**The Catholic University of America**

**Counseling Center**

## http://counseling.cua.edu/res/images/image002.jpg

**Doctoral Internship in Health Service Psychology**

**Accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association**

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

750 1st Street NE

Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202) 336-5979

[apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org)

apa.org/ed/accreditation

**Message from the Director of Internship Training**

Thank you for taking the time to explore our internship training program. Information on this brochure and other online materials is intended to give you an accurate picture of the internship experience for the 2023-2024 academic year. Please feel free to [email me](mailto:lasota@cua.edu) if you have any questions.  Good luck with the internship process.

Sincerely,

Dr. Mark LaSota, Director of Internship Training

### **Background**

The doctoral internship in health service psychology offered by the Counseling Center at The Catholic University of America is designed to provide supervised experience in individual and group psychotherapy, supervision of graduate extern and practicum students, outreach, and consultation programs. Our senior staff is multidisciplinary and diverse in therapeutic orientation, and both our internship and externship programs are designed to expose trainees to a variety of clinical perspectives and to the advantages and challenges of theoretical integration. Interns at the Center have an opportunity to work with clients struggling with a wide range of problems, including those whose pathology is of a severity usually treated by senior staff in many counseling center settings.

Candidates must be enrolled in a doctoral program in either counseling or clinical psychology. All of the formal course work and comprehensive examinations for the doctorate should be completed, including supervised practicum courses in counseling and/or psychotherapy. Additional clinical training experiences and experience working within a university setting are highly desirable.

Currently there are three full-time psychology internship positions. Interns are currently offered a $43,488 stipend for the internship year. **The doctoral internship program is a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and has been accredited by the *Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association* since 2009.**  Questions or concerns related to the program’s accreditation status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

750 1st Street NE

Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202) 336-5979

[apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org)

apa.org/ed/accreditation

The aim of the Catholic University internship is to provide psychology interns with a comprehensive, well-organized training experience, focusing on the continued development of the professional skills necessary for successful functioning as a professional psychologist. The program provides the clinical foundation that bridges graduate academic training and the practice of psychology. We provide the opportunity for interns to engage in a wide variety of university counseling center activities that can be applied to a host of career directions. In addition to training in individual and group therapy, integral parts of the training experience include individual and group supervision (4-6 hours per week), weekly training seminars, group supervision of graduate student externs, secondary supervision of practicum students, exposure to crisis coverage, outreach, and consultation across formal and informal settings. Our interns are regarded as an important part of the agency, are respected as full-time professional staff, and are expected to work closely as colleagues.

In addition to the focus on training in psychotherapy and supervision, the Catholic University Counseling Center Internship program offers a variety of training experiences. Interns are able to assist the in-house psychiatric nurse practitioner during medical evaluations, serve as a diversity liaison for university offices, and to collaborate with offices such as the Dean of Students.

**About the Training Center**

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**The University Counseling Center at the Catholic University of America**

The Counseling Center at Catholic University is **fully accredited by IACS**, the International Association of Counseling Services. All of the programs at the Center are designed to contribute to the personal, educational, social, and career development of Catholic University students. The Center offers a wide range of counseling and student development services and is the only mental health facility on the campus.

Currently, in addition to the three doctoral psychology interns, the staff includes four full-time psychologists, one full-time senior staff clinician, one full-time and one part-time social worker, one part-time psychiatric nurse practitioner, 10 graduate student externs (six from psychology and four from social work programs), and five practicum students from the clinical psychology doctoral program at Catholic University.

The staff at the Center spends roughly 40 percent of time in counseling, 25 percent in training and supervision, and 20 percent in consultation, staff development, and university programs. In addition, staff participate in a variety of activities including group psychotherapy, outreach activities, teaching, committee work, administration, and research. The clinical staff represents a number of theoretical approaches to psychotherapy.  Senior staff are members of the American Psychological Association or National Association of Social Workers and have specialized training in a variety of clinical areas, including cognitive-behavioral therapy, psychodynamic therapy, treatment of eating disorders, trauma recovery, mindfulness, and multicultural issues.

The Center also provides a practicum setting for Catholic University’s doctoral program in Clinical Psychology and a clinical externship for doctoral candidates from throughout the Washington-Baltimore area. The center provides supervision, clients, and agency support to the practicum students at Catholic University and additional opportunities for externs.  Staff are very proud of the reputation of the clinical externship housed in the Center, and they participate in the recruitment and selection of graduate students from clinical graduate programs. Interns have the opportunity to participate in the training and mentoring of our other trainees in a wide variety of ways.

**APPIC Membership**

The internship has been an APPIC member site since 2003.  It participates in the annual match and adheres to all APPIC policies and criteria.

**APA Accreditation**

The doctoral internship in health service psychology has been accredited by the *Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association* since 2009. Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the *Commission on Accreditation:*

Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

American Psychological Association

750 1st Street, NE, Washington, DC, 20002-4242;

Phone: [202-336-5979](tel:202-336-5979) / E-mail: apaaccred@apa.org

Web: [http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/)

**Client Population**

Each year, approximately 14 percent of the undergraduate and graduate students at Catholic University request counseling services from the Center. These students present with a wide variety of personal, social, educational, and vocational problems. As the internship year progresses, interns have opportunities to work with clients at a similar level of pathology as those seen by the senior staff. The Center has a reputation for providing more challenging cases than are typically expected at a counseling center internship. The clientele also provides interns with opportunities to work with nontraditional students and individuals from various underserved populations and minority groups.

**Center Facilities**

The Counseling Center is located on the first floor of O’Boyle Hall.  This large building houses the Department of Education and the Department of Psychology.  The first floor of the building is home to the Counseling Center.  All senior staff and interns have private offices.  Interns' offices and the group therapy room are equipped with cameras (iPads) to record sessions for supervision. In addition to individual office space, there is a conference/seminar room.  All professional staff and interns have individual desk-top computing capabilities with Internet access. Individual webcams are also provided for instances in which telebehavioral health services might take place. The extern lounge also has computer access for externs. Parking outside the building is available for a reasonable fee.  The university is also accessible by Washington, DC's subway system (Metro), as the Red Line has a station on the southeastern edge of campus.

#### ****Internship Training Philosophy****

The internship offered by the Catholic University of America’s Counseling Center is designed to provide a broad-based professional training experience in the range of activities carried out by psychologists in a service-oriented university counseling center.  Our training philosophy emphasizes the following elements:

### **INTEGRATIONIST PERSPECTIVE**

While on internship, interns are exposed to many different theoretical perspectives, such as psychodynamic, cognitive-behavioral, behavioral, systems, and client-centered.  This enables interns to function not only within the college counseling center community, but also opens up possibilities in many other mental health settings.

### **PRACTITIONER-SCHOLAR MODEL**

This training experience aims to bring theory and scientific knowledge to life through practice in accordance with the practitioner-scholar model (Rodolfa, Kaslow, Stewart, Keilin, & Baker, 2005).  Throughout the training year, interns are assigned relevant literature to inform their practice not only of psychotherapy but also of supervision, group therapy, cultural competence, and the development of an identity as a psychotherapist.  Supervisors serve as models for the practitioner-scholar approach, and interns are encouraged to bring to supervision questions that involve integrating theory and practice.

### **EXPERIENTIAL TRAINING ACTIVITIES**

The areas of emphasis at the Counseling Center include the clinical assessment of clients’ presentations, individual and group psychotherapy, crisis intervention, and supervision, as well as outreach and consultation. Through supervision, staff meetings, outreach, and informal contact and consultation with other staff members, the staff aim to model the internship’s training philosophy.  The staff members aspire to lead by example, providing a flexible and open environment within which interns can explore different approaches.  Case discussions in staff meetings as well as appropriate self-disclosure from supervisors during training activities help foster an environment wherein interns can learn from others and experiment with different ways of thinking about their clinical work.  This exposure to a variety of therapeutic approaches and styles contributes to a rich and varied training experience.

### **DEVELOPMENTAL APPROACH**

Where appropriate, the internship experience is organized in a sequential, developmental manner, encompassing increasing degrees of complexity as the training year progresses. This developmental approach is followed in terms of both the didactic and experiential components. In the spirit of the developmental approach, interns undergo a systematic and thorough orientation to the Counseling Center and the campus over a period of two weeks. In addition, fundamental skills and knowledge, such as an understanding of ethics and college student development, are emphasized first as a foundation for more complex skills and clinical issues. Interns are met where they are at the beginning of the training year; their existing skill levels are gauged by supervisors who then strive to provide developmentally appropriate goals for the training year. As interns progress through the year, these goals are modified according to the level of progress made by each individual intern. The aim of this approach is to sustain developmental momentum for interns while ensuring their continued development and growth within a safe learning environment.

### **MENTORSHIP**

Mentorship at the Counseling Center is evidenced by true commitment to supervision and to professional development. An important component of the professional development aspect of the internship is self-care and the development of a professional identity. Interns have the opportunity to talk about developmental issues and challenges during all of their supervisory experiences. A weekly meeting with the Director of Internship Training is particularly geared toward professional growth and mentorship. Interns are regarded as junior colleagues and function as an integral part of the senior staff at the center. The development of an identity as a supervisor is a further important element of the mentorship goal. Through the Supervision of Supervision seminar, as well as through modeling by individual and group supervisors, interns have the opportunity to work towards becoming competent mentors and supervisors.

### **DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS**

An integral part of the training mission involves theoretical knowledge and experiential application of diversity and multicultural issues. The aim is to translate theory into practice in an ongoing manner throughout the year. Interns are expected not only to complete the assigned readings for the bi-monthly culture-in-practice seminar but also to provide clinical material where relevant in an attempt to integrate these elements. Efforts are made to assign to interns clients who are diverse in terms of race, religion, gender identity, socioeconomic background, age, disability status, and severity of mental disorders. Supervisors continuously monitor interns’ caseloads to ensure that interns are exposed to as much diversity as possible. Interns are formally evaluated in terms of their multicultural acuity and sensitivity across therapeutic modalities. Self-awareness of individual biases and prejudices, with consideration of how these might affect clinical and supervisory work, are further important components of the training program’s efforts to stress the importance of diversity and multicultural issues. Finally, outreach activities within the multicultural realm are encouraged and expected. For example, there are several opportunities for working with the Center for Cultural Engagement, International Student and Scholar Services, the study abroad community, Disability Support Services, and non-traditional students.

**TRAINING PROGRAM**

The internship is designed to provide excellent training and supervision in the various activities and responsibilities practiced by a professional psychologist. The staff members at CUA’s Counseling Center are highly committed to a graduate internship program that encourages interns to gain a broad exposure to a variety of professional activities and services which exist in a college or university counseling center setting. At the completion of the internship, interns will be prepared to assume positions of responsibility within the profession.

The aims of the internship training program are as follows:

* To prepare graduate students who have completed their doctoral studies for applied work in the field of psychology.
* To provide consistent, intensive, and professional supervision in training activities.
* To provide interns the opportunities for the refinement of their clinical skills necessary to practice as professional psychologists.
* To provide flexible training that allows each intern to develop according to his or her own personal and professional needs.
* To provide a social environment where interns are supported while developing their professional identity.

#### ****Internship Training Activities****



Interns at the Counseling Center are employed on a full-time basis and participate in the following clinical and training activities:

#### ****INDIVIDUAL PSYCHOTHERAPY****

The major focus of the training program is on providing direct counseling services to the university population.  While receiving intensive supervision, interns gain a broad range of experiences with diverse clients and clinical issues.  Interns are able to gain experience using different therapeutic modalities, and length of treatment may vary from brief interventions to therapy throughout the internship year.  Interns designate twelve hours per week for individual counseling.

#### ****GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY****

Interns participate in all phases of establishing a psychotherapy group for either undergraduate or graduate students, including creative advertising, conducting pre-screenings, co-leading the group with a senior staff member, and (if applicable) providing feedback to a trainee process observer.  The groups currently being co-facilitated by interns are a general process group, a women’s empowerment group for survivors of unwanted sexual contact, a social anxiety group, a body image group, a stress management group, and a support group for students to address gender and identity concerns.  Interns may also become involved in support groups or other treatment groups for specific clinical issues as needs arise. The year culminates in a presentation given to senior staff in which interns have the opportunity to consolidate theory and practice.  For more information about the groups currently offered at the Center please see the group therapy webpage: <http://counseling.cua.edu/services/group-therapy.cfm> .

#### ****INTAKE INTERVIEWS AND ASSESSMENT****

Like other trainees and senior staff, the interns conduct weekly intake assessments.  The intake consists of a 50-minute interview/assessment used to determine the best treatment for clients.  The intake counselor is responsible for determining the presenting problem, assessing the severity of the problem, gathering relevant history, judging the need for timely interventions, evaluating safety needs, and discussing the treatment options that are available.  Intake counselors write an Intake Evaluation that becomes part of the client’s record.  Staff are responsible for a specific number of intake appointments per week; each intern’s schedule provides for two intakes per week.  Interns are trained as needed in use of the Suicide Status Form-IV-R, a brief alcohol assessment (AUDIT), and Counseling Center Assessment of Psychological Symptoms (CCAPS).

#### ****CRISIS INTERVENTION****

Interns are expected to respond to crises experienced by their own clients.  Assistance is always available to the intern in those instances where an emergency situation requires hospitalization or other atypical measures.  Interns are also responsible for carrying the Counseling Center’s after-hours on-call cell phone for two weeks each semester (in rotation with the rest of the senior staff) and are trained in responding to off-hours emergencies.

#### ****SUPERVISION OF EXTERNS****

The staff is very committed to training and believes that learning to supervise others is an integral part of professional development.  During the fall and spring semesters, each intern (along with a senior staff member) co-leads either a weekly supervision group for externs or a weekly case conference for externs.  In this role each intern is supervised by his or her senior staff co-leader.  Interns meet regularly with their co-leaders as part of training in supervision.  Interns participate in a group supervision of supervision seminar led by a senior staff member every other week.

#### ****SUPERVISION OF PRACTICUM STUDENTS****

**Interns will also have the opportunity to supervise 1-2 practicum students during the fall and spring semesters. The practicum students are second year clinical psychology doctoral students. Interns will serve as the secondary supervisor for the practicum students and will meet with them for one hour on an alternating every other week basis.**

#### ****SUPERVISION****

Interns receive a variety of supervision experiences. Interns each select a primary supervisor with whom they meet for two hours per week for the full year.  Interns also select a secondary supervisor with whom they meet for one hour per week, choosing a new secondary supervisor each semester.  Interns meet weekly with a third supervisor for an hour of group supervision. During the fall and spring semesters, interns meet every other week with a fourth supervisor who provides supervision of interns’ supervision of practicum clinicians.  Interns receive supervision in group therapy and in (extern) group supervision by their group co-leader and group supervision co-leader, respectively.  Interns also meet weekly with the Director of Internship Training to maintain an open dialogue on training and to address professional development needs.

#### ****INTERNSHIP TRAINING SEMINAR****

Every week, a two-hour seminar is conducted by a senior staff member or other skilled clinician/professional from the DC/VA/MD area.  Seminar topics have included grief and loss, eating disorders, CBT for panic disorder, private practice, outreach, crisis intervention, and many other topics.  Interns are invited to request topics to be covered in these seminars.

#### ****CULTURE IN PRACTICE SEMINAR****

It is widely accepted that culture is inextricably intertwined with psychotherapy.  This every other week applied seminar (weekly over the summer) approaches culture as a broad construct with many dimensions, and endeavors to integrate cultural theories and self-exploration with current clinical practice.

#### ****EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE SEMINAR****

This every other week seminar provides interns with best practice models for the treatment of various symptomatology and disorders through current literature and research. Interns also gain the opportunity to integrate some of these treatment models into their clinical work.

#### ****GROUP THERAPY SEMINAR****

This every other week seminar is designed to help interns develop in their roles as group leader. It is also aimed at developing core group counseling skills, increasing interns’ knowledge base around group therapy dynamics, and providing the tools and skill set to independently start a psychotherapy group.

#### ****SUPERVISION OF SUPERVISION SEMINAR****

In this every other week (during the academic year) seminar, interns will examine the major theoretical and research developments in supervision, and facilitate the development of basic supervisory skills and techniques in their own supervisory work. Portions of each seminar meeting will also be devoted to discussion and exploration of the interns’ current supervision meetings with extern and practicum trainees.

#### ****OUTREACH AND CONSULTATION SEMINAR****

This bimonthly didactic seminar on outreach and consultation is provided to interns with an emphasis on increasing knowledge and understanding of relevant theories and philosophies that then inform programming efforts and design to better respond to and meet the needs of the campus community.

#### ****CONSULTATION WITH THE STAFF PSYCHIATRIC NURSE PRACTITIONER****

Each intern sits in every third week (rotating with the other two interns) with the staff psychiatric nurse practitioner.  During this consultation, the intern observes and assists the psychiatric nurse practitioner in medical evaluations and follow-up appointments and in the preparation of case notes and reports.  Interns learn about the integration of therapy and psychopharmacology and how to collaborate with psychiatric providers.

#### ****OUTREACH & CONSULTATION****

Interns engage with members of the campus community on multiple levels.  If there is a crisis on campus that involves a residence hall, the intern, with the assistance of a senior staff member, may respond to that emergency.  Each intern is also required to create and deliver one outreach program per semester during the academic year on campus (usually, but not always, within normal working hours) that is tailored to the needs of students, faculty, or the Counseling Center staff.  Presentations have included a variety of topics such as supporting students with historically marginalized identities, healthy relationships, eating disorders, and depression/anxiety.  If an intern has a desire to concentrate in this area, they are able to shadow the director of outreach and to assist externs in providing outreach services to the university community.

#### ****DIVERSITY LIAISON RELATIONSHIPS****

In order to increase the richness of the training experience and better serve the campus community, we have developed relationships with three separate entities on campus that assist underserved populations where interns serve as the primary liaison (e.g. The Center for Cultural Engagement, International Student Scholar Services, and CUAllies). During the year, interns coordinate with these offices/organizations on different outreach activities. In addition, interns are able to provide support and guidance to staff members from these offices/organizations if a psychological crisis arises.

**SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT**

Each intern will manage a social media platform (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) and be responsible for maintaining an online presence for the Counseling Center. This can include providing information on relevant campus mental health topics, advertising outreach events, and offering psychoeducation to vulnerable populations.

#### ****PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT****

Interns meet with the Director of Internship Training weekly for ongoing professional development review. This covers aspects of adjusting to the agency, building one’s professional identity, support around post-doctoral or job search applications and interviews, preparing for the EPPP, navigating licensure, and any other areas that may arise for the interns. Interns participate in senior staff meetings and case presentations.  Outside experts are occasionally brought into the agency to provide consultation and advanced training, and interns join senior staff in these presentations.  Interns are encouraged to attend other training opportunities geared toward professional development during their internship year.

**Evaluation Procedures**

**In the beginning of the spring semester and again near the end of the internship year, interns are given formal feedback about their professional skills and performances. Evaluations are written by all staff members who supervise interns, and interns write evaluations for each of their clinical supervisors. The evaluations are communicated to the intern both verbally and in writing, and they are ultimately forwarded to the Training Director. As a part of this process, group and individual supervisors may exchange information and/or perceptions about the progress of interns. In addition to evaluation of the interns, we ask interns to evaluate the program and their experiences at the Center. Evaluations are viewed as critical aspects of training and allow individuals to maximize their strengths and develop new competencies.**

**Sample Weekly Schedule**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Activity** | **Hours/Week** |
| Direct Face-to-Face Clinical Service Activities |  |
| Individual, assessment client hours | 12.0 |
| Intake interviews | 2.0 |
| Group therapy  Group therapy session (2.0) | 2.0 |
| Weekly emergency response hours | 2.0 |
| ***Total Direct Clinical Hours*** | ***18*** |
| Supervision Received |  |
| Primary supervision of individual therapy, intakes, assessment, crisis intervention | 2.0 |
| Supervision w/ secondary supervisor | 1.0 |
| Intern supervision group | 1.0 |
| Supervision of group therapy | 1.0 |
| Supervision meeting following extern group (with group co-leader) | 0.5 |
| ***Total Supervision Received*** | ***5.5*** |
| TRAINING SEMINARS |  |
| Meeting w/ Training Director: Professional Development Seminar | 1.0 |
| Intern seminar (Friday seminar presentations) | 2.0 |
| Supervision Seminar/biweekly | .5 |
| Culture in Practice Seminar/biweekly | .5 |
| Group Therapy Seminar/biweekly | .5 |
| Evidence Based Practice Seminar/biweekly | .5 |
| ***Total Training (Supervision and Seminars)*** | ***10.5*** |
| Providing Training to Students |  |
| Provide supervision to externs in group format | 2.0 |
| Provide supervision to practicum students | 1.0 |
| ***Total Provision of Training*** | ***3.0*** |
| Outreach and Consultation |  |
| Consultation/Outreach (avg. weekly) | 1.0 |
| Outreach/Consult. Supervision and Administration | 1.0 |
| ***Total Outreach, Consult, Admin*** | ***2.0*** |
| Other |  |
| Administrative time | 3.75 |
| Staff meeting | 2.0 |
| Psychiatric Provider Rotation and Periodic Consultation | 0.25 |
| ***Total Other*** | ***6.5*** |
| ***Grand total*** | **40.0** |

#### ****Qualifications, Application Procedures and Selection Procedures****

**Qualifications of Candidates**

Candidates must be enrolled in an **APA Accredited** doctoral program in counseling or clinical psychology. All formal course work and comprehensive exams for the doctorate should be completed, including supervised practicum courses in counseling/psychotherapy by the internship start date. In addition, all candidates must complete a minimum of **350** intervention hours prior to the submission of their applications. *Note that this minimum was reduced to accommodate training challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic.* Please see the information posted about our site on appic.org for more information.

**Application Procedures**

**Please use APPIC’s online application process (**[**http://www.appic.org**](http://www.appic.org/)**) and include the following:**

         **A current curriculum vitae**

         **Official transcripts of all graduate work**

         **Three (3) letters of reference**

**Our site participates in the APPIC Match process and abides by the Match policies:** [**http://www.natmatch.com/psychint/**](http://www.natmatch.com/psychint/) **.**

**APPIC Number: 1910**

**Fall Deadline: Friday, November 11, 2022**

**Selection Procedures**

Competitive candidates will be offered interview via videoconferencing (Zoom). These interviews provide the candidates an opportunity to meet our staff and learn more about the theoretical orientations of the clinicians, styles of supervision, professional activities offered, and overall feel of the agency. Students from historically marginalized backgrounds are especially encouraged to apply. APPIC matches are contingent upon successful completion of standard criminal background checks.

**For additional information, please contact:**

**Mark LaSota, Ph.D.**  
**Director of Internship Training**  
**Counseling Center**

**620 Michigan Ave. NE**  
**Catholic University of America**  
**Washington, DC 20064**

**(202) 319-5765**

**Email:** [**Dr. Mark LaSota**](mailto:lasota@cua.edu)

**Internship Benefits and Stipend**

**Stipend**

The internship is for a one-year period from August 1, 2023, to July 31, 2024.  There is a $43,488/year stipend.

**Benefits**

Basic employee benefits include use of Dufour Athletic Center and use of the Metro Library Consortium. Catholic University Staff level health insurance is available as part of employment as an intern. Interns receive 12 paid vacation days and 12 paid sick days during their internship. Interns are encouraged to take the majority of their vacation time during the summer months, when it is least disruptive to the functioning of the Counseling Center and to the care of our clients.

**Liability**

We ask that interns carry their own professional liability insurance coverage. Malpractice insurance is available for student members of the American Psychological Association at a relatively low cost; the Counseling Center will pay the cost of this insurance.

#### ****Senior Staff 2022-2023****

**Full-Time Staff**

Deirdre Gaughan, Psy.D.

Staff Psychologist and Director of Outreach

Sonja Johansson, Psy.D.

Staff Psychologist

Mark LaSota, Ph.D.

Staff Psychologist and Director of Internship Training

Frances Mallari, M.Phil.

Senior Staff Clinician

Monroe Rayburn, Ph.D.

Director, Counseling Center

Allyson Shaffer, L.I.C.S.W.

Staff Social Worker and Director of Externship Training

**Part-Time Staff**

Karen Miller, L.I.C.S.W.

Staff Social Worker

**Specialty Staff**

Mallory Marse, B.A.

Administrative Assistant

Morgan McDonald, M.A.

Psychometrist

Ali Phillips, MSN, APRN, PMHNP-BC

Staff Psychiatric Nurse Practitioner

For more information on the staff, please see the following webpage <http://counseling.cua.edu/about/staff.cfm>

**Other Important Information**

#### ****A Brief History of the Training Program****

The doctoral internship program was first launched in 2003. The internship was established in order to provide intern level clinicians with a training experience that would help them grow both as clinicians and as professionals. The training staff at that time valued an integrative approach to treatment. This value has persisted throughout the evolution of the internship program. The program first became a member of APPIC in 2005. In 2010 the internship was accredited by the APA’s Committee on Accreditation. After receiving accreditation, the internship expanded from two interns to three interns in 2010. Following the most recent site visit in 2020, the internship was reaccredited by the APA through 2030 for the maximum of 10 years! It is the Center’s hope the internship program will continue the tradition of providing high quality training for emerging professionals that was originally established in the 2003.

#### ****Commitment to Training****

For over 40 years, the Center has provided training opportunities for graduate level clinicians. In addition to the intern program, the Center provides training opportunities for both psychology doctoral students and graduate level social work students. Currently, the Center has a highly competitive *externship* training program which is comprised of graduate students from regional universities. The current externship class includes 6 advanced psychology doctoral students and 4 second year social work graduate students. Additionally, the Center maintains a positive and mutually beneficial relationship with the Clinical Psychology Doctoral program at Catholic University. Each year, between 4-6 second year practicum students associated with the Catholic University clinical psychology doctoral program see clients at the center.

The Internship program plays an important role in the training of the graduate trainees at Catholic University, serving as both mentors and co-supervisors. For more information on the supervision opportunities interns have please see training activities section of our website.

#### ****Location****

The Catholic University of America is located in Northeast Washington DC. The University has a Metro station (CUA/Brookland) located adjacent to the southeast corner of the University. The Metro stop is conveniently located on the Redline and is just a few short stops away from landmarks such as Union Station, Gallery Place, Downtown DC, and The White House. The Counseling Center itself is located on the first floor in O’Boyle Hall. O’Boyle Hall was built in 1899 on top of a hill overlooking the campus. Despite the fact that the building is over 100 years old, it has received several upgrades over the years and is now furnished with many modern amenities such as Wi-Fi and smart classrooms. It is also important to note that each intern is given their own personal office for the year at the beginning of their internship.

#### ****Interesting Fact****

The largest solar panel structure in Washington DC, featuring more than 2600 solar panels, is located at Catholic University, directly above the parking lot behind the Counseling Center.

#### Frequently Asked Questions

#### ****What types of clients will I see at during my internship year?****

At the Counseling Center, we typically see the majority of clients who seek our services. Only a small percentage of clients (i.e., 3-5%) are referred out due to a need for more specialized care than our treatment model might accommodate. Typically, interns will have the opportunity to provide both time-limited and long-term treatment to clients for a broad range of issues. Some of the most common symptom presentations include: mood disorders (depression and bipolar disorder), anxiety (including GAD, OCD, panic, social phobia), trauma, adjustment, attention-deficit/hyperactivity, eating disorders, autism spectrum, stress, suicidal ideation, self-injury behaviors, distress tolerance, personality disorders, relational problems, bereavement, and religious or spiritual problems.

#### ****Will I have a diverse caseload?****

At the Counseling Center, we have worked hard to reach underserved populations on campus. Interns tend to have a diverse caseload throughout their internship year. Statistically speaking, over the past few years, the percentage of individuals identified as ethnic minorities seen by interns has ranged from 25% to 44%. In addition, interns frequently work with clients who have less visible minority statuses such as first generation college students, various faith traditions, students struggling with LGBTQIAA issues, as well as students from less economically privileged backgrounds.

#### ****How long can I work with clients?****

Interns have the opportunity to work with clients on both a long-term and short-term basis. Full-time Catholic University students are eligible to receive up to 45 individual therapy sessions at the Center. Currently, as a way to manage service demand and minimize a long wait for therapy, clients are able to be seen for 10 weekly sessions before a shift to biweekly sessions for the remainder of the year. In recent years, the average length of treatment for clients during the year was around 8-9 sessions.

#### ****What do interns do after they complete the internship program?****

The internship program is committed to helping interns take the next step in their careers. Once we were accredited by the APA in 2010, essentially all of our former interns who sought positions acquired them shortly (if not immediately) after completion of internship. Reasons for not seeking immediate positions included taking time to finalize dissertation defense and to start a family. In recent years, interns have been very competitive at securing postdoctoral and early career positions. The most common initial positions include independent private practice, group practice, and university counseling centers. Other interns have sought research/faculty positions, work in VA/hospital settings, and consulting work. With rich connections to a local and regional community of mental health practitioners, interns have access to broad supportive resources to help navigate the next steps in their professional journey.

#### ****Does Catholic University require criminal background checks?****

YES: Catholic University requires a background check that verifies that candidates have no criminal or other record that would preclude employment in the University's judgment. These background checks will be conducted following the APPIC Match, and offers will be contingent upon successfully completing the background check. A full explanation of this policy is available at <http://policies.cua.edu/employment/backgroundinvestigation.cfm>

#### ****How difficult is it to relocate to Washington DC?****

Although Washington DC is an expensive city, there are affordable living options in the vicinity of campus. Because Catholic University is located on the Metro’s Red Line, this provides interns with access to affordable housing in both DC and Maryland. For more information please take a look at Catholic University’s off campus website <http://housing.cua.edu/offcampus.cfm>

#### ****What are the staff dynamics like at the Center?****

The staff at our Center is comprised of four full-time psychologists, one full-time licensed social worker, one full-time senior staff clinician, one part-time psychiatric nurse practitioner, and one part-time licensed social worker. The staff is collegial and maintains an open-door policy. Interns are encouraged to collaborate with staff from different disciplines in order to broaden their training experience.

#### ****When will interviews take place?****

Interviews will likely begin on December 19th - 20th of 2022 and conclude the week of January 3rd – 6th of 2023.  All interviews will take place via Zoom. The applicants are interviewed by the entire staff and one of the interns.  Staff members interview the intern applicants in teams of two or three interviewers.  Each interview lasts approximately 50 minutes.  The entire interview process lasts approximately three hours, including an opportunity to meet with current interns to ask more informal questions.

#### ****Who should I contact if my question is not answered above?****

Please contact [Dr. Mark LaSota](mailto:lasota@cua.edu) if you have further questions and he will respond to your inquiries.