

Internship Program in Professional Psychology
PROBLEM RESOLUTION AND GRIEVANCE POLICY

Resolving Problems with Intern Performance

The following steps govern the placement of psychology interns on probation or their dismissal from the program in instances of serious performance problems, serious impairment, or serious ethical violation.

Step 1: Clinical Supervisor. If the psychology intern is not performing at a satisfactory level of competence, the clinical supervisor is expected to discuss this with the psychology intern, to increase his/her supervisory guidance, and to direct the psychology intern to other appropriate resources such as additional didactics, the EAP, etc. At this step, no formal communication with other member of the Core Faculty is required to take place. However, the clinical supervisor should, in writing, note what concerns led to the discussion and the remedial steps, if any, which were proposed.

Step 2: Clinical Supervisor. If the problem addressed in Step 1 persists, or if the problem is judged to be of a seriousness that cannot be remedied by actions outlined in Step 1, the clinical supervisor will communicate his/her concerns in writing to the Internship Director. The communication should include copies of any internal memoranda developed in Step 1. The Internship Director informs the intern of the concerns expressed by the supervisor.

Step 3: The Internship Director calls a meeting of the Core Faculty which makes a plan to gather all pertinent data and to interview the psychology intern and all supervisors involved. All information gathered during this process is detailed in written memoranda. After gathering information from the psychology intern, supervisors, and any other relevant parties, the Core Faculty, in executive session, by majority vote, makes one of the following decisions: (a) no action is required; (b) corrective action short of probation; (c) probation for three months; (d) immediate dismissal from the program.

If the decision is to place the psychology intern on probation or to dismiss the psychology intern, the Internship Director will communicate the decision immediately to the psychology intern and to the Director of Clinical Training of the psychology intern's home university. Minutes of the meeting are kept.

Step 4: Toward the end of the formal probation period, the Internship Director convenes the Core Faculty again. They examine data and conduct interviews with the psychology intern and relevant supervisors. The Core Faculty, in executive session, by majority vote, makes one of the following decisions: (a) removal from probation; (b) continuation of probation for an additional stipulated period; (c) dismissal from the program.

Step 5: Toward the end of the second probation period, the Core Faculty repeats Step 4. However, only two decisions can be made: (a) removal from probation; or (b) dismissal from the program.

Appeal Procedure: There are no appeals available to a psychology intern placed on probation by action of the Core Faculty. A psychology intern who is dismissed from the program by action of the Core Faculty has 10 days to appeal this decision. This appeal must be in writing to Riverbend's Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer. The decision of the Senior Vice President/Chief Operating Officer is final. Psychology interns who are dismissed or placed on probation may not pursue further appeals under the Open Door Policy in the Employee Handbook.

Psychology Intern Grievance Policy

In the event of difficulties with a supervisor or other grievances about his/her training, the psychology intern should:

1. Raise the issue with his/her supervisor in an effort to resolve the issue
2. If the matter cannot be resolved with the supervisor, the intern should discuss the issue with the Internship Director. (If the supervisor involved is the Internship Director, a slightly different procedure applies, see below).
3. If the Internship Director cannot resolve the matter, the Director chooses a staff member, acceptable to the psychology intern, from a panel whose members have agreed to serve as mediators. The mediator requests written materials from the psychology intern and from the supervisor and meets with the psychology intern and supervisor in an attempt to mediate the difference.
4. If mediation fails, the Core Faculty reviews the issue based on materials supplied by the psychology intern, the supervisor, and the appointed mediator. The Core Faculty holds a meeting to review the matter at which the psychology intern and supervisor must be present. The Core Faculty has final discretion regarding outcome.

It is possible that conflict might revolve around issues of assignment to a placement or supervisor, or other matters that involve the Internship Director. Similarly, the Intern Director might be the supervisor directly involved in the problem. In such situations, if the intern is not able to resolve the issue with the Internship Director directly, the following steps should be taken:

1. The intern should discuss the issue with the Vice President of Human Resources (VPHR).
2. If the matter is not resolved in Step 1, the VPHR should assign a mediating staff member who will discuss the matter with the psychology intern and the Internship Director.

3. In the event that matter is not resolved by mediation, the Core Faculty reviews the issue as in Step 4 above and the VPHR chairs the meeting. The Internship Director will remove him/herself from the decision of the Core Faculty.

Nothing in the Psychology Intern Grievance Policy precludes psychology interns from utilizing the Open Door Policy and Sexual Harassment Policy in the Employee Handbook. The Psychology Intern Grievance Policy is intended to provide psychology interns with a means to resolve perceived conflicts that cannot be resolved by informal means without fear of retribution.

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4. The intern should discuss the issue with the Vice President of Human Resources (VPHR).
5. If the matter is not resolved in Step 1, the VPHR should assign a mediating staff member who will discuss the matter with the psychology intern and the Internship Director.
6. In the event that matter is not resolved by mediation, the Core Faculty reviews the issue as in Step 4 above and the VPHR chairs the meeting. The Internship Director will remove him/herself from the decision of the Core Faculty.

Nothing in the Psychology Intern Grievance Policy precludes psychology interns from utilizing the Open Door Policy and Sexual Harassment Policy in the Employee Handbook. The Psychology Intern Grievance Policy is intended to provide psychology interns with a means to resolve perceived conflicts that cannot be resolved by informal means without fear of retribution.

Please sign below indicating that you have read and understand the above stated policy.

Signature of Predoctoral Intern