INTERNSHIP INTERVIEW PROCESS

Internship sites will often have personal interviews to assess potential applicants. If they choose to interview you, they have already made you a finalist in their decision process. The purpose of the interview, then, is to:

1. Gain more information about you as a person;
2. Decide if you are the kind of person with whom they want to work for 2,000 hours;
3. Give you the opportunity to make sure you want to take advantage of what they offer in the internship.

It is my (somewhat informed) opinion that the best interviews are the ones in which the applicant presents a genuine sense of him/herself as both a student and a practitioner. Internship sites want to train individuals who have a developed base of knowledge, but who still have a lot to learn. Think of ways that you can convey that you have something to offer the site, while at the same time you still have a great deal to learn.

Interviews are anxiety producing! Recognize this fact and do what you can to manage your anxiety. Four keys:

1. Be prepared with information about yourself and your work to date;
2. Become familiar with the interview style/arrangement (i.e., group vs. individual) of the site to which you are applying;
3. Be prepared with specific information about the internship placement so that you can demonstrate that you do your homework, and so that you can ask the all-important, often-overlooked question as to whether this is the right place for you;
4. If you find the anxiety inhibiting you in the interview, recognize it and acknowledge it to the interviewer(s); then collect yourself and get on with the interview.

Good luck!

Charlie Waehler

General Interview Questions

Many internship sites may include questions about the candidate’s theoretical orientation, coursework, training, research, use of "free" time, and general knowledge about the field of psychology. Participants should be prepared to respond to this type of questioning. The following sample questions are representative of those which may be asked during an interview. Also included are a few "tips" to consider when responding to these questions. In preparing for an interview, it would be helpful to review these questions, and practice responding to them orally. These are "walk-on-the-beach-and-talk-with-a-friend" questions which need to be rehearsed and thought through.

1. What is your theoretical orientation?

   It is important to determine and articulate a recognized theoretical perspective; one that is consistent with your method of practice, and
one that defines an assessment methodology that leads to an assessment which defines treatment and intervention techniques.

Discuss your general philosophy, but use examples to illustrate how you incorporate this philosophy into your professional practice.

2. Do you have areas of special interest?

This question can be answered in terms of specialty areas in your training and practice: for instance, working with groups, senior citizens, children, minority and ethnic groups, etc.

Specify specialized training or experience that qualifies you to pursue your areas of special interest.

3. What are your plans for professional development over the next five years?

Have a plan defined that will demonstrate that you have progressed from your present level of ability to a more sophisticated position. Include how this internship fits into this plan. Be as specific to that internship site as possible.

Describe continuing education plans and include advanced training at workshops, institutes or universities, and future goals.

4. Have you had experience with any situations with clients involving professional ethics and/or the law? How did you handle them?

Be prepared to discuss the importance of ethics as they relate to the practice.

In particular, consider the issues of confidentiality in the practice of counseling. The rights and responsibilities of parents and children must be considered in dealing with ethical issues. When can privileged communication be broken?

5. Describe and explain a case you handled well.

Begin with some assessment information (i.e., history) when presenting problems. Define some diagnostic nomenclature, DSM III-R or other clinical type. Later, specific goals should be set for yourself as therapist and the client. Intervention strategies should be explained in the context of your theoretical perspective.

Finally, the resolution of treatment should be described to the best of your knowledge. It is important to describe the process of treatment and psychotherapy.
6. Describe and explain a case that you handled inadequately. What would you do differently?

Be prepared to speak about minor mistakes that you have made in becoming a therapist.
Speak of how you have utilized supervision to ensure your ability and objectivity in the therapy process. Recognize that we all make mistakes.

7. What clients do you work best with and why?

Recognize that we all have affinity for certain client groups. It is important to be able to distinguish our needs from those of our clients.

8. What clients do you have difficulty working with? Why?

Recognize countertransference and its ramifications in how you do psychotherapy. Describe anything in your experience or personality that affects the patients you feel uncomfortable working with.

9. What are your feelings about your own personal therapy?

Take this opportunity to describe what you have learned from your experience as a client and how that has affected your ability as a therapist.

10. What do you see as the primary professional issue in the field?

Be prepared to discuss current professional issues.

11. Where do you see the field going in the next decade or so?

Recognize general trends in psychology, and in your area of specialization.

12. Do you have anything you would like to say?

Speak objectively about "positives" in your background which illustrate your competency. Stress the training you have undertaken and the ways you have made good use of this training.

13. What are your strengths as a clinician?

Be prepared to discuss your abilities, general and specific.

14. What are your weaknesses? How do you intend to improve or remedy them?

Be honest about your weak areas. Be specific in your discussion of how you have dealt with these areas and how you plan to improve.

15. Under what circumstances would you seek consultation?

Discuss the boundaries of your expertise. Be ready to discuss your rationale for seeking consultation.
16. Which types of problems would you refer out? How do, or would you, make a referral?

Be prepared to show your knowledge of professionals in related fields.

17. What is therapeutic in the therapy process? How is change achieved? What is the role of the therapist?

Present a general framework; utilize specific examples for illustration. Make sure this is consistent with your theoretical orientation.

18. Have you read anything interesting in your field lately?

Discuss a significant article or book on which you are able to elaborate.

19. What is in your personality that helps you in therapy? What forms an obstacle?

Be honest, emphasize your positive qualities; turn "obstacles" into positives by discussing future plans.

20. If you use psychodiagnostic testing, which test do you like best? How do you use it? When do you use it?

Only discuss a diagnostic procedure which is familiar to you, even if it is "simple".

21. What do you know about the Tarasoff case?

Discuss the legal and ethical implications of "duty to warn".

22. How do you appraise "danger"?

Discuss signs of "danger" recognition in various situations.

Case Vignettes

Some internship sites require applicants to respond to vignettes. In preparing for this type of oral exam, organization is imperative. The following guidelines should be utilized in analyzing and responding to the case vignettes:

1. Give yourself adequate time to think.

2. Determine if the problem has been adequately defined. If not, present supposition on the possible definition of the problem; include differential diagnoses.

3. Define the identified patient.

4. Speak of any legal or ethical issues and alternative resolutions.

5. Present your criteria for assessment.
6. Discuss your treatment goals.

Some internships will request a case presentation:

Suggestions on Presenting a Clinical Case - Clyde S. Congdon, Ph.D.

The most frequent error that applicants make is to present a case that is too long to be effective. The applicants have amassed a great deal of information about their case, but have not taken the trouble to organize it to represent it in a coherent fashion. They, therefore, do not know what to present and what to omit. The result can be disastrous, because the interviewer is free to follow-up on all the stray minutiae that were presented, or the applicant never has time to finish his/her presentation.

Thus, the golden rule is: Organize and be brief. Plan to present your case within five minutes, possibly shorter. Since an applicant's anxiety typically creates a tendency to talk too much, you can be sure that your presentation in the actual situation will turn out to be well beyond that time limit. If you say too little, the interviewer will always ask the questions he/she needs to know; if you say too much, you are likely to sound disorganized and risk being cut-off.

In regard to organizing your case, consider the following outline. Keep the outline in your head and make sure you address each topic. You need not be obsessive compulsive about it. Your delivery can be informal and spontaneous-appearing, but practice will make it better. Do not fail to cover any of the points listed.

Outline for Case Presentations

1) Give a brief discussion of the client and his/her problem, (e.g.:

"Name" is a 22-year-old single male college student who came to see me
because of depression.)

2) State the setting in which he was seen and the referral source (how
did they get to you?)

3) Report on the initial session:

a) brief history of pertinent background information

b) client's current subjective feelings

c) observations during the interview

4) Assessment (DSM-III-R or other nomenclature)

5) Recommendations for dealing with the problem - Psychotherapy?

What kind? Why?

(Areas 4 and 5 should reveal your therapeutic orientation)

6) Therapeutic Goals - be specific
7) Stages of Therapy

a) Initial: Goals - possible "red flag areas" - rapport

b) Middle: Intervention, modification, referrals, diagnosis

c) Termination: Goals met

8) General Outcome and prognosis - be prepared to discuss why the success and failure, and what you would do differently.

As you can see from the outline, if you spend too much time on any one area, something will have to give somewhere else. Write down the pertinent - and only the pertinent - information in each of the eight areas. Smooth it out and talk into a tape recorder to get some idea of the length of your presentation. You will probably be surprised to see how long it takes just to communicate the pertinent details. It may also help you to realize how little time you have to insert interesting stories or amusing tidbits about the patient. Select your "case study" - "typical" - example of clients you work with and how you generally conduct therapy. Try to avoid unusual clients and unusual techniques. Go with what you do best. This is one of the few places in the interview where you exert a great deal of control over the direction of the interview. Use it to your best advantage by moving the discussion toward what you know best. It will be much easier to defend your position if you are standing on familiar ground discussing the type of patient you know best.

It would also be helpful for you to study the psychodynamics of patients with the diagnosis you use in your case. If you do not utilize a psychodynamic approach, make sure your treatment procedures fit the diagnosis you assign to your patient, and be thoroughly read on such treatment procedures.
PRACTICE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
Personal/Professional

1. How did you become interested in psychology?
2. How did you become interested in (specific interest area)?
3. What would you be doing if you were not in psychology?
4. Personal strengths and weaknesses? How do they influence your work?
   What have you done to deal with your shortcomings?
5. What are your goals after internship? In 5 years?
6. Tell me about yourself?
7. What do you do in your spare time? To relax?
8. Tell me about your interest in this area (geography)?
9. Why did you choose your training program?
10. Why should we accept you over other equally qualified candidates?
11. What do you have to contribute to us?

Research
1. Dissertation topic? How is your research progressing? Where do you see it going?
2. How did you get interested in this topic?
3. Clinical relevance of research?
4. Master's thesis?

Assessment
1. Tell me about an instrument with which you feel competent.
2. Opinion of projective testing.
3. What Rorschach scoring system? Why?
4. Opinion of MMPI-2
5. What further assessment training or experiences do you need?

Treatment
1. Greatest strength as a therapist?
2. Type of client most difficult to work with? What types of feelings do you have toward such cases? How do these feelings interfere with treatment?
3. Orientation in therapy? What do you think of ___ approach?
4. How do you see yourself as a therapist?
5. Challenges you expect to face as a therapist?
6. Experience with family/group/inpatient/etc. treatment?
7. Talk about a therapy case you had. How did you conceptualize the case? What was most effective? (mini-case presentation, 5 minutes)
8. Most challenging case?
9. What type of client do you work best with?
10. What sort of supervisors have you had? What type of supervision is best for you?
11. What further therapy training or experience do you need?
Recruiting
1. What can we do to make you want to come here?
2. How do you see us fitting with your goals?
3. Which of your interest areas are (not) addressed by our program?
4. Where else have you applied and what attracted you to these places?
5. What attracts you most to our internship?

Other
1. What else would like me know about you that isn’t apparent from your CV?
2. What is the 1 question you would like me to ask you?

Additional question
7. Talk about a therapy case you had. How did you conceptualize the case?
   What was most effective? (mini-case presentation, 5 minutes)
The committee would always supply a case vignette that the applicant was to discuss. The case vignettes would invariably entertain an ethical dilemma that contained multicultural and diversity variables.

Interest & Fit
Why are you interested in our site? Why are you applying to this particular internship?
Why do you want to work at a counseling center site?
What do you see as the role of the counseling center in a university?
Why do you think you are a "fit" for our site?
What have you heard about this site and its internship?
What are the advantages to you of this site?
What worries you about coming to this site?
What might you not get at this site that you want?
How could this site disappoint you next year?
What are your feelings about coming to this state?
What do you think of the program now that you’ve heard more about it?

Internship Goals
What are your goals for internship?
What are you looking for in an internship?
What kinds of experiences would you like to leave this agency with?
What kind of training experiences do you need to round out your clinical skills?

Supervision
Past:
What kind of supervision have you had?
What were the orientations of the supervisors you’ve had in the past?
Describe the best and worst supervision you’ve received?
What do you like and dislike in supervision?
What was the most difficult experience for you in supervision? What was
helpful? What did you learn about yourself? What is your style of providing supervision? What are you looking for from supervision next year? How do you react to criticism/challenges in supervision?

Future:
What are you looking for in supervision? What would you like to get out of supervision? What do you need in supervision now for your theoretical development?

Theoretical Orientation
What type of therapist are you? What is your theoretical orientation or counseling style? How did you develop it? How do you see the process of therapy? What is your group experience and your theoretical orientation in group? What is your experience with time-limited therapy? What are your feelings about time-limited therapy? Why do people come to therapy and how can we help them? If you were to seek therapy, what qualities would you look for in a therapist? How do you use emotions/affect in therapy? What is therapeutic in the therapy process? How is change achieved? What is the role of the therapist?

Clinical Work & Clients
Describe your professional experience and types of clients you have worked with. What are your strengths as a clinician and what do you you perceive as your growing edges or weaknesses? What is your professional growing edge? How does that affect you therapy? What clients do you enjoy the most and the least? Why? What clients do you work best and least well with? Why? What clients are hardest for you? What types of clients do you work well with? What about clinical work do you enjoy most/least? Describe a difficult case and how you worked with this person. Describe a case that went well. Describe a client you worked with and your theoretical orientation in conjunction with this case. Describe a critical incident which influenced you during your training? Why was that incident critical and how did it influence you? What impact does your person have in therapy, or in what ways do you use your person in therapy? Do you have any experiences with clients that involved professional ethics/law? How did you handle them? Describe a case that you handled inadequately. What would you do differently?
How do you appraise danger?

Diversity
What does diversity mean to you?
What multicultural or diverse student populations have you worked with?
What are your strengths and weaknesses in working with minorities?
What variables/issues are of concern to you in working with specific populations?
What reading didactic experiences influence the way you think about these populations?
For the following four populations, describe what you know about them and how you would work with them: women, gays/lesbians, people of color, and disabled people

Clinical Interest Areas
What are your clinical interest areas?
Outreach and consultation, group, career
How does outreach and consultation fit into a counseling center?
What types of groups have you led?
How do you see yourself in the consulting role? (residence halls, etc.)
What outreach activities have you conducted? Do you enjoy outreach?
What is your experience with career counseling?
Under what circumstances would you seek consultation
What types of problems would you refer out? How would you make a referral?

Research Interests
What are your research interests?
How far along is your dissertation?

Other Professional Interests
Other professional interests?

Career Goals
What are your career and long-term goals?
What is your ideal job in the future?
What kind of career are you seeking? Where do you see yourself in 5 years, 10 years, etc.?

Personal
What are your personal relaxation interests?
How are you to work with as a staff person in a group setting?
What are your hobbies?
What is the biggest risk you have ever taken personally or professionally?
Tell us an anecdote or story that would tell us something about you.
What is the primary professional issue in the field?
Where do you see the field going in the future?
Who are your mentors? What makes them your mentors?
How do you deal with stress? How would we know when you are stressed?
Describe how you are a team player?
What criteria are you using to judge sites by?
What are five words you would use to describe yourself? What are five words someone else would use to describe you?
Have you read anything of interest to the field recently?
What about your personality helps you in therapy? Hinders you?
Questions asked - in no particular order.

Why did you choose this internship?

How does this internship relate to your future goals?

How do you feel yourself being a good match for this internship?

What are your future goals

What particular skills do you have that would make you a good intern?

What would you like to gain from this internship?

What are your strengths

What are your weaknesses

How do you think this internship can address your weaknesses

What is your theoretical orientation

How do you come to decide on a strategy for therapeutic intervention?

What are your hobbies outside of work

Can you see yourself having time for this internship (other commitments, etc?)
  if they ask you this one, you may want to know how many hours they want you to be there

How are your writing skills

How are your assessment skills

What types of assessment measures have you used

If you're missing a big assessment skill (such as Rorschach) how will that impact you? Do you have a problem or concern about giving the test? (both with learning it on your own and in terms of its merits [ie do you believe in it as a test])

Why did you pick UND

Why did you pick your dissertation topic

How cold does it really get in North Dakota?
How would you feel about living in this type of environment (big city, small town, etc.)?

What are your experiences dealing with issues of diversity and multiculturalism?

What does diversity/multiculturalism/cross-culturalism mean to you?

If they have a rotation program:

What rotations do you want

Why

How do these relate to your future goals

How do these match your strengths and weaknesses

Are there particular clients you especially enjoy working with

Are there particular clients you have difficulty working with/could not work with

Describe an ethical dilemma you had in therapy and how you resolved it

Have you ever worked with the ethical issue of reporting potential to harm self/other and/or child abuse; how did you deal with that?

They may ask about experience with particular populations they work with: kids, adolescents, people with particular diagnoses, etc.

If they're big into diversity, they may give you the opportunity to discuss if you are a member of a minority group, group they focus on in their program, etc.

They may give you a case, scenario, etc and ask for your clinical impressions, what you would do, what other questions you would ask the client, how you would direct staff to work with the client, you choice for course of therapy, etc.

One person in our class was asked why s/he did not inquire about the size of a client's genitals. Hopefully, that's not standard interview material.

Why do you want to be a psychologist

How did you hear about our program

What is your theoretical orientation

What does that mean to you? for your clients? how you conceptualize cases? how you do therapy?
Taneisha's Tips for the Internship Application Process

The Basics
- Figure out what you want in an internship program
- Go to the APPIC website and search through the online directory
- Decide on the programs that you want to apply to
- Register for the match (there will be a deadline)
- Join the listservs - MATCH NEWS and INTERN-NETWORK
- Fill out the APPIC application form - this will include your hours and essays
- Ask for letters of recommendation from your advisor and supervisors
- Give the training director the list of sites you will be applying to - the TD will complete the second half of the application form
- Make sure your CV is updated
- Prepare and mail your packages (most applications are due in November)
- Schedule interviews
- Do interviews
- Rank sites
- Get internship

Phase 1: Selecting and Applying to Internship Sites

Hours don't matter AS LONG AS you meet the sites minimum requirements.
Some sites don't consider estimated hours for meeting the minimum requirements (some explain this in their application materials). By the way, dissertation progress is also likely to make you an attractive applicant.

Ask a few people to read your essays.
I found that having more than one reader allowed me to catch things I might have otherwise missed. One of the things I strove for in my essays was to be professional and at the same time allow the sites to get an idea of who I am as a person. So one idea might be to have someone that knows you well read your essay - you might get ideas on how to incorporate additional pieces about yourself that might be important.

Keep track of your hours - and keep a few cases in mind.
Keeping track of your hours is important in completing your APPI but also you will need to be able to discuss cases for your interviews. Think ethical dilemmas, client's you had some difficulty working with and clients that would be good illustrations for how you typically approach therapy.

Apply to enough sites - somewhere between 10 and 16 seems to be the magic number.
The internship process is very competitive and so you want to make sure to have a number of options. Also once you have the APPI completed you just need to do one essay specific to the site and a brief cover letter - so it only takes a little extra time. Apply to places that you would want to spend your internship year but keep in mind that...
you may LOVE places that you didn’t think would and find that some sites you really liked aren’t as impressive when you interview.

Phase 2: Interviewing/Ranking

Scheduling interviews—try to do what’s best for you

I ended up driving to all the interviews I went to. Fortunately I was able to pair-up interviews that were closer together (e.g., I had interviews in Iowa and Wisconsin in the same week) so that I could save myself some time in driving. This worked out for me because although driving can be stressful I used it as time to unwind and listen to music. Think about what you need in terms of time to settle in, rest, and so on. Also I increased my cell phone minutes so that I could talk with sites when they called but also so I could keep in touch with friends and family while I was traveling by myself.

Telephone interviewing

Be prepared for the possibility that this might feel awkward because you might not get much feedback from your interviewers. Even if you can’t tell what’s happening on the other side continue to present yourself as friendly and confident. The silence may just be nods and smiles that you can’t see.

Do some practice interviews and come up with answers for questions that might be asked.

Practice interviews really helped me to feel more confident going in. Also you get better with each interview. By my second to last interview I was feeling pretty good about how I was doing, so that might be something to take into account in terms of the order of the interviews. I don’t recommend memorizing your answers or expecting your interviews to have standard questions—be prepared but also be able to be spontaneous.

Be prepared with some questions that weren’t answered in the brochure.

Many sites will spend as much energy (or almost as much) telling you about themselves as you will be. My take is that they want to know that you are also interested in what they have to offer and are really giving thought to how well you fit.

Present yourself in a balanced way.

Charlie Wachler’s advice that I found really helpful is to present yourself as having something to offer but also as someone who has things to learn (teachable/trainable). That took a lot of pressure off—I could talk about gaps in my training/experience and how it fits with the internship program without feeling at a disadvantage.

Keep a positive attitude.

Honestly, this year I had a lot of fun traveling to different places and meeting new people. I think having a positive attitude to the process helped me to be more of myself and more enthusiastic during my interviews. There are a lot of professionals out there
who really enjoy working with interns and make every effort to make the internship experience a good one.

**Review information about the sites before you interview**

I created a binder with all the internship sites’ info so that I could have it to review the night before my interviews. It was convenient having all this information organized so that I wasn’t feeling flustered—I could turn to the section for a particular site and review questions that I wanted to ask and think about specifics of that site to prepare for my interview. Also I had my essays and cover letters for each site so I could look them over as well (essay 5 and my cover letters were tailored for each site).

**Ranking**

Rank the sites you want to go to in order of your preferences. For the 2005 match, 50% of applicants who were matched got their first choice and 82% got one of their top 3 choices.

**Phase 3: Waiting**

**Create a contingency plan**

I had one the first time I applied—just in case. Although I was worried about not matching it really helped to have a back up plan. If you are not matched you can apply to sites that were left with positions open (or even created new internship slots) through the clearinghouse. This can be stressful because it’s fast paced. However, you will have a weekend to brace yourself. As with your original selection process, know what you will be looking for and what internship you are willing to take. If you have some idea of what you might do if you don’t go on internship this year then you might feel less pressure to go to internship site even if it is not a good fit for you (e.g., if it was important for you to have an APA-approved internship).

*This is a competitive process in 2005 21% of applicants did not get matched. I lived to tell about it. Do your best work and then leave room for serendipity. “Life is a like a box of chocolates. You never know what you’re going to get.” – Forrest Gump*

**Resources**

The Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) Web site
www.appic.org
This is where you get your application (the APPI), get your materials to register for the match, and you can find useful information and statistics.

www.cpa.ca/documents/Internship_workbook.pdf
This workbook was really useful. I used the timeline provided as a reference and printed off the list of things to do and other useful pages (e.g., pre-interview rank list and post-interview rank list).
Dave Winer's Wacky Internship Tips

I was fortunate enough to get matched at my top choice (Grand Valley State University in Allendale, MI), so apparently my strategies worked. However, I used bribery to get matched (just kidding, obviously!) and I wouldn’t recommend using that strategy. Before formally listing tips, I should recommend the APAGS pre-conference workshop on applying for internship that I participated in at APA in August, 2005. That workshop was very helpful to me in terms of organizing my thoughts about what I need to do, when I need to do things, and (most importantly) how I need to do things in order to get matched. It cost approximately $30 and paid for itself because it included a copy of the APAGS internship book. For those of you attending APA in New Orleans, look to the APAGS web site or conference program for information about this workshop. Here we go:

Choosing which sites to apply to:

- First, many individuals going through the internship process get onto the Match News listerv. This listerv doesn’t load up your inbox (I received an average of one e-mail per day, at the most), and it keeps you up to speed on important deadlines and so forth. You can join the listerv at the APPIC web site, http://www.appic.org.
- Research has shown that the ideal number of sites to apply to is approximately 11 to 15. Statistically, applying to any more than 15 sites is not worth the extra time and effort.
- In my opinion, selecting the list of sites that you’ll be applying for is the most important part of the whole process. The key to this whole thing is match—the match between your interests and experience with the needs of a particular site. How closely the sites you choose to apply to match what you bring to the table is a huge factor in whether you get matched.
- Make a list or a brainstorm about what you’re looking for in an internship site—geographic location, type of site, type of population you’d like to be working with, whether you can teach or not, supervision opportunities, amount and type of assessment, etc.
- Although I understand that some people believe they have no choice, restricting yourself to a single geographic area is not a good idea.
- Something that is very important is embracing the fact that you’re being trained as a Counseling Psychologist, and knowing that this may automatically hurt you at some sites (certain medical facilities) and it can automatically help you at some sites (some counseling centers) regardless of how talented you are. When I was navigating the APPIC web site and looking at programs, the first thing I looked at is whether the site takes CP students. Some sites report that they NEVER take CP interns, so unless you’re extremely marketable in a certain area, it’s probably a waste of your time and energy to apply to those sites. On the flip side, some sites almost exclusively take CP students, so obviously you have a better chance at these places. Most sites are somewhere in between.
• Know how to market yourself, and choose sites at which you will be marketable. For example, I have a great deal of career counseling experience so I applied to sites that value career experience.
• I used certain strategies and heuristics when navigating the APPIC web site, but it's hard to explain in writing so if you see me in a computer lab I'd be happy to spend some time showing you.

Going through the application process:
• Being organized is crucial because there's a huge amount of material and information to keep track of. I had a separate manila file folder for each site I was applying to, and a separate folder on my computer as well.
• Filling out the APPI (the universal behemoth of an application that gets sent to all sites) is a very time consuming process, especially the essays. It's like taking an extra course or even two extra courses - know this ahead of time and plan accordingly.
• Speaking of the essays, the APAGS internship book (I can't remember the title - it's purple) was very helpful with them. There are five essays, and only essay #5 can be different for each site. There is an option of including the information for essay #5 in your cover letter and leaving essay #5 blank on the APPI. I decided to do this because then I didn't have to print 13 different APPIs. Some people believe that this isn't a good choice but I got matched anyway, so meah! I would also recommend having your advisor or someone else who you trust look over your essays and give you feedback.
• Calculating my hours was somewhat confusing but it wasn't too bad. Also, the hours you list on the APPI don't have to be exact! There are no "hours police" who will come and whip you with a wet noodle if you accidentally count an outreach hour as an assessment hour - just be as accurate as you can. I don't have room here to go into too much detail about this but the APPI asks about the demographics of your clients, what type of assessment instruments you've used, how many supervision hours you have both as supervisee and supervisor, and so forth. You should be keeping track of your experience in these and other areas in an organized way. I had a manila folder I labeled "hours" and kept my practicum hours sheets in there. Also, Titanium at the CTCC has data for all counselors there and that can be helpful too.

Interviewing:
• BE PREPARED! Some of you may have heard my story about how I was minimally prepared for my first phone interview and I completely choked - I felt like I only opened my mouth to switch feet. Knowing this, it's usually a good idea to schedule your top choices later in the interview process (if possible).
• To prepare, the most important thing is to have a case in mind that you can readily discuss - and make sure you were successful with the case! Make sure the case information you provide is anonymous, of course.
• Have a list of questions for them prepared, because it looks bad if you don't ask them questions. Make sure they questions are genuine, though. Be very familiar with the site's web page and general information about the site.
• I’ve heard that you can get discounted flights through the APPIE web site, but I don't know the details because I drove to all of my interviews and open houses.

Ranking and waiting:
• At some point you need to pay $100 or so to register for the match. Later, you will receive instructions in the mail about how to submit your rank order list. The instructions are top secret and self-destruct ten seconds after taking them out of the envelope (just kidding).

• Unlike Tom Petty, I don’t think that the waiting is the hardest part. I was relieved after submitting my rank order list!

• If you think you may use the Clearinghouse (a way to find a site if you did not get initially matched), then know about the Clearinghouse before notification day (the Friday in February when you find out whether you got matched; “match day” is the following Monday when you find out where you got matched if you were placed).
Internship Tips

- Get APAGS Internship Psychology book. It has many helpful tips.
- To avoid being burned out especially since you start finalizing applications short after you hear about comps results, I suggest you START EARLY.
- You can start early by tabulating your hours in the appropriate categories as they come in so you don’t have to back track later – make sure you don’t count hours in more than one category.
- Start writing your essays early too.
- Tailor as many essays to specific sites after you research them.
- I highly suggest that you tailor essay 5 especially to the site you really want to go to.
- Narrow sites in APPIC and keep track of what each site wants from you and when the deadlines are.
- With my sites deadlines start as early as November 1 and ended as late as December 7.
- You hear back about interviews by December 15.
- Be aware that some places have interviews for EVERYONE that applies so be prepared to explore what makes you stand out at that site.
- Other sites will ask everything from professional questions related to what you have done in graduate school and what you would still like to accomplish to things such as, “if you could be any famous person alive or dead who would you be and why?”
- I was asked on almost every interview about my personal strengths and weaknesses. It was helpful to answer this question with fact rather than opinion. COME PREPARED WITH THIS ANSWER BEFORE THE INTERVIEW because it is difficult to discuss strengths without sounding like you are bragging and difficult to express weakness without sounding like having deficits.
- Answer this questions with facts about what you’ve done and what you would still like to do in the remainder of your training.
- Tailor your responses to the training of the program.
- Ask questions of the interviewer related to their program.
- Sound genuine but make sure you tell them how their program fits your interests/training needs.
- Send thank you letters.
- You will not get any follow up information so do not worry if you don’t hear from sites again.
- Rank only sites you would like to go to not ones you don’t want to go to because if matched YOU MUST go to that site.
- Apply nationally if possible – the more sites the better but only to a certain degree – don’t over do it either.
- On match day take a deep breath. If you don’t get a site you still have clearinghouse so don’t panic yet.
- The three days after match can be difficult if you don’t have other things to occupy you.
- Depending on the results you may want to keep your schedule on Monday after the match free incase you don’t match so you can make and receive calls/emails.
Carly’s Tips for Internship

Choosing Sites
• Start early – this is the fun part of the process!
• Think about your geographical preferences, types of sites you might be interested in, stipends you think you can live with, etc. The APPIC website is great for helping to narrow down your choices.
• Decide how many sites you want to apply to, and consider the additional materials needed for each site. Some may want case studies, assessment reports, or many additional questions answered. This can be time consuming. I went through the application process twice. The first time I applied to 11 sites and got 1 interview. The second time I applied to 16 sites and got 3 interviews (it was much easier to put together my application materials this time!)
• One other thing to consider – onsite or telephone interview? This may or may not be up to you. Some sites offer one or the other. My advice would be that if you can manage getting to the site for an onsite interview, go. My onsite interviews let me get a much better feel for the place and the people, and I know I interview much better in person.
• Once you’re absolutely sure you’re applying, register for the Match ($100) so that you can put your match number on your AAPI. This isn’t necessary at this point, but I liked having the number on there the first time around rather than having to update the site later.

Putting Your Application Materials Together
• First of all, expect this to take much longer than you think it will. For me, it felt like the equivalent of a part-time job. Also, it can be expensive – you will need to buy big envelopes, good quality paper, postcards, and pay for postage (think 16 applications times at least $4). Hint: If you ask at the desk at the post office, you can get prestamped white postcards for only the cost of the stamp.
• Go to the APPIC site and download the AAPI form as early as you can.
• Try to review the essays and start brainstorming your answers and even writing over the summer. I found this part very challenging as they require you to engage in some self-examination and put together what you’ve learned and what you believe with who you are in a comprehensive answer – all in 500 words or less.
• Your peers can be invaluable (as long as you’re not competing with them for the same site). I found it helpful to work with others on calculating your prac hours and having people read my essays. Advisors are also great for reading essays.
• Put your vita together ASAP and have a couple of people proofread it for errors and format. Look at other people’s vitas from your year to make sure you didn’t miss anything.
• You will also need to develop a cover letter. I tried to keep mine fairly general since I did essay #5 and put in a few more specific lines for each site. If you use this approach, be very careful to change all pertinent information for each site (titles, addresses, etc.). It sounds dumb, but it’s easy to make a mistake.
Ordering transcripts: Do it as soon as you know your summer grades are listed. The form is online through the registrar's office, and it takes a couple weeks to actually get the transcripts. Keep in mind that if you need them immediately you will pay $10 per transcript for them. One site asked for my undergrad transcript, but that wasn't the norm.

Recommendation letters: Ask if it's OK first! I gave each person writing me a recommendation letter folders with all the information they might need (some sites have extra forms for people to sign). I included the deadline, a disk with all the addresses for the sites, and preaddressed U of A envelopes (these are in a box in the copy room). Some sites will accept materials coming in from different people for an applicant, and some ask that everything comes complete in one envelope. For my own peace of mind, I asked people to give the sealed and signed letters to me so I knew that each package was complete when I mailed it. It's up to you and the sites' requirements.

I used a checklist for each site so that I knew when I was done. They included: return addressed "my app has been received" postcards, a cover letter, my vita, the AAPF form, a list of my completed coursework and the proposed coursework for the next semester, my transcript from Akron, my recommendation letters, and any additional materials that were requested.

One last small detail. Check the post office schedule. There are some days that they are closed and if you happen to get down to the wire (I had an app due Oct. 20th and it was tight) a day or two might be the difference between an app that gets reviewed versus going in the garbage.

Now, you wait!

The Waiting Game and Getting the News

To be frank, for me, this part sucked. A lot. I got most of my replies back between December 5th-December 20th. And since, like me, you are human, you may get a rejection letter. If this happens, remember than I got 10 the first year and have lived to tell about it. Keep in mind that while it's nice to have a ton of interviews, you only need one internship.

This part can be expensive, too. I had a site that told me I got an interview on December 20th and I had to go for an onsite interview on January 5th. This place is where I got matched, so I can't complain much, but planning these trips 2 weeks in advance can be very pricey.

This is a great time to rely on other people for support. Try to explain the process to your family and lean on them. Make sure you do some fun things—holiday shopping, movies, going out, breathing(!) — anything that distracts you is great. My boyfriend and colleagues held me together at this point.

Yay, I Got An Interview!

Prepare, prepare, prepare! There's a list of about 70 possible questions they typically ask floating around somewhere that was very helpful. I went through the list and if I couldn't think of an answer, I sat down with paper and wrote out a paragraph answer and reviewed it.

Pick out that fabulous interview outfit and have it ready.
• Make cheap travel arrangements if necessary.
• I reviewed the paperwork I had for each site and made notes about what made it unique. I thought about how that fit into what I wanted in a site — they WILL ask you this. Make sure your answer to “what are your goals for internship?” fits with what they offer. (Duh!)
• When you get there, try to relax and be your professional self. Remember that this is a chance for you to check them out as well. At both onsite interviews I had there were other applicants there and I realized that they were my competition, but they might also be my colleagues if I matched there. Figure out what makes you unique as an applicant. Be somebody who makes people think “this person might fit well here.”
• If it seems as though it isn’t going well, remember that it will end soon. The best you can do is convey your sincere interest, excitement and qualifications.
• Thank-you notes are a toss up. I sent one to where I got matched. Some people say it’s polite interview etiquette, some say it’s just an extra piece of paper in a file. I thought the people I interviewed with and the interns I met truly were great and helpful, and I wanted to convey that. You may work with these people later — I figured there was no harm in sending one.
• Now, you wait!

**Ranking and Match Day**

• Think through your ranking and do it several days before the due date. If you change your mind, you can update it later — anytime up until the deadline. Remember that you’ve done all you can possibly do at this point and that you cannot control the outcome at this point (I don’t know if that helps much, actually, but it’s the truth…).
• Sign up for the Clearinghouse if you feel you want that as an option. I set up a new email account just for Clearinghouse so my account wouldn’t get clogged up.
• Get a couple of transcripts so that you’re prepared if you have to send out more apps for Clearinghouse.
• **Match Day, Part I.** will come eventually. Try to arrange to stay home that day — you’ll probably want to freak out and party if you match, and you’ll want the time if you don’t.
  • If you match, this weekend is still nerve-wracking, but hey! you matched!
  • If you didn’t match and intend to try the Clearinghouse, this is a good time to talk to your advisor and your support network and start planning your strategy. Do you need to get a fax machine? Put your cover letter and AAPI into one document? Have an extra phone available? Do you have someone who can run around for you or bring you food if you need it?
• **Match Day, Part II**
  • If you matched, Congrats! Get in touch with your new training director and start planning.
  • Clearinghouse — stay calm. You will be making big decisions in the next day or so.
  • Either way, do something nice for yourself!
  • A word to the wise — results are often emailed much earlier than the proposed time (7 or 8 am), so if you can’t wait, check early.
THE INTERNSHIP APPLICATION PROCESS FROM MINDI'S PERSPECTIVE...

**Please keep in mind: This is my perspective & based on my experiences. Therefore some of the things that fit for me (or others who you read their handouts) won't for you – so... please just view this as information that you can use to figure out what will work best for you!**

Some things to keep in mind...

- **This is a very long process!!!**
  - do what you need to do to prepare yourself for it (mentally, physically, & financially)
  - do what works for you to take care of yourself ... and reward yourself for the little things along the way
  - don't compare yourself to your cohort, other people you know applying, or those who have already gone through the process – just like with studying for exams, everyone has a different style & different strategies so just make sure you KNOW YOURSELF
    - this is probably especially important with this process because each person likely has very different ideas about what their ideal internship will look like & what they are looking to get out of it
    - for example: some people are excited about just getting an internship, others just want something in a specific location, others have a particular place or two in mind that they really want to be, etc.
  - so... your process will look very different (likely) depending on what you want/how you like to do things

- Be prepared for things to take longer than you anticipate them taking... not unlike graduate school in general, there will be times that it feels as if you are making no progress, times you see the light at the end of the tunnel, and other times you repeatedly wonder what you were ever thinking😊

- Personally, I don’t think I was prepared for just how long and exhausting this process would be!
  - As a caveat: part of this may be reflective of my own personal interests, career goals, etc. and may not be a common experience. I felt like before this year, I had only heard positive things about this process as many students are typically very excited about their internship year... for me, it created an existential crisis.
  - I was expecting there to be down time for me in between my last application deadline and finding out about (and having) interviews. However... I ended up with only about a week between my last deadline and having to prep for my first interview.
  - I also didn’t have a very good sense of how hard the ranking process can be...

Some Tips...

- There are tons of resources out there – USE THEM!
  - Some examples that others have used and liked: the pre-APA internship workshop, the APA Guide to getting an internship, handouts from past students that you can get from Charlie and/or others, supervisors, advisors, former students, APPIC’s website and listservs, and your colleagues.
  - Again, what you decide to use will depend on your style – some people like to be an email listservs with others going through the process, some people like to be over prepared and make use of every possible resource, and others like to figure things out based on the way they do things.
• Decide ahead of time how much money you are willing to spend on this process.
  o Some things to consider: the cost to register with the NMS, traveling to sites for
    interviews (some sites prefer on-site, others only offer phone interviews), traveling to
    sites that you had a phone interview with in order to help with your own decision-
    making, investing in a suit, money for mailing a lot of packages (envelopes, copies,
    stamps, etc.), increasing cell phone minutes for the month if you have a lot of phone
    interviews scheduled, & of course the money you will spend rewarding yourself along the
    way (good dinners, take-out, wine, online shopping, gym membership, etc.)

  • APPIC site information does not always (in my opinion) accurately reflect the particular
    emphasis areas of given internship sites. So, you may need to do some extra researching.

  • Double check deadlines for applications listed on APPIC’s site. Make sure it says the right date
    because sometimes sites update their information (and change their dates) year to year and may
    not actually update it by the time you’ve made your list. Sites update a Aug/Sept

  • Choose to apply to a lot of sites, and ones that vary in level of competitiveness.
    o Don’t assume that the number of applicants who applied last year is your best indicator
      of competitiveness – It may be that a program in a non-popular part of the country has
      fewer applicants, but that all of those who do apply there choose to apply because they
      really are good fits for the program – or sometimes programs in the middle of nowhere
      are some of the programs with the best reputations.

  • Try to figure out what it is you want out of an internship ahead of time.
    o Things to consider: location restrictions, importance of location, stipend, type of setting,
      goals for internship (emphasis areas, opportunities available, typical clientele, modality of
      treatment . . . ), personal values, etc.
    o This will help you when you get to actual decision times (i.e., narrowing down or
      expanding list of places to apply, figuring out your rank list, etc.).
      - For students who are further away from your own application process, this
        means you can start shaping your prac and other experiences to prepare you for
        your goals for internship (i.e., if you want an internship in a hospital setting, you
        probably want to get some prac experiences in a similar setting).

  • Beware of additional essay question requirements and what this means for you in choosing your
    sites . . . some people choose not to apply to sites with additional essays because they assume that
    these are more competitive and/or that they will expect you to work harder once you get there –
    for me, additional essays did not seem unreasonable, however, there was one site to which I
    decided not to apply because, amongst other things, they essentially had created their own AAPI
    rather than using the regular AAPI, which seemed a bit ridiculous to me.

  • The types of questions you get on interviews are great sources of information about the site.
  • Take notes for yourself during/immediately following the interviews – this will provide you with
    information you need after all the interviews are done and it is time to rank
  • It is sometimes difficult to choose between programs because they are very different.
    o To help with this, I decided to ask the same question for each of my interviews – this
      allowed me to be able to have a “cheat sheet” which I could use to compare programs

  • Try to accommodate their scheduling requests for interviews, BUT, if you absolutely cannot do
    a specific day or time, it is OK to let them know. As long as you do it respectfully, the worst
    that will happen is that you will learn that they are not the sort of place you want to be.
    o Don’t assume that you will get the opportunity to choose which order your interviews
      come in or that you will be able to only schedule one interview per day.

Mindi Thompson - 2007
• When it comes to deciding how to rank places, go back to your original goals for internship and values about the process and then just **TRUST YOURSELF!!**
  o The process of ranking can be very anxiety provoking and may take a lot of energy.
  o I was worried that I would not be able to come up with a final rank list that I would feel comfortable with – and, because part of my decision-making process is typically intuitive, I knew it was important for me to make sure I “knew” how I to rank programs
  o This meant that it was important for me to gather as much information as possible related to the sites (e.g., asking extra questions, on-site visits to programs, talking to multiple people)
    - And, I would suggest – if you do decide to go to places to visit or for on-site interviews… make sure that you enjoy it/make a vacation out of it!
• It is OK not to rank a place if you don’t think you’d like it even if you get an interview (just ask yourself if you would rather wait a year or go to that place if it came down to it. If your answer is that you would rather have to wait another year, then don’t rank it).
• Then, once all of the rankings are in… try to trust the match and realize it is completely out of your hands!
  o Be sure to print your match list once you certify it & you probably want to try to avoid waiting until the last night at 11:30pm to do it
• Don’t forget to let others know that you appreciate their help through the process!!

One last thing…
• Unfortunately, the APPIC data demonstrate that **LOTS (i.e., 25%+) of people don’t get matched**! This is not meant to scare you, but rather to remember that not getting an internship is not the end of the world & does not mean that you aren’t good enough. Try to maintain a positive attitude! There is always the clearinghouse and next year (and it seems like people who haven’t been matched their first year in the past end up in places they really love their second time around!).

Mindi Thompson - 2007
I. **KEEP PERSPECTIVE!** Applying for internship should not be daunting!
   a. **So keep the positive aspects of applying in mind...**
      i. Think about how far you have come and how much you have learned
      ii. Think about what you want and need as a professional
      iii. Dabble in professionalism
      iv. Go to new places and meet new people
      v. Opportunity to reflect and crystallize your thoughts and perspectives
      vi. Serves as a break from research and other things
      vii. Time for yourself
      viii. There is light at the end of the tunnel

II. **STEP 1: TRACK HOURS**
    a. Do the best you can. An hour off here or there isn’t going to make or break you.

III. **STEP 2: WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM AN INTERNSHIP?**
    a. Reflect on what you want from this opportunity
       i. Is it a location thing?
       ii. Is it about a particular type of training opportunity?
       iii. Are you limited in where you can move?

IV. **STEP 3: IDENTIFY YOUR SITES!**
    a. Select 13-15 if possible
    b. Read their website and get to know what they’re all about
    c. Pay attention to due dates and application requirements

V. **STEP 4: APPLY!**
   a. Typical Requirements: References, APPI, Essays, Extra Essays, and Cover Letters
   b. **TIPS FOR APPLYING:**
      i. **Stay fit**...it’s all about marketing yourself and packaging your experiences!
      ii. **Know Thy Self**...prepare like you always do!
      iii. **Don’t reinvent the wheel**...if they ask the same questions, use the same answers!
      iv. **Give yourself a break**...do your best when tracking hours and writing, but don’t be overkill!
      v. **Use your resources**...ask people to help you out.

VI. **OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER**
   a. Cash Money!
   b. Scheduling isn’t always perfect
   c. Ask other people