracking sheet to keep track of site information, important dates, and notes from interviews

Keep track of your clinical hours as consistently as you can (e.g., if using time2track, update weekly), this will save you time during the internship application process

Have your application materials reviewed/edited multiple times by multiple people (e.g., professors, DCT's, fellow students)

Consider meeting with fellow applicants to work together, provide each other feedback, and hold each other accountable throughout the application process

Be friendly with your fellow interviewees, they are your future collaborators and colleagues!

Interview Prep

Review common interview questions and practice with friends/past students etc.

Develop a strong sense of why you are a good fit for each program

Prepare a few case examples that you can use for different question responses

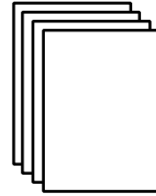
View completed sample AAPI application [here](#).

APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP

Application Material Overview



Completed AAPI
Application



Unique Cover
Letter for Each Site

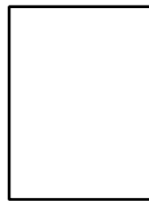
4 Essays (500 words each)



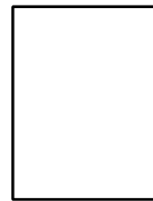
Autobiographical
Statement



Research
Statement



Multicultural/Diversity
Statement



Theoretical
Orientation
Statement

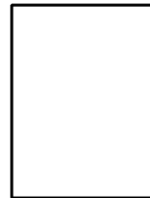
3 Letters of Recommendation



Advisor



Clinical
Supervisor



Clinical Supervisor*

**Note: recommendation writers identified here are suggestions only*

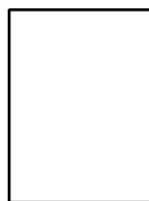
Other Materials



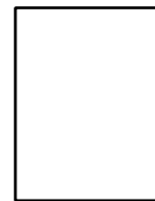
Curriculum Vitae
**updated to emphasize clinical
or research experience,
depending on the site*



Graduate
Transcripts



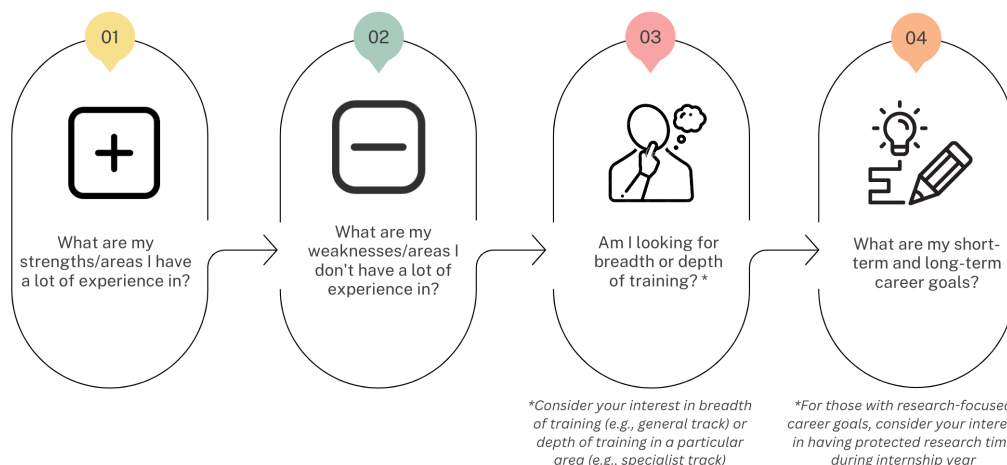
Updated Clinical Hours
Information
** Time2Track*



Integrated Report
Sample
**Depends on site*

APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP

Identifying Goals for Internship



Timeline for Applying

The following content is a suggested timeline for applying compiled by SSCP campus reps in 2023. Pace and process will vary from person to person.

Month	Task
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update Time2Track ● Join APPIC Listserv ● Consult with DCT about applying
July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Begin researching programs ● Begin outlining essays ● Update CV
August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Select clinical cases to discuss in essays ● Make AAPI account, register for Match, and update information in the AAPI Portal ● Identify your goals for internship ● Prepare packets for letter writers (e.g., CV, Cover Letter draft or essay drafts if ready, reminders of cases, points to highlight, list of potential sites)
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide packets to letter writers and request completion of Standardized Reference Forms (at least 6 weeks before deadline) ● Finalize list of sites ● Prepare a de-identified report (if required by sites) ● Begin writing Cover Letters ● Have working drafts of essays and AAPI application ● Order official copy of transcript to AAPI ● Enter your practicum experiences and submit to DCT before end of month

APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP

October	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Finalize essays● Finalize Cover Letters● Check websites and brochures of each site you are applying to● Carefully upload all materials to AAPI Portal
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Submit applications!● Organize expected interview dates at each site applied to so you're prepared to reply quickly and pick an interview date● Practice interviews● Schedule interviews
December - January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Interview!● Take notes at each site● Send follow-up Thank You emails after each interview● Draft and submit Phase 1 Rank Order List
Feb 2, 2024	Phase 1 Rank Order List Deadline
Feb 16, 2024	APPIC Phase 1 Match Day
Feb 22, 2024	Phase 2 Application Deadline
Mar 13, 2024	Phase 2 Rank Order List Deadline
Mar 20, 2024	APPIC Phase 2 Match Day

APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP

Clinical Hours Breakdown

Many internship sites will post the minimum number of hours required to apply at that site. Some sites adhere strictly to these guidelines, while others may be willing to review your application even if you are below the minimum number of hours. It can be helpful to ask your DCT or graduates from your program how many hours students typically have by the time they apply.

Below are some numbers from SSCP student members regarding assessment and intervention hours acquired by the time of internship applications.

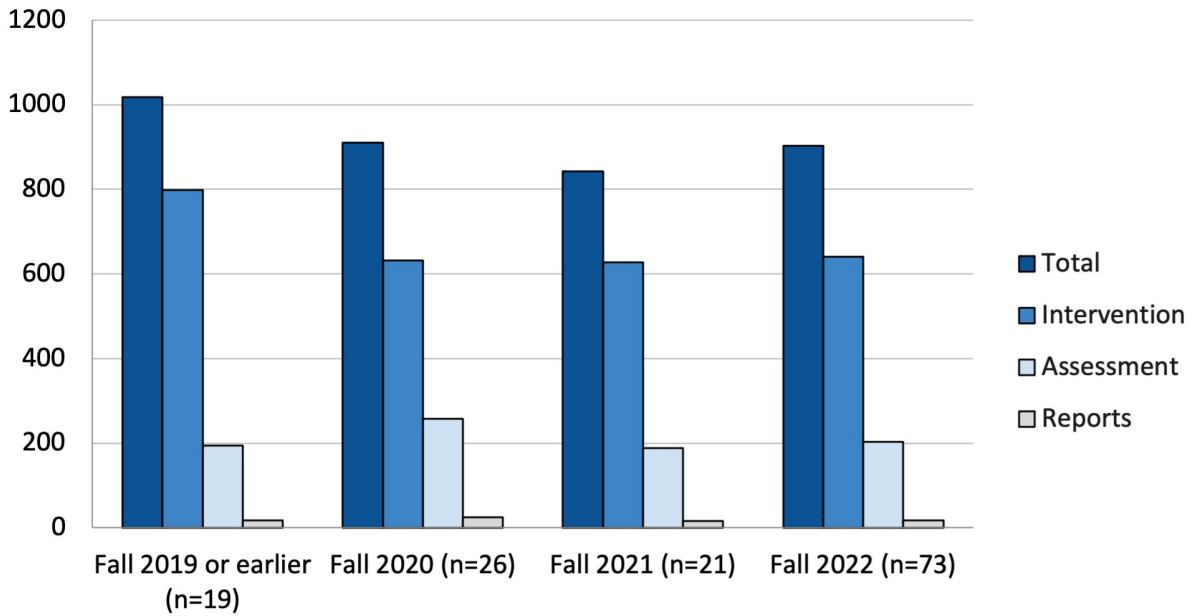
**Note that the number of hours vary widely between students!*

Total Direct Contact Hours (n=139)			
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	911 (336)	817	460-2464
Intervention	658 (257)	600	199-2179
Assessment	209 (138)	165	35-941
Reports	18 (21)	10	1-111

What types of sites did you apply to?			
Both (n=75)			
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	922 (373)	842	460-2464
Intervention	653 (262)	610	224-2179
Assessment	211 (121)	183	35-575
Reports	18 (21)	10	1-111
Clinical Only (n=22)			
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	936 (342)	850	538-2100
Intervention	734 (299)	640	365-1464
Assessment	191 (197)	139	51-941
Reports	14 (14)	8	3-60
Research Only (n=42)			
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	879 (258)	770	510-1625
Intervention	628 (218)	573	199-1140
Assessment	216 (134)	179	57-759
Reports	21 (24)	11	2-100

APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP

Average Number of Hours Completed



What year did you apply?						
	Fall 2022 (n=73)			Fall 2021 (n=21)		
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	903 (337)	840	468-2207	843 (232)	789	538-1397
Intervention	640 (241)	596	224-1464	627 (142)	575	411-925
Assessment	203 (142)	162	35-941	188 (101)	139	80-417
Reports	17 (20)	11	2-111	16 (16)	11	1-57
	Fall 2020 (n=26)			Fall 2019 or earlier (n=19)		
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	911 (270)	834	544-1807	1018 (482)	918	460-2464
Intervention	632 (195)	652	199-1000	798 (415)	748	350-2179
Assessment	257 (162)	204	100-759	194 (116)	181	64-549
Reports	25 (25)	14	3-92	17 (24)	10	2-100

APPLYING TO INTERNSHIP

What track(s) did you apply to?						
	Adult (n=60)			Child (n=33)		
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	853 (222)	800	468-1397	981 (386)	900	502-2100
Intervention	685 (196)	625	301-1140	673 (253)	610	311-1464
Assessment	161 (73)	136	51-400	257 (145)	203	54-759
Reports	13 (13)	8	2-57	20 (18)	11	3-81
	Health Psych/Behavioral Med (n=7)			Neuropsych (n=7)		
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	722 (201)	630	505-1000	901 (251)	817	700-1427
Intervention	529 (164)	430	380-800	361 (137)	365	199-550
Assessment	175 (85)	200	75-289	540 (194)	501	327-941
Reports	18 (18)	13	2-54	70 (32)	65	30-111
	Other/Mix of Tracks (n=31)					
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range			
Total	999 (463)	867	460-2464			
Intervention	692 (348)	600	336-2179			
Assessment	186 (107)	162	35-457			
Reports	16 (19)	10	1-100			

Did you match somewhere with protected research time?						
	No (n=24)			Yes (n=44)		
	Mean (SD)	Median	Range	Mean (SD)	Median	Range
Total	1078 (435)	985	635-2464	824 (223)	768	460-1424
Intervention	781 (345)	762	365-2179	608 (209)	555	199-1100
Assessment	231 (143)	155	64-549	215 (137)	184	80-759
Reports	17 (16)	10	2-56	24 (28)	11	1-111

SSCP

Internship Director

Q&A

Many thanks to internship directors:



Dr. Philip Gehrman
University of Pennsylvania



Dr. Lauren Weinstock
Brown University



Dr. Susan Sprich
Massachusetts General Hospital/Harvard Medical

for generously donating their time and sharing their expertise.

Applicants are usually told that “fit” is one of the most important factors. What components of an applicant’s materials would make you consider them a strong fit?



Given the nature of our department/university, applicants who bring a scientist-practitioner or clinical scientist perspective are generally the best fit. So that would include clinical experience with evidence-based therapies, good research experience including publications, and future career goals that include some focus on research as described in the personal statement.



We generally look at fit with our ongoing research and clinical experiences. Many of our tracks have a research component so we want to make sure that we have faculty available to mentor each intern adequately.



For us, “fit” really speaks to an applicant’s background, interests, and training goals; and whether our internship site offers opportunities that will allow the applicant to develop and grow in those unique (to them) areas that will help support their professional development. Applications that clearly “connect the dots” for our admissions committee and articulate which specific training opportunities are a good match to an applicant’s background and interests – and why – are often the ones that stand out the most.

Would you recommend applying to a site if you do not meet all listed requirements (e.g., fewer hours, fewer integrative reports)?



If that site provides training that is highly consistent with your training goals during internship, then yes.



If it is close, especially if you can provide a reason (due to covid restrictions, lack of availability of patients who can be seen in person, etc.), I would suggest applying even if you don't fully meet the requirements.



If there is a site that is of interest and/or otherwise appears to be a strong fit, but an applicant does not meet all the listed requirements, I'd recommend reaching out to the appropriate contact at the site – whether that is a Training Director or someone else who is the contact for recruitment and admissions – and inquire as to whether it would be worthwhile to still apply. We recognize that there may be mitigating circumstances, particularly in recent years as the COVID-19 pandemic and related events have interrupted training, and it may be worth inquiring in advance.

Which components of the application are weighted most heavily when deciding who will be invited for an interview (e.g., research statement, recommendation letters, etc.)?



It's really a combination of multiple components so I can't really highlight and 1 or 2 sections.



Research statements, personal statement, letters of recommendation.



It may sound hokey, but we really do weigh all aspects of the application equally when making interview invitation decisions. It is important to us to adopt a holistic approach to our application review process.

Are there any common red flags or errors you see in applications that make you less likely to consider that applicant?



Unclear focus or career goals, lack of experience or interest in diversity and equity, lack of research experience, and of course weak letters.



I'm not sure that there are common red flags or errors. I would just advise all applicants to proofread their materials carefully to avoid typos or grammatical errors.



It is important that an applicant do their research and personalize the application to their training goals and needs, particularly in the context of the opportunities offered at our site. Those applications that do not reflect an understanding of our training approach or structure (even practically speaking) are typically flagged as being poor fits.

What makes an applicant stand out?



A clear training/career trajectory in the cover letter and/or essays. For many applications I come away without a good sense of where the applicant is going and how our internship fits into that plan. Aside from that, it's all the obvious stuff like good number of clinical hours in diverse settings, diverse client populations, strong research experience and publications, etc.



Generally, research productivity, research related to faculty research interests, recommendations from mentors and/or relevant clinical experience.



In addition to fit, as described in the answer to question #1, we are invested in nurturing an environment that is welcoming of people from diverse backgrounds – broadly defined. Sharing the unique aspects of one's life experiences and/or training can help an applicant stand out. While we are attentive to how our site can provide opportunities for our trainees' growth and development, we are equally as attentive to how our trainees, and the unique experiences and perspectives they bring with them, can contribute to enhancing our clinical and training environments for the better.

How important is previous practicum experience in the specific setting of the internship site? For example, should applicants applying to hospitals/medical schools try to gain experiences in those same settings as a graduate student?



We're looking for applicants with experience in a range of clinical settings and with a range of types of clients. That is more important than that they be in an academic medical center like the one our program is housed in.



I think that is helpful but not required.



Although prior experience can be a benefit, particularly with respect to informing an applicant's understanding of the nature of the work that they may find themselves doing on internship, we also recognize that one of the great parts of internship training is that it provides an opportunity for exposure to training in new settings, with new populations, and potentially in new treatment modalities. An enthusiasm for learning is encouraged, particularly in areas that might fill a gap in an applicant's training to date that might make sense, given their interests and desired trajectory.

For example, an applicant who is interested in and experienced in trauma work, but who has never worked with Veterans, might be able to make a strong argument as to why a placement in one of our VA rotations would support their own clinical and professional growth.

For students coming from less research-focused programs, but who are interested in a research career, what qualities do you look for, aside from publications?



Clear research interests described in the cover letter and/or research essay and a plan for how to fill gaps in research experience.



We notice when people note ways in which they sought out research opportunities even if they weren't readily available at their home department or institution.



We recognize that publication records are to some extent an indicator of an applicant's interest and proclivity toward success in research, but to another extent also an indicator of publication opportunities within an applicant's graduate program – which can be variable. More than simply the publication record, we are seeking a coherent narrative in the application materials that supports an applicant's interest and pathway toward a research career. Expression of scientific curiosity and specific questions that drive their research interests are also ways an applicant can demonstrate their commitment to research.



Do you have any general advice for students beginning the internship application process or for students deciding where to apply?



On the one hand, internship is only a year so try not to have location be too much of a limiting factor. On the other hand, it's great if you can pick locations where you'd also want to stay on for post doc so you don't have to move again in a year. So balancing those factors is important.



I would suggest talking not only to faculty but also to current interns or recent graduates.



Fully acknowledging that the internship application process can be stressful, costly, and time consuming, I'd also encourage applicants to find ways to have fun and make the most of the process. Applying for internship brings with it the opportunity to think very explicitly about where one might want to take their career, and to try new things on for size. Interviewing at different sites also provides the opportunity to meet and network with psychologists who work in various settings, with different populations, and who are also at different stages of their career. Personally, I fondly recall some very memorable interviews that I had when I applied for internship, and have benefited from those exchanges in a variety of different (and sometimes surprising!) ways.

Do many sites have opportunities to stay on for post-doc? Is willingness to remain for postdoc viewed favorably during the interview process?



We do not have a regular pipeline to post docs but some interns have stayed on. So willing to remain for post doc is not a factor.



We have many opportunities to stay on for post-doc. We like it when interns stay at MGH but it isn't a primary factor in determining ranking.



Our Training Consortium has a robust and active postdoctoral fellowship training program, and there are many opportunities for people to stay once they complete internship. With that said, we make our postdoc opportunities clear to applicants, as we feel that may be useful in their own decision-making process about whether we are a good fit *for them* and their professional goals. However, willingness to remain for postdoc is not a major consideration in the application and review process, from the training program's perspective.



For those applying to internship this fall, how much will you still take into account the impact of COVID-19 on clinical hours?



We have decided to continue to not have a minimum number of clinical hours. In particular, we recognize that assessment hours and experience are particularly impacted.



We will continue to take this into consideration.



Our site takes our minimum hours requirement quite seriously, as we have found that it is around that threshold that our trainees are most prepared for the rigors of training on the clinical rotations that we offer. Put simply, we want our incoming trainees to be prepared for a successful training year. At the same time, it is impossible to ignore the impact of COVID-19 on training over the past several years, and we continue to view it as prudent to factor that into our evaluation of the full application.