

## Description of Practica

(Note: As the CCAP program is designed as a MA and PhD level program in which clinical competencies are assessed continuously and cumulatively across both degrees towards preparation for residency application, both MA and PhD level practica are described below).

Practica are an integral part of the CPA accredited Clinical Child and Adolescent Psychology (CCAP) program and involve supervised placements in school boards, community mental health agencies, hospitals, and the Department's in-house training facility, Maplewoods Centre. The sequence of practica provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and clinical skills gained in coursework to develop and practice the professional competencies that are an essential part of the training program. Evaluated competencies on practica are also an important component of the PhD Qualifying Examination for determining suitability for Doctoral candidacy. Moreover, documented skilled performance and experience in practica are essential preparation for the required year-long CPA accredited clinical internship (PSYC\*8000). Before applying for this internship year, students should have developed both breadth and depth of clinical training through a minimum of 300 direct contact hours in interviewing, assessing or intervening with clients and 200 hours of supervision. Note that to be competitive for internship placement, most of our students will achieve greater than 300 direct contact hours (see recommended sequence of practicum experiences).

Guidance to students regarding practica is primarily provided by the Clinic Director, supported by the DCT. The typical sequence of clinical experiential training, course work, and other activities that students follow across their studies is included elsewhere in this document.

Note that students must carefully balance their coursework, practica and thesis/dissertation work to ensure that they make good progress on their research. The department has clear requirements regarding the deadlines for thesis and dissertation proposals and overall program timelines which must be considered while acquiring appropriate practicum experience. On a term-by-term basis, particularly in senior years, students must consult with their advisors and the DCT to ensure that they are appropriately balancing the clinical training and research components of graduate study.

## Broad Learning Outcomes Assessed Via Practicum Training

The following broad learning outcomes (comprised of numerous more specific competencies) are developed and assessed on our integrated series of practicum experiences.

**Professionalism and Interpersonal Relationships:** Demonstrates knowledge and ability to establish, develop, and maintain effective interpersonal and professional relationships (e.g., with clients, supervisors, students, research participants, colleagues) with consideration to diversity. This is a core competency that underlies all other competencies. Psychologists normally do their work in the context of interpersonal relationships. They must therefore be able to establish and maintain a constructive working alliance with clients and other professionals (e.g., colleagues, learners).

**Assessment and Evaluation:** Demonstrates knowledge about how and ability to assess, conceptualize, diagnose, and communicate the needs, challenges, and strengths of clients to inform practical plans of action. The skills required for assessment can and should be applied to many situations other than initial evaluation, including, for example, treatment outcome, program evaluation, and problems occurring in a broad spectrum of non-clinical settings. The primary purpose of psychological assessment is to provide an understanding that informs a practical plan of action. It may result in a diagnostic

## Description of Practica

Published on Department of Psychology (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology>)

---

classification or in the identification of strengths or competencies.

**Intervention and Consultation:** Demonstrates knowledge about and ability to implement activities that promote, restore, sustain, and/or enhance positive functioning and a sense of wellbeing; this includes addressing clients' needs, concerns, distress, and impairment. A broad, comprehensive vision of the intervention competency should include explicitly theory as well as knowledge and skills.

**Ethics and Standards:** Demonstrates knowledge and application of ethical principles, standards of professional conduct, and jurisprudence in relation to psychology.

## Required Practicum Hours

Students are often focused on how many practicum hours they need to accrue to be prepared and competitive for their internship. Directors of internship sites repeatedly stress that it is the quality of the practicum experiences rather than the sheer quantity of hours that sets the applicants for internship in the best stead. The expectations in our accredited program are informed by practicum hours guidelines set by both the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) and recommendations from the Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs (CCPPP).

In their recent document outlining the documentation of practicum hours, CCCPP (2021) notes, "typically 1000 hours (400-600 direct service hours) of wisely chosen practicum experience is required to attain sufficient breadth and depth. This would include an appropriate balance of direct service, supervision, and support hours. Students and programs should strive in their practica for experience with cases varying in complexity in different service delivery settings, with a variety of populations, presenting questions, assessment and therapeutic models and methods, case conferences, and supervisors to acquire competencies for a successful residency year. The quality of training is more important than the number of hours recorded." from Documentation of Professional Psychology Training Experiences, CCCPP 2021). CPA's recent update to the Accreditation Standards also describes 1000 practicum hours, requiring at least 300 direct or face-to-face hours at the time of application for residency.

In keeping with these recommendations, the following table details the practicum experiences and hours that are expected throughout the program.

### MA 1

PSYC\*7991 Internal practicum which includes policies and procedures of Maplewoods Centre, Maplewoods Centre intake line, risk assessment training, and one assessment (intensively supervised).

### MA 2

PSYC\*7991 Internal practicum which includes completing one full assessment at Maplewoods.

PSYC\*7992 External practicum which involves completion of approximately five to six cognitive, social/personality and learning disabilities assessments; Consulting with teachers, school administrators, parents. Hours required: 200

Direct contact hours: 65 Supervision hours: 40

### PhD1

PSYC\*7994 CBT practicum course with didactic, practice and supervision components within the Maplewoods Centre (1 therapy case min); Within PSYC\*7991 carry one additional therapy case at minimum and complete a minimum of one assessment case at Maplewoods Centre.

## Description of Practica

Published on Department of Psychology (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology>)

---

### PhD2

PSYC\*7993 is a two-day per week, 400 hour external practicum (typically hospital or community clinic based; therapy and assessment).

### PhD 3

PSYC\*7991 - Students are expected to carry at least 2 therapy cases throughout, and complete at least two assessment cases.

PSYC\*7996 - Students are expected to supervise a junior student on one therapy case.

### PhD 4

PSYC\*7991 - Students are expected to carry at least 2 therapy cases and carry out or supervise at least one assessment case

## Description of Practicum Courses

### **Clinical Psychology Practicum I: (PSYC\*7991) taken in most semesters of the graduate program**

Faculty Instructor (Coordinator): Clinic Director or Clinical Faculty Member

Throughout their MA and PhD studies, students are required to undertake ongoing supervised clinical work with children, adolescents and their families at the Maplewoods Centre. This practicum is undertaken in multiple semesters to permit a broad variety of case and supervisory experiences. This includes experiences from shadowing cases and performing intake duties early in MA training to participating on the In-Person-Intake-Team (IPIT), handling complex assessment and eventually therapy cases during PhD training. Senior PhD students will also participate in supervised supervision activities. Supervision of clinical work at Maplewoods Centre is provided by the Clinic Director and several clinical faculty.

Note: In senior PhD years, some students elect to take PSYC\*7991 as an external practicum (i.e., outside Maplewoods Centre). If a student would like to complete an additional PSYC\*7991 in a setting other than the Maplewoods Centre, the student must obtain approval from the Director of Clinical Training. It must be clear that the potential site offers sufficient quality clinical training and supervision and that the particular experience is not readily available at Maplewoods Centre within the same timeframe.

### **Clinical Psychology Practicum II: Masters Level Practicum (PSYC\*7992)**

Approximately 200 hours (65 Direct; 40 Supervision)

Faculty Instructor (Coordinator): Clinic Director or Clinical Faculty

This practicum is intended to provide students with a broad range of experience in psychological assessment and typically occurs in the psychological services department of a school board. Under supervision, students are expected to conduct initial interviews, plan assessments, administer a range of tests, score and integrate assessment data, generate preliminary formulations, consider differential diagnoses, and write integrated, informative psychological assessment reports. Although the breadth and complexity of cases and level of involvement of students will vary depending on the abilities of the individual student, the client population, and the practicum setting itself, PSYC\*7992 students have exposure to a range of presenting problems, including learning, attention, behaviour, social-emotional, developmental, and/or other mental health concerns. Typically, students take on between 5 and 6

## Description of Practica

Published on Department of Psychology (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology>)

---

assessments over the course of a semester depending on the complexity of the cases and depth of the assessments. Students may also be involved in consultation or other in-service work.

CBT Practicum: PhD Level Practicum (PSYC\*7994) Approximately 100 hours (20 Direct; 20 Supervision)  
Faculty Instructor (Coordinator): Instructor/Faculty Member Assigned to Teach PSYC\*7994

This practicum course is taken in the first year of the PhD and is intended to provide extensive support for first psychotherapy cases. The course will foster graduate student training in early therapy skills with a focus on cognitive behaviour therapy (CBT) and will include didactic and experiential components. Students will gain competency with the practice of CBT for child and adolescent mental health challenges within the Maplewoods Centre, be exposed to treatment manuals, and undertake at least one ongoing therapy case utilizing a CBT approach.

### **Practicum III: PhD Level Practicum (PSYC\*7993) Approximately 400 hours (100 Direct; 50 Supervision)**

Faculty Instructor (Coordinator): Clinic Director

This practicum is intended to provide students with in-depth experience in the assessment of and intervention for complex social-emotional and mental health problems. Often this practicum takes place in a hospital or community mental health setting. On this practicum, students continue to develop assessment, therapy and consultation competencies. Most students apply to sites that comprise the Toronto Area Practicum Group.

### **Supervision Practicum: PhD Level Practicum (PSYC\*7996) Approximately 36 hours (10 Direct; 5 Supervision)**

Faculty Instructor (Coordinator): Instructor/Faculty Member Assigned to Teach PSYC\*7996

The 7996 course is normally taken in PhD Year 3 or 4 and because it is a practicum it can be taken the same year as applying/interviewing for internship. This practicum is designed to introduce students to the theory, research, and practice of supervision and consultation in the field of clinical psychology. Students will become familiar with the professional literature relevant to supervision, gain competency with ethical, culturally-competent clinical supervision, and explore their own development as a supervisor.

## Selecting a Site

For all practica, students should meet with the Clinic Director to identify training objectives and potential practicum sites and to develop a rough plan of activities for the practicum to be finalized in consultation with the on-site practicum supervisor. When applying for practica, students should have ready an up-to date curriculum vitae that includes coursework, clinical experience, and research completed and planned for before the practicum begins.

For Practicum II (PSYC\*7992), students need to meet with the faculty instructor for this course 4-5 months in advance of placement to review possibilities for placements at different school boards. Students should supply a recent CV to the instructor who will initiate contact with the chief psychologist and gain potential matches for students to follow-up on. If students are interested in placement with school boards (or other assessment placements) that are part of the Toronto-Area Practicum Group, they will need to apply one year in advance.

## **Description of Practica**

Published on Department of Psychology (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology>)

---

For Practicum III (PSYC\*7993), preparation should begin at least a year in advance, as considerable lead-time is required for some settings. Students who are interested in completing a practicum in one of the popular Toronto Area Practicum settings including, CAMH, SickKids, Bloorview Kids Rehabilitation Hospital, Reach Out Centre for Kids, Hamilton Health Sciences, among many other sites, are advised that this group of settings has organized into a Toronto Area Practicum Group with a coordinated application date (usually early February), notification date (usually March) and procedure. Reference letters, transcripts and cover letters will be requested when applying for Practicum III.

### **Insurance**

Work completed as part of required studies is covered under the Canadian Universities Reciprocal Insurance Exchange insurance policy. Practicum settings may request proof of this Insurance Certificate. This documentation can be arranged through the faculty instructor or the DCT.

### **Police Checks, Vaccination Coverage, and Tuberculosis Clearance**

Many practicum settings require that all regular and visiting personnel have a criminal record check with a vulnerable sector screen, proof of vaccination coverage/history, and certificate of being free of tuberculosis. Policies vary from setting to setting and may change from one year to the next. Students must determine what the policies are at the setting and ensure that appropriate documentation is submitted in advance of beginning the practicum. Sometimes the processing of this and other paperwork involves substantial time; thus, students should organize themselves and coordinate with the sties well in advance.

### **Registering in Practica**

Registration in each practicum course requires the consent and initials of the faculty instructor or Clinic Director (depending on the course). It is the student's responsibility to supply the instructor of these courses with the appropriate Add Form. Once a practicum setting and supervisor has been determined, the student completes three copies of the Practicum Agreement Form: one for the onsite supervisor, one for the Clinic Director/Faculty Instructor, and one to keep for their records.

Students must register for a practicum before undertaking any clinical work. Clinical work undertaken while the student is not registered for practicum will not count as program sanctioned hours. This is to ensure that appropriate experiences and a suitable supervisor are in place for optimal clinical training.

## **Practicum Responsibilities**

### **Responsibilities of the Student**

Students are responsible for establishing training goals and objectives and monitoring their experience in conjunction with their supervisors. At minimum, progress toward these goals should be discussed with the supervisor at the mid-point and at the end of the practicum. Students must also keep a record of their hours and activities and submit these to their practicum supervisor for approval and signature. The Department also subscribes to the software program Time2Track to facilitate tracking practicum experiences and students are required to use it for their benefit and also so that their clinical training hours can be cumulatively tracked by the DCT and Clinic Director. Students are expected to resolve issues in a professional manner and to seek advice from their supervisors should any difficulties arise. Students are also able to bring any issues related to their clinical training to the Faculty Instructor, DCT, and/or Clinic Director for discussion.

### **Responsibilities of Onsite Clinical Supervisors**

Clinical supervisors should provide students with information on the policies and procedures for the

## Description of Practica

Published on Department of Psychology (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology>)

---

setting, as well as identify particular professional and legislative standards that apply. Ongoing feedback should be provided to the student through scheduled supervision. In addition, as per the CPA Accreditation Standards, on average, one hour of face-to-face supervision is to be provided for every two hours of direct, face-to-face client work. Supervision is expected to follow the student's level of competency. Typically, more supervision is required when students undertake new or more complex tasks. For example, students at earlier stages of training or undertaking new responsibilities on practica may require more intensive supervision ratios. Client work may also result in other service-related activities such as report writing, scoring, progress notes, and classroom observations that also require supervision. In addition, supervisors should expect to be contacted one or two times by the faculty member responsible for evaluating the training experience to discuss the student's progress.

The supervisor completes (an) evaluation form(s) regarding the student's competencies, recommends future training goals, discusses this with the student, and verifies that the documentation of hours and experiences compiled by the student is accurate; this occurs at the mid and/or end-point of the practicum depending on practicum length (i.e., shorter practica may only have an evaluation at the end). At any point during the practicum, supervisors are to convey any serious or immediate concerns regarding the student's practicum work to the faculty instructor identified on the Practicum Agreement Form and/or the DCT.

### Responsibilities of the Course Instructor

Often, the Clinic Director is responsible for coordination and evaluation of PSYC\*7991, and PSYC\*7993 whereas a clinical faculty member is responsible for PSYC\*7992, PSYC\*7994, and PSYC\*7996. The instructor assists students in locating and setting up practica.

The faculty instructor is also responsible for monitoring the progress and experiences of students while on practica and helping to resolve any problems that might arise. Monitoring is typically handled through a combination of scheduled cohort meetings and one-to-one consultation. Following the Guidelines of Council of Chairs for Training Councils Voluntary Guidelines for Communication between Graduate Program and Internships, the faculty instructor should make 1-2 informal (telephone or email) contacts with the site supervisor to elaborate on or answer any questions on the nature of the program and expectations for supervision and accountability and to monitor student progress. In cases in which a site supervisor expresses concerns over a student, the instructor is to document these concerns as they are conveyed, address them with the student, and follow-up with the on-site supervisor accordingly. These communications should be brought to DCT's attention.

At the end of the practicum, the instructor ensures that all practicum documentation for each student is complete and signed and that the final grade is submitted. Practicum documentation for each student is to be collated, provided to the graduate secretary for entry into the database, and then placed in the student's practicum file. This file may be periodically reviewed by the DCT and Clinic Director. The PhD Qualifying Exam takes place following completion of PSYC\*7993. At this time, the Clinic Director utilizes the information in the student practicum file to write a summary and recommendation as to whether the student demonstrates clinical competency commensurate with a senior PhD student. This letter will be weighed when making overall decisions about student PhD candidature.

### Responsibilities of the Director of Clinical Training:

It is the responsibility of the DCT to consult with the Clinic Director and/or Faculty Instructor who coordinates PSYC\*7991, PSYC\*7992, PSYC\*7993, PSYC\*7994, and PSYC\*7996 to be aware of the progress made by students in the various practica. The DCT meets with individual students as needed to address any questions/concerns about progression in the program including practica. The DCT will also be available for consultation about professional and ethical matters pertaining to the practica and to ensure that the accreditation standards of CPA are adhered to.

## Description of Practica

Published on Department of Psychology (<https://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology>)

---

### Practicum Credit

#### Evaluation

The faculty instructor in conjunction with the clinical supervisor decides whether the regular practicum evaluation form or the short practicum evaluation form should be used, depending on the nature of the student's involvement on practicum. Students are graded on a pass/fail basis by the faculty instructor based on written evaluation and verbal feedback from the clinical on-site supervisor. Practicum evaluations are reviewed by the Clinic Director at various times to gain an overview of student progress and provide guidance for future training experiences, as well as to provide a summary of clinical competence as part of the PhD Qualifying Examination. Unethical, irresponsible, incompetent and/or unprofessional behaviour in practicum activities that is egregious and/or which continues after explicit corrective feedback to the student would likely be grounds for failure in a practicum course. Should a student fail a practicum, the CCAP area will review the case to determine a recommendation that may range from remedial work to withdrawal from the program.

---

#### Source

**URL:** <https://www.uoguelph.ca/psychology/book-page/area-specific-ccap-description-of-practica-phd>