



## VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center Psychology Internship Program

VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center  
Psychology Service

351 E. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Phone: (213)253-2677 ext. 24837

<https://www.losangeles.va.gov/trainee/>

**APPIC MATCH NUMBER 113911**

**Applications Due: Nov 1, 2020 (EST)**

Hello Prospective Applicants! Congratulations on achieving this level of your psychology training. We are glad that you are considering completing your doctoral internship at a VA, and more specifically at our site. We hope the following information will help you get to know our site, our staff, and our unique internship program. Best wishes on your internship application process!

### Accreditation Status

The doctoral internship program in psychology at VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center (LAACC) is fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) of the American Psychological Association (APA). We have been continually accredited by APA since 1977 and our most recent re-accreditation cycle granted us 10 years of accreditation, to be reviewed again in 2028.

CoA is located at 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242, and their telephone number is 202-336-5979.

### Application Procedures

Applications for full-time doctoral internship positions in clinical psychology will be accepted from students who are enrolled in doctoral programs in clinical or counseling psychology that are accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA). The training program is funded to support **four** full-time internship positions. The 2021-2022 internship year will begin on August 2, 2021.

Applications must be submitted through the AAPI Online portal by midnight **Eastern Standard Time (EST)** on November 1, 2020, and must include the following:

1. Completed on-line APPIC Application for Psychology Internship (AAPI) , see [www.appic.org](http://www.appic.org) and click "on-line application."
2. Site-specific cover letter

3. Three (3) letters of recommendation from faculty members and practicum supervisors with whom you have worked. Letters are to be uploaded through the AAPI Reference Portal.
4. Curriculum Vitae
5. Transcripts from all graduate programs attended

We abide by the APPIC policy that no person at this training facility will solicit, accept, or use any ranking-related information from any intern. We also participate in the APPIC Internship Matching Program. To apply, please register for the Match using the online registration system at [www.natmatch.com/psychint](http://www.natmatch.com/psychint). Our program code number is 113911.

***Please contact the Director of Training if you have any questions:***

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## **Impact of COVID-19 on Training**

The COVID-19 pandemic has created numerous personal and professional challenges for us all. One of these challenges is uncertainty about what will happen next week, next month, and especially one year from now.

The VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center Psychology Training Program has prided itself on its transparency, providing detailed and accurate information about our program and training opportunities. With COVID-19, transparency means we cannot definitively predict how specific rotations or adjunctive training opportunities may evolve for the 2021-2022 training year.

With confidence, we can say that there will likely continue to be more telehealth and technology-based delivery platforms than was being utilized prior to the pandemic. We do not expect there to be any significant changes to the base clinical services or populations served through rotations and adjunctive experiences described in our materials.

Although a lot happened this spring and summer with all trainees and many staff abruptly shifting to providing clinical services and training remotely, our dedication to high-quality clinical care and psychology training, and our dedication to the trainees themselves has never been stronger. These will always be cornerstone elements of the VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center Psychology Training Program.

We will update our public materials as we know more about what will be for the 2021-2022 training year. Please feel free to reach out to us if you have any questions.

## **Internship Admissions and Selection Process**

Efforts are made to select interns consistent with the mission and values of LAACC and the population we serve. Our selection criterion are based on a goodness-of-fit model; we consider academic background, clinical experience and personal characteristics, as well as professional goals consistent with our training opportunities and clinical setting.

We require that applicants' doctoral-level training includes experiences providing direct, face-to-face psychological services to diverse adult populations treating a variety of presenting conditions. The ideal candidate has experience with complex presentations. We seek applicants with experience in clinical interviewing, individual and group psychotherapy, and psychodiagnostic assessment (at least 400 intervention and 100 assessment hours). Applicants must be U.S. citizens in good standing at a clinical, counseling, or combined psychology doctoral program accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA), Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) or Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System (PCSAS). In addition, applicants must have completed all coursework and been approved for internship by the graduate program training director. All coursework required for the doctoral degree must be completed prior to the start of the internship year, as well as any qualifying or comprehensive doctoral examinations and approval of the dissertation proposal. Given the demands of the program, we prefer that the doctoral dissertation is well under way or completed prior to the start of the internship year.

LAACC psychology staff greatly value individual and cultural diversity and social justice. We endeavor to form an internship class with individuals from a wide range of backgrounds, interests, and life experiences. Ideal applicants engage in regular self-reflection, are committed to providing patient-centered care, and bring an openness to, respect for, and appreciation of working with diverse populations.

Department of Veterans Affairs is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We honor our policy prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex (including gender identity, sexual orientation, and pregnancy), age, disability, genetic information, marital status, and parental status. It is the policy of VA to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The Director of Training must receive completed applications no later than November 1, 2020. Our training staff will review all submitted materials and meet to complete our initial application screening. Clinical and academic interests, quality of practicum training experiences, letters of recommendation and educational background, as well as personal qualities communicated in application materials are all considered in determining fit with our fast-paced, internship program located in downtown Los Angeles. Following review, all applicants will be notified whether they remain under consideration by December 15, 2020. Qualified applicants will be invited to participate in virtual interviews (via telecommunication) in January 2021. Typically, we offer four interview dates to choose from. Each day consists of orientation with the Director of Training, introductions to psychology staff, and individual interviews with supervisors and current interns. Following individual interviews, applicants will have opportunity to ask any additional questions of all current interns and Director of Training. We will make every effort to maintain the ample opportunities to meet training staff and get a feel for the program over telecommunication.

<b>Does the program require that applicants have received a minimum number of hours of the following at time of application? If Yes, indicate how many:</b>		
Total Direct Contact Intervention Hours	Y	Amount: 400
Total Direct Contact Assessment Hours	Y	Amount: 100
<b>Describe any other required minimum criteria used to screen applicants:</b>		
N/A		

## Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for our program you must be in good standing at an American Psychological Association (APA) or Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) accredited graduate program in Clinical, Counseling, or Combined psychology or Psychological Clinical Science Accreditation System (PCSAS) accredited program in Clinical Science. Persons with a doctorate in another area of psychology who meet the APA or CPA criteria for respecialization training in Clinical, Counseling, or Combined Psychology are also eligible. You must be approved for internship status by your graduate Director of Clinical Training. We also require that applicants have successfully completed their dissertation proposal prior to the application deadline. Applicants should have 400 hours of supervised experience in direct intervention and 100 hours of assessment experience at the time of application. If you have fewer than those hours at the time of application, but will be accruing substantial hours before the internship start date, please indicate that in the application materials.

### Other VA-wide eligibility requirements include:

1. U.S. citizenship. VA is unable to consider applications from anyone who is not currently a U.S. citizen. Verification of citizenship is required following selection. All interns and fellows must complete a Certification of Citizenship in the United States prior to beginning VA training.
2. A male applicant born after 12/31/1959 must have registered for the draft by age 26 to be eligible for any US government employment, including selection as a paid VA trainee. Male applicants must sign a pre-appointment Certification Statement for Selective Service Registration before they can be processed into a training program. Exceptions can be granted only by the US Office of Personnel Management and are very rarely granted.
3. Interns are subject to fingerprinting and background checks. Match result and selection decisions are contingent on passing these screens.
4. VA training occurs in a health care setting. Some of the patients served by VA are elderly or infirm and could succumb to common illnesses like influenza. It is important to be able to document that your vaccinations are up to date and that you have been screened for active tuberculosis prior to starting your training at VA or other hospitals. Securing a statement from university student health center, your regular health provider, or an urgent care clinic can expedite your appointment. Additionally, maintaining a current flu vaccination during the training year (or taking additional preventative measures to limit patient exposure to the flu) will be required. Please discuss this with the program training director after you have matched and well before to your start date to facilitate your onboarding.

For more information, please visit <http://www.psychologytraining.va.gov/eligibility.asp>

## Financial and Other Benefit Support for Upcoming Training Year

### Internship Program Tables

Date Program Tables were updated: 7/12/20

Annual Stipend/Salary for Full-time Interns	\$29,817
Annual Stipend/Salary for Half-time Interns	N/A
Program provides access to medical insurance for intern?	Yes
<b>If access to medical insurance is provided:</b>	
Trainee contribution to cost required?	Yes
Coverage of family member(s) available?	Yes
Coverage of legally married partner available?	Yes
Coverage of domestic partner available?	No
Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off (PTO and/or Vacation) (4 hours accrued every 2 weeks)	104
Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave (4 hours accrued every 2 weeks)	104
In the event of medical conditions and/or family needs that require extended leave, does the program allow reasonable unpaid leave to interns/residents in excess of personal time off and sick leave?	Yes
Other Benefits (please describe): - Interns are also eligible for life insurance, as well supplemental dental and vision insurance. - Interns also receive 80 hours of federal holiday leave	

### Post-Internship Activities

Because of the generalist nature of our internship program, interns are prepared for postdoctoral residencies in a number of different sub-specialty areas. Interns from LAACC have been highly competitive for postdoctoral positions. Below is a table listing the initial post-internship positions for the preceding 3 cohorts (2017-18 through 2019-20):

#### Initial Post-Internship Positions

	2017-2020	
Total # of interns who were in the 3 cohorts	12	
Total # of interns who did not seek employment because they returned to their doctoral program/are completing doctoral degree	0	
	PD	EP
Community mental health center	0	0
Federally qualified health center	0	0
Independent primary care facility/clinic	0	0
University counseling center	0	0
Veterans Affairs medical center	9	0
Military health center	0	0

Academic health center	1	0
Other medical center or hospital	0	0
Psychiatric hospital	0	0
Academic university/department	0	0
Community college or other teaching setting	0	0
Independent research institution	0	0
Correctional facility	0	0
School district/system	0	0
Independent practice setting	2	0
Not currently employed	0	0
Changed to another field	0	0
Other	0	0
Unknown	0	0

Note: "PD" = Postdoctoral residency position; "EP" = Employed Position

Postdoctoral Residency Positions for Interns from the 2017-18 through 2019-20 Classes:

- Advanced Mental Health Interprofessional Residency, VA Long Beach Healthcare System
- Chronic Pain Management Postdoctoral Residency, VA Phoenix Healthcare System
- Chronic Pain Postdoctoral Fellowship, Kaiser Permanente-San Francisco
- Health Psychology and HIV Postdoctoral Residencies at Harbor UCLA Medical Center (multiple interns)
- Health Psychology Postdoctoral Residency, VA West Los Angeles
- Holistic Mental Health Postdoctoral Residency, VA Loma Linda Healthcare Center
- Homeless Mental Health/SUD Postdoctoral Residency, VA West Los Angeles
- Integrated Care for Homeless Veterans, VA West Los Angeles Healthcare Center
- Integrated Care and Behavioral Medicine Fellowship, VA Northern California HCS
- PTSD Focus Postdoctoral Residency, VA Palo Alto Healthcare System
- PTSD/SUD Postdoctoral Fellowship at Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center
- Stanford University Sleep Health and Insomnia Postdoctoral Residency
- Women’s Mental Health and Trauma Postdoctoral Residency at VA San Francisco

For those who prefer to seek employment versus a formal postdoctoral residency, our alumni have had considerable success obtaining jobs in a variety of settings such as the VA (as a graduate psychologist), prison system, community mental health, and private practice. Lastly, a high percentage of our staff were psychology interns at LAACC. A number of additional intern alumni hold staff psychologist positions through the Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System.

**Program Setting**



VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center (LAACC) is an outpatient care clinic located in downtown Los Angeles. Our clinic is part of the VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System (VAGLAHS), serving approximately 1.4 million Veterans in the central and southern California region. VAGLAHS has the largest number of healthcare trainees in the VA system and consists of one flagship medical center (West Los Angeles Healthcare Center), two ambulatory care facilities (Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center and

Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center), and eight community-based outpatient clinics (Bakersfield, East Los Angeles, Lancaster, Oxnard, Santa Barbara, San Gabriel Valley, Santa Maria, and San Luis Obispo). VAGLAHS is part of the larger VA Desert Pacific Healthcare Network (VISN22), serving Veterans who live in California and Nevada.

LAACC is a dynamic and exciting place to work. Located in the heart of downtown Los Angeles, the clinic is situated in one of the most diverse cities in the nation. Veterans who come to LAACC represent a wide variety of cultural backgrounds. Recent statistics show that the Veteran population at LAACC is approximately 46% White, 30% Black or African-American, 24% Latinx, and 8% Asian and Pacific Islander, with 14% unknown or declined to answer. Our clinic serves all socioeconomic levels; however, the majority of Veterans whose data was reported have low incomes. Within this population of Veterans, trainees at LAACC have the opportunity to work with specific groups, including serving the unique needs of women Veterans, LGBTQ Veterans, and homeless Veterans. Staff at LAACC also represent many different cultural groups and the clinic celebrates the diversity of its staff.

LAACC provides comprehensive medical and mental health services to its Veteran population. The thirteen full-time (with and three part-time psychologists on staff at LAACC coordinate the following mental health programs: Addictive Behaviors Clinic (ABC), Behavioral Medicine program, psychology services of the Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team (HPACT), Mental Health Clinic (MHC), Neuropsychology and Geropsychology assessment services, Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC), Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI), Trauma Recovery Services (TRS), and the Women's Mental Health Program. TRS includes services provided at LAACC, as well as a formal PTSD Clinical Team located at our satellite clinic in East Los Angeles.

Our mission is to provide training that prepares interns for the practice of clinical psychology. We aim to train interns in a wide variety of clinical psychological services and prepare them for successful entry into a postdoctoral residency or entry-level clinical psychology position. With this in mind, we provide generalist training in a wide spectrum of outpatient services. We offer practical experience, didactic training, and intensive supervision in order to help our interns become competent and prepared for the professional practice of psychology.

## **Local Information**

LAACC is located in downtown Los Angeles, in the middle of the cultural, financial, and political hub of metropolitan Los Angeles, an area that extends west to Santa Monica, south to the Port of Los Angeles, north to the San Gabriel Mountains, and east to Whittier. Our clinic is adjacent to Olvera Street, Little Tokyo, and Chinatown, and is very close to the Arts District. Our location is in the midst of a physical and socio-cultural renaissance. Businesses, shopping, restaurants, recreation, and cultural centers now dominate the area around the clinic. The Geffen Contemporary Art Museum, the Japanese American Museum, the Music Center (Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, Ahmanson Theatre, and Mark Taper Forum), the Disney Performing Hall (home to the LA Philharmonic), the financial and garment districts, and the jewelry center are all within walking distance of the clinic.

Our interns take advantage of all that Los Angeles has to offer. They have resided in many different areas of LA through the years, including Pasadena, Santa Monica, Hollywood, downtown Los Angeles, and the San Fernando Valley. Union Station, the main train station servicing the Metropolitan Los

Angeles area, is also walking distance from our clinic thereby facilitating staff and interns to use public transportation and “go green.” In some ways, our location couldn’t be better since the VA subsidizes public transportation expenses.

***If you are interested in further information regarding downtown Los Angeles, please visit:***

[www.lacity.org](http://www.lacity.org)

## **Training Model and Program Philosophy**

The philosophy of the LAACC internship program is that internship is a time for applied clinical experiences and training based on current psychological science. Our training year prepares our interns to “wear many different hats” and depart from our program ready for postdoctoral residency or entry-level practice utilizing evidence-based psychological practice and providing high quality care rooted in understanding of the cultural and individual level differences affecting health and health care. An important principle of our program is that training and supervision is a priority. We view delivery of services as the platform upon which interns’ learning takes place and provide generalist training and supervision in support of this learning.

Our internship provides training according to a scientist-practitioner model, placing a strong value on scientific knowledge and inquiry. We offer a supervision-rich atmosphere, and interns have the opportunity to work with many different staff members who are very committed to training. Students are exposed to a variety of supervision orientations and while supervision styles vary, the quality of supervision is regularly regarded as one of the program’s signature strengths.

At LAACC, interns are well-respected by the psychology training staff as well as by staff from a variety of other disciplines and departments. We believe that training is best provided through good working relationships and mutual respect. We work beside our interns every day (staying in close contact and maintaining availability, even while working remotely and via telehealth channels). While they are on internship, we support interns as advanced practitioners while embracing them with support through numerous opportunities for supervision and learning. Our goal is to help interns attain the competence and confidence they will need to take the next step in their careers, by providing them with diverse challenges relevant to the profession of psychology. We believe that we are successful in this mission because of the success of our alumni who have secured a wide variety of positions as practicing psychologists, many of them within our own clinic and the VA healthcare system.

## **Program Competencies & Goals**

### **COMPETENCIES**

The nine profession-wide competencies that we consider central to internship training at our site, consistent with APA’s Standards of Accreditation, are as follows:

#### **Intervention**

This competency includes the development and maintenance of effective therapeutic relationships, the establishment of evidence-based intervention plans specific to service delivery goals, and the application of relevant research in clinical decision-making. Interns will demonstrate competency in providing evidence-based individual and group interventions that are informed by assessment findings, therapeutic goals, context, culture, and the scientific literature.

They will also evaluate the effectiveness of their interventions and adapt their approach effectiveness using appropriate methods or measures, and modify the approach as appropriate

### **Assessment**

Interns will be able to select and apply appropriate assessment methods based on the scientific literature, the referral question and goals for assessment, and relevant diversity characteristics. Test interpretation, case conceptualization, and recommendations will be informed by current research and professional standards, and information will be obtained from multiple sources. Interns are expected to demonstrate the ability to communicate findings and recommendations in an accurate, effective manner.

### **Ethical and Legal Standards**

This competency includes knowing and acting in accordance with all professional ethics, laws, regulations, standards, and guidelines governing health service psychology. Interns will recognize ethical dilemmas when they arise and apply ethical decision-making to resolve them appropriately. Interns are expected to conduct themselves ethically in all professional activities.

### **Individual and Cultural Diversity**

This competency requires interns to demonstrate and apply an understanding of individual and cultural diversity in psychological assessment, treatment, consultation, supervision, and research. Interns are expected to reflect on how their own social identities and culture/diversity characteristics impact relationships with others. Interns are also expected to work effectively **with all areas of individual and cultural diversity** and provide competent care for individuals whose cultural identity/worldview conflict with their own (e.g. race, religion, sexual orientation, ability status, gender identity, national origin, etc.). To support trainees in this work, interns will attend diversity seminars that include diversity related didactics, regular case presentations/consultations, and self-reflection on their own reactions and interactions with others. Interns will also be asked to complete a semi-formal presentation on a topic of their choice related to diversity/culture.

### **Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors**

For this competency, interns are expected to act in ways that reflect the values and attitudes of the profession, including integrity, comportment, professional identity, accountability, and concern for the welfare of others. They will engage in self-reflection regarding their own personal and professional functioning, and work to improve performance and wellbeing. They will demonstrate an openness and responsiveness to supervision and feedback and develop greater independence as they progress across the training year.

### **Communication and Interpersonal Skills**

This competency involves developing and maintaining effective relationships with patients, peers, supervisors, staff members, and professionals from other disciplines. Interns are expected to use effective interpersonal skills and manage difficult communication well. This competency also includes the effective use of verbal, nonverbal, and written communication skills, and a thorough understanding of professional language.

### **Consultation and Interprofessional/Interdisciplinary Skills**

This competency includes a knowledge and respect for the roles and perspectives of other disciplines. Interns will demonstrate the ability to function effectively as a member of an interprofessional or interdisciplinary team and to engage in the practice of consultation with individuals/families, other healthcare professionals, interprofessional groups, and/or systems.

### **Supervision**

Interns will demonstrate knowledge of supervision models and practices and apply this knowledge in either direct or simulated practice. Competency in supervision includes awareness and knowledge of ethical and legal issues and cultural/diversity factors as they relate to the supervisory role.

### **Research**

This competency includes the ability to critically evaluate research literature, integrate scientific literature into clinical practice, and disseminate clinical research or engage in other scholarly activities. Interns will apply clinical research findings to clinical decision making, integrate research into case conference presentations, attend seminars and workshops on evidence-based practices, and present current research in the Team Training Seminar.

## **PROGRAM GOALS**

Our program goals are based on our training model, program philosophy, and competency-based supervision. Our goal is to train interns to be generalist clinicians who are competent in these nine areas listed above. Consequently, upon graduation, our interns will be ready to handle the demands of a job as a postdoctoral resident or entry-level psychologist in most mental health settings. Psychologists within the VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center provide a wide variety of psychological services throughout the clinic. Interns are trained to provide these same services, and the staff clearly models the roles that interns are expected to develop.

Interns are provided with training to increase their competency in each of the required areas throughout the training year. For instance, training in the area of individual and cultural diversity is an ongoing year-long practice that is integrated into all other areas of clinical and professional work, explored in supervision, didactics, and the Diversity Seminar. Respect for, and understanding of, the importance of individual and cultural diversity as relates to psychological and professional practice is a core value of the training program at LAACC. Training in ethical and legal standards are also incorporated into the training program year-long, through clinical experiences, supervision, and the weekly Law & Ethics seminar that all interns attend.

Training in assessment includes clinical interviewing, psychodiagnostic assessment, and opportunities for neuropsychological assessment. Students will learn how to administer the VA-wide Mental Health Initial Assessment interview. Interns will also learn how to hone their skills in the administration, scoring, and interpretation of comprehensive test batteries including numerous psychological and cognitive screening tests, as well as neuropsychological tests. Assessment training at LAACC also includes teaching interns to improve skills in assessment report writing, communicating assessment findings, and incorporating test results into case conceptualization and treatment planning.

## Program Structure

Internship activities are structured to provide training in evidence-based assessment, treatment, and consultation for Veterans with behavioral and mental health problems as part of interprofessional teams. We provide a broad range of opportunities, of varying lengths and time commitments. Beginning in 2020, interns at LAACC will participate in two **major** 6-month rotations, which will provide: a) the generalist training needed to implement care for a wide range of psychiatric disorders, and b) the training required to deliver trauma-focused treatments to Veterans who have been exposed to traumatic events across their lifespan. Concurrently, interns will also rotate through two additional **minor** rotations to allow for both breadth and depth of training in other clinics/programs. Interns also will participate in several **year-long** (or almost year-long) clinical activities related to assessment and Behavioral Medicine and have the opportunity to participate in a rich catalogue of **electives** designed for specialized training in an area of the trainee's interests. Additionally, interns will attend didactic and discussion-based **seminars** dedicated to topics such as diversity, law and ethics, research, and supervision. We believe this training structure emphasizes generalist training while allowing room for interns to enhance their knowledge and skills in areas they view as important to their professional development.

Throughout all of these different training experiences, we expect that interns will spend about 12-18 hours per week engaged in direct patient contact. The minimum number of hours of direct patient care expected on internship is 10 hours per week. These hours spent in patient care include conducting psychological assessments, completing intake assessments, providing individual psychotherapy, and facilitating group psychotherapy.

### MAJOR ROTATIONS

The required major rotations provide training in general outpatient mental health (Mental Health Clinic) and trauma-related disorders (Trauma Recovery Services). Given the high prevalence of trauma in both Veteran and general population settings, we believe it to be important that all interns receive training in this area. Interns will spend 16 hours per week in their rotation (two interns are in each rotation at a time), which switches half-way through the year; all interns will rotate through both major rotations. Within each rotation there will be the opportunity to gain experience in assessment, individual and group-based interventions, and interprofessional consultation. Each major rotation will also include at least one hour of individual supervision.

### MINOR ROTATIONS

Interns rotate through two six-month rotations to allow for experience in VA clinics focused on specific populations or intervention models. Interns will spend 8 hours per week in the minor rotation, including one hour of individual supervision. Each intern will rotate through two of the four available minor rotations. Consistent with our generalist model, in minor rotations, interns can gain experience in substance use disorders, primary-care mental health integration (PCMHI), neuropsychology, and women's mental health.

Possible Sample Intern Schedule:

FIRST 6 MONTHS

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
7:30-8		PC-MHI	MHC	MHC	
8:00		PC-MHI	MHC	MHC	
9:00		PC-MHI	MHC	BMED SEM	Assessment
10:00		PC-MHI	MHC	MHC	
11:00	BMED	PC-MHI	MHC	MHC	DIVERSITY
12:00		PC-MHI	MHC	LAW & ETHICS	INTERN LNCH
1:00		PC-MHI	MHC	BMED SUP	
2:00		PC-MHI	MHC	MHC	
3:00		PC-MHI	MHC	MHC	

SECOND 6 MONTHS

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
7:30-8	SUD	TRS	TRS		
8:00	SUD	TRS	TRS		
9:00	SUD	TRS	TRS	BMED SEM	Assessment
10:00	SUD	TRS	TRS		
11:00	SUD	TRS	TRS	BMED	DIVERSITY
12:00	SUD	TRS	TRS	LAW & ETHICS	INTERN LNCH
1:00	SUD	TRS	TRS	BMED SUP	
2:00	SUD	TRS	TRS		
3:00	SUD	TRS	TRS		

**SUPERVISION**

Each intern will receive a minimum of four (4) hours of supervision per week, at least two hours of which includes individual face-to-face (currently over video telecommunication) supervision with rotation supervisors. At least two hours per week will include group supervision with other supervisors (e.g., Behavioral Medicine). Our training program employs a developmental model of training. Specifically, there is more intensive supervision at the outset of the internship and at the beginning of each new rotation, with the goal of increasing the interns' independence and ability to manage increasingly complex situations as their knowledge and skills develop, which is in alignment with our Graduated Levels of Responsibility. Supervision takes place through a number of different modalities, including direct observation, audiotape review, case presentations, role plays/response to vignettes, review of written work, review of test data, observations in interdisciplinary team

meetings, and feedback from other staff members. Interns have the opportunity to observe supervisors providing services in many settings, especially at the start of the rotation, and frequently serve as co-facilitators for group interventions. If social distancing protocols due to the COVID-19 pandemic remain in effect at the time of training, supervision will likely be conducted using remote methods, such as HIPAA-compliant web-based video platforms or via telephone.

## **EVALUATION**

Interns are asked to complete a self-assessment at the beginning of the training year and again at the end of the year, the purpose of which is to promote self-reflection, to identify gaps in training, and plan for ongoing growth and continued acquisition of knowledge post-internship. The self-assessment also assists with the planning and organizing of intern's training goals in consultation with their primary supervisors (primary supervisors are assigned based on current rotation). They receive ongoing informal feedback during their regular supervision about their competency development and how well they are fulfilling their requirements. Interns also routinely discuss how well they are addressing their training goals in supervision with all supervisors.

The internship program encourages ongoing feedback among interns, supervisors, and the Training Committee. Staff members informally review interns' progress at monthly staff meetings. Supervisors and interns complete formal, written, competency-based evaluations at 3-months, 6-months and 12-months and, specifically, at the end of each rotation, with the expectation that feedback in an ongoing process throughout the year. These evaluations encourage communication, identify strengths and weaknesses, and set goals for training. Interns are required to complete evaluations of their supervisors, the rotations, the didactics, and their elective placements. The internship program also solicits feedback from interns on programmatic issues informally throughout the year. Interns are scheduled to meet with the Director of Training on a monthly basis to discuss any problems, concerns, or suggestions for program improvement. Interns complete a formal evaluation and an exit interview with the Director of Training at the completion of the year.

Training records are maintained in a locked cabinet within a locked room and are kept indefinitely. Interns are asked to comment upon the evaluations both orally and in writing. Any disagreements are discussed, and evaluations are modified, as appropriate.

## **PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Professional development is emphasized through a variety of methods including through routine supervision with the primary supervisor, Team Training presentations focused on professional development issues (e.g. postdoctoral applications, licensure, etc.), and intern support lunches with the Director of Training. In addition, our program maintains close contact with former interns in order to help facilitate the transition into professional positions.

## **Training Experiences**

The program consists of a variety of training experiences to develop competency in the following nine areas: psychological intervention (e.g. individual and group psychotherapy), psychological assessment, ethical and legal standards, individual and cultural diversity, professional values, attitudes, and behaviors, communication and interpersonal skills, consultation and interprofessional/interdisciplinary skills, supervision, and research. Training in these competency areas is provided through the programs outlined below.

This transition to rotation-based programming is a new step for the LAACC Psychology Internship Training program, and the staff has been thoughtful about choosing major and minor rotations that will best meet the program's goals and interns' training needs. Given that this structure is new, and we anticipate some staffing additions in the next training year, some of the details are subject to change, but the major components/training experiences should remain stable.

## **MAJOR ROTATIONS**

### **1. Mental Health Clinic (MHC)**

The MHC is an interprofessional clinic designed to meet a wide range of mental health needs for a diverse population of Veterans. Disciplines include psychiatry, psychology, social work, and nursing. In this training setting, interns will work with Veterans presenting with a variety of diagnoses. Referrals come from psychiatry and social work with MHC, Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI), treatment providers outside of mental health and across GLA (i.e., VA Greater Los Angeles Healthcare System), and from other VA facilities. Intern activities while on this rotation include functioning within the context of an interprofessional team to conduct weekly initial assessments and provide individual and group psychotherapy. Numerous groups are operated through the MHC and interns have the opportunity to co-facilitate with staff, (e.g., CBT for Depression & Anxiety, Depression Management, Cognitive Processing Therapy, Stress Management, Interpersonal Issues, and Depression Process Group). Interns may also engage in patient triage/crisis intervention with walk-in/open access appointments, which would include risk assessment and treatment planning (e.g., hospitalization, care coordination with psychiatry).

Supervisors: Drs. Goguen, Jablon, Lo, and Newsom  
Hours per week: 16-18  
Number of months: 6

### **2. Trauma Recovery Services (TRS)**

Located at both LAACC and the East Los Angeles (ELA) Community-Based Outpatient Clinic, TRS serves Veterans diagnosed with PTSD. During the six-month program, interns receive education and training in all aspects of trauma-related disorders, including etiology, diagnosis, and utilizing empirically based treatments for trauma, including Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Prolonged Exposure (PE), and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) protocols for PTSD. The patient population is ethnically diverse and consists primarily of persons with combat-related disorders at the ELA clinic and military-related disorders at LAACC.

Interns on this rotation will spend Tuesdays at the ELA clinic and Wednesdays at LAACC. At the ELA clinic treatment includes psychological assessment, individual and group psychotherapy, psychiatric treatment. Most groups are built on a cognitive-behavioral framework and emphasize the development of coping skills. Trainees will likely complete an intake interview and write-up including assessment measures each week. They will co-facilitate a psychoeducational PTSD group and an ACT and/or STAIR (Skills Training in Affective & Interpersonal Regulation) group with Dr. Feigel. At LAACC, interns will complete weekly 90-minute PTSD-specific intakes (i.e., CAPS-5, PCL-5, PHQ-9, LEC), carry two individual therapy cases, and engage in group and individual supervision. Interns will be given time for session preparation and to write up intake report.

Supervisors: Drs. Argueta and Petty (LAACC) and Feigel (ELA)

Hours per week: 16-18

Number of months: 6

## **MINOR ROTATIONS**

### **1. Substance Use Disorders (SUD)**

The SUD clinic houses two programs: The Addictive Behaviors Clinic (ABC) and the Opioid Treatment Program (OTP). Within ABC, there are two distinct tracks: the abstinence-based Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP) and a more flexible Harm-Reduction Program (HRP), both of which rely heavily on psychosocial group interventions. The primary treatment modality in OTP is methadone maintenance, although veterans in OTP do have the option to participate in ABC programming as well. Interns who rotate in the SUD clinic conduct intake assessments and provide individual and group psychotherapy as well as care coordination services across these programs. Although substance abuse is usually the focus of treatment, most patients present with comorbid medical, social, and mental health vulnerabilities including mood disorders, trauma, and psychosis, and thus a range of approaches are commonly used in the clinic, including Cognitive Behavior Therapy for Substance Use Disorders (CBT-SUD), Matrix Model, Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), mindfulness, and emotion-focused treatment. Interdisciplinary work is emphasized, and interns are expected to collaborate effectively with SUD clinic psychiatrists, social workers, nurses, and addiction therapists.

Supervisor: Dr. Barglow

Hours per week: 8-10

Number of months: 6

### **2. Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI)**

Nationally, the VA has implemented PC-MHI programs (also referred to as integrated care). PC-MHI programs embed mental health specialists such as psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers in primary care settings to assist healthcare providers with the management of common psychological conditions that often co-occur with chronic health conditions among Veterans (i.e. depression, PTSD, substance abuse). The goal of psychologists in these settings is to provide specialized evidence-based care of mild to moderate mental health conditions to primary care patients. Distinct from the services offered in the mental health specialty clinic, PC-MHI provides short-term services to primary care patients, who may present with acute mental health issues as well as longstanding psychological conditions that can interfere with medical compliance. PC-MHI offers a rich training experience in fast-paced primary care and women's health clinic settings in which the intern will advance their skills of functional assessment, consultation, working with a multidisciplinary team, facilitating brief individual and group treatments, treatment planning, and differential diagnosis. Additionally, this experience exposes the intern to the growing and unique role of psychologists in medical settings, while increasing the interns' familiarity with cutting-edge mental health practices in primary care. The services promote a "tiered" model of mental healthcare within the medical system, whereby Veterans with mild to moderate problems amenable to brief or short-term interventions are treated in the primary care setting with their primary care provider (PCP) remaining the "center" and leader of care, while Veterans with more severe difficulties or requiring longer-term, or more complex care are ultimately referred to specialty mental health (Specialty MH) care clinics (e.g., Mental Health Clinic, Addictive Behaviors Clinic, Trauma Recovery Services, Women's Mental Health Program). PC-MHI is an integrated care

model that focuses on care coordination with other healthcare providers and short-term management of psychological conditions.

Supervisors: Drs. Chereji and Karakashian  
Hours per week: 8-10  
Number of months: 6

### 3. **Women’s Mental Health Program (WMHP)**

The LAACC WMHP provides psychological assessment, evidence-based individual and group psychotherapy, and special events to a diverse population of women Veterans. The number of women Veterans receiving care at VA is growing; in this program we aim to provide psychotherapy in a safe and respectful environment. Referrals for the WMHP come from primary care and specialty mental health clinics for a wide-range of psychological difficulties, including mood disorders, anxiety, PTSD and trauma-related disorders, emotion dysregulation, borderline personality disorder, substance use, chronic pain, sleep disorders, reproductive mental health, parenting difficulties, and relationship problems. Interns are supervised in individual empirically supported psychotherapies such as mindfulness-based interventions, Cognitive Behavior Therapy, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Cognitive Processing Therapy, Prolonged Exposure, and Dialectical Behavior Therapy (for those who also participate in the DBT elective). Opportunities for couple’s and group therapy may also be available. Current women’s groups include a Third Wave Depression Group and a Self-Compassion Training Group (modeled after Kristen Neff and Chris Germer’s Mindful Self-Compassion Training), as well as a drop-in Stress Management Group currently addressing issues and concerns raised by COVID-19. Psychologists, a postdoctoral fellow, and an intern comprise the WMHP, with collaboration from psychiatrists in the Mental Health Clinic. In the past, we have encouraged interns to become part of our monthly Women’s Committee meeting that combines interdisciplinary consultation with event and program planning for women Veterans. We are hoping to offer 2-4 Women’s events (on-line, if need be) with topics such as care for transgender Veterans and Mother’s Day events during the upcoming training year.

Supervisors: Drs. Steinberg and Schweizer  
Hours per week: 8-10  
Number of months: 6 months

### 4. **Neuropsychological Assessment**

The minor neuropsychology rotation includes opportunities to participate in cognitive screening and neuropsychological evaluations delivered in person and/or via video telehealth. Interns will have exposure to the administration, scoring, and interpretation of neuropsychological measures with an emphasis on differential diagnosis of neurocognitive disorders as well as associated care and treatment planning. This rotation involves the provision of services to a primarily older adult population with referral questions typically focused on the diagnosis of Major or Mild Neurocognitive Disorders (dementia or mild cognitive impairment). Differentials include consideration of a number of different etiologies including Alzheimer’s disease, cerebrovascular disease, and other neurological, medical, and mental health conditions.

Interns will observe in person and/or telehealth evaluations, conduct interviews and cognitive assessments, prepare comprehensive reports, and deliver feedback and recommendations to

patients, families, and referral sources. Cultural identities are considered throughout case conceptualization, selection of normative sources, and recommendation development.

In addition to weekly supervision, didactics will be provided on neuropsychology-specific material as part of the assessment seminar.

Supervisors: Drs. Brunet, Harrell, and Rensberger  
Hours per week: 8-10  
Number of months: 6

### **YEAR-LONG ACTIVITIES**

All interns participate together in two year-long activities that include didactic seminars, group supervision and clinical practice.

#### **Psychodiagnostic Assessment**

The goal of the training in psychodiagnostic assessment is to facilitate intern competence in the area of psychodiagnostic assessment by the end of the year. Assessment training is provided via didactic seminar(s) and through supervision of testing cases. Interns are required to complete a minimum of two (2) comprehensive batteries during the year. Psychological testing is often conducted as part of initial assessment and diagnostic clarification, treatment planning, and/or to gauge progress in therapy. Referrals for comprehensive assessments come from psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, and other professionals throughout the clinic. Computerized administration, scoring, and interpretation are available for most tests.

Supervisors: Drs. Harrell and Brunet (didactics); Various (clinical practice)  
Hours per week: Variable  
Number of months: Year-long

#### **Behavioral Medicine**

This multidisciplinary program evaluates and treats Veterans with a host of medical and mental health problems. Presenting issues include chronic pain (muscular skeletal pain, headache, neuropathic pain), diabetes, heart disease, gastrointestinal disorders (i.e., Crohn's) Parkinson's, ALS, and insomnia. Short term skills focused treatment emphasizes a wholistic approach tailored to individual needs.

Therapeutic lifestyle change is also incorporated into treatment (e.g., weight management, exercise, etc.). A weekly seminar introduces interns to the etiology, assessment and treatment of such disorders. Specific interventions taught include relaxation training, cognitive behavioral strategies, mindfulness meditation, hypnosis, breathing exercises, and biofeedback. Interns have the opportunity to co-facilitate chronic illness/pain groups for women and men. Behavioral Medicine treatment is a multidisciplinary endeavor that includes interaction with teams throughout the clinic. Several specialty programs (i.e., TARGET DIABETES) offer interns a chance to team with i.e., primary care, pharmacy, social work, dental services in reaching out to Veterans at risk for complications, thus, removing obstacles to best care. TARGET TINNITUS addresses the distress of living with tinnitus (i.e., ringing in the ears) through a mindfulness-based program in collaboration with audiology. Interns typically carry one individual client at a time for a 4-month period.

Supervisors: Drs. Newsom and Sobol  
Hours per week: 4-6  
Number of months: Year-long

## **ELECTIVES**

Interested interns may also take part in the following elective programs. Generally, students participate in only 1-2 elective programs over the course of the training year. Elective programs make up a small (~15%) percentage of our training. Entry is at the discretion of the Director of Training and rotation and program supervisors.

### **Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)**

Trainees are invited to take part in the Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) team at LAACC. DBT is a cognitive behavioral treatment originally developed to reduce suicidality among individuals with borderline personality disorder, by addressing difficulties with emotion regulation and impulsive behaviors and enhancing connection to a “life worth living.” The DBT team at LAACC has included psychologists, social workers, fellows and interns who provide DBT to Veterans in their own clinics (we do not have a separate DBT program) and meet weekly for team consultation. Trainees who elect to participate make a 6 month – 1 year commitment to providing DBT, either co-facilitating the DBT skills group and/or seeing 1-2 individual therapy patients, attending the DBT team consultation (mandatory), and individual DBT supervision (if treating a patient in individual therapy). There may also be the opportunity to conduct psychosocial assessments and diagnostic interviews for borderline personality disorder. Trainees who participate in DBT will be expected to do some outside readings and skill practice to ensure a strong working knowledge of DBT concepts and implementation.

Supervisors: Drs. Argueta, Dautenhahn, and Schweizer  
Hours per week: 5  
Number of months: 6-12

### **HPACT/PRRC**

The *Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC)*, is an outpatient interdisciplinary treatment program that provides mental health services for Veterans diagnosed with serious mental illness (e.g., schizophrenia, schizoaffective disorder, bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, and PTSD) and significant functional impairment. The PRRC provides group and individual therapy, assessment, and treatment planning services designed to prevent relapse, foster independence and self-esteem, maximize functioning in the community, and assist in the acquisition of new skills and understanding to promote mental health recovery. PRRC programming implements a recovery model to help Veterans reach their personally identified goals, develop new meaning and purpose in their lives, and increase engagement in their communities.

The LAACC *Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team (HPACT)* uses a Housing First model to provide wrap-around services within the context of a patient-centered medical home with highly integrated mental health and social work services. The mission of HPACT is to identify and engage in care to the highest-risk, highest-need unhoused Veterans who are not able to get the care they need through traditional channels and then to provide care that facilitates stabilization of mental health and medical problems, incorporates social determinants of health into their care delivery, and expedites placement in housing. HPACT psychologists provide assessment, individual and group psychotherapy, consultation and coordination with other HPACT providers, as well as staff involved in Veterans’

Justice Outreach, Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing (VASH), supported employment services, as well as the general Mental Health Clinic.

In PRRC, interns have the opportunity to participate in one (1) hour of group therapy (i.e., ACT, CBT for Psychosis, Social Skills Training) co-facilitated with Dr. Romero or one (1) hour of individual psychotherapy and supervision with Dr. Romero. In HPACT, interns will participate in the interprofessional team huddle, conduct assessments, conduct one (1) hour of individual psychotherapy a week, co-facilitate one (1) hour of group psychotherapy, and receive individual supervision with Dr. Dautenhahn. If group therapy is not available, interns will complete two hours of individual work (therapy or assessment).

Supervisors: Drs. Dautenhahn, Romero, and Rumberg  
Hours per week: 4.5 – 6  
Number of months: 4

### **Mindfulness Facilitation**

Interns interested in specialized mindfulness training can create an elective to hone their skills in mindfulness facilitation. This may include participating in multiple ongoing mindfulness-based groups (e.g. Mindfulness Skills, Mindfulness in Recovery, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, etc.), other mindfulness-based interventions (e.g., individual mindfulness training, staff intervention, additional ACT cases, etc.), mindfulness self-study, and/or program development activities. Please note that interns who choose this elective will also be asked to commit to daily personal mindfulness practice.

Supervisor: Drs. Karakashian and Nuñez  
Hours per week: 3-4 (plus personal practice)  
Number of months: Varies

### **Program Development**

This elective allows interns to design and implement a clinical treatment program in a need area. Staff provides guidance from the needs assessment stage through resource allocation, program implementation, and cost-benefit analysis. For example, under the direction of Dr. Sobol, previous interns have elected to engage in a 16-week Behavioral Medicine Program Development elective, which focused on enhancing psychological adjustment and improving disease-relevant outcomes in such areas as diabetes, hypertension, tinnitus, obesity, effective aging, sleep, etc. Multidisciplinary teaming is at the core of the program.

Supervisor: Various Staff  
Hours per week: 3-4  
Number of months: Varies

### **Clinical Research**

This elective allows interns to devote a portion of their training time to research. Interns may use this time to develop an empirical project, carry out an existing study, obtain research-related training, etc. Staff is available to provide expertise, resources, and a variety of research opportunities. A number of our previous interns have worked with staff members on clinical research that resulted in co-authored publications, including a book. Previous students have conducted psychological research in

Behavioral Medicine, TLDP, and in the Dental Program. There are opportunities for research in the PTSD Program as well.

Supervisors: Various Staff  
Hours per week: Flexible; 4 maximum  
Number of months: Varies

### **DIDACTICS**

At the beginning of the year, all interns receive training via didactic seminars in evidence-based psychotherapies, including Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT), and Prolonged Exposure (PE). Additionally, interns participate in several ongoing seminars and attend day-long continuing education workshops offered throughout the year.

#### **Assessment Seminar**

As described above, this weekly seminar will provide interns with information about test administration, clinical interviewing skills, and applied neuropsychology topics such as traumatic brain injury (TBI), healthy aging, and how to use neuropsychology as a complementary service to inform other clinical service delivery. The seminar will support intern's competency in assessment as they also engage in administering, scoring, and interpreting psychodiagnostic and/or neuropsychological tests.

Supervisors: Drs. Harrell and Brunet

#### **Behavioral Medicine Seminar**

As described above, this weekly seminar (August-February/March) incorporates education about specific behavioral medicine skills such as interviewing, assessing, and treating behavioral medicine patients as well as education about specific disorders such as diabetes, headaches, musculoskeletal pain, hypertension, tinnitus, insomnia, anxiety, and fibromyalgia. Trainees learn about the etiology and clinical presentation of such disorders and about appropriate treatment interventions. Treatment approaches include pain management techniques, biofeedback, hypnosis, relaxation training, stress management techniques, mindfulness practice and cognitive-behavioral strategies.

Supervisors: Drs. Sobol and Newsom

#### **Day-Long Continuing Education Workshops**

Several times per year, workshops are offered at LAACC and other local VA facilities (or virtually). Recent past programs/workshops have covered the following topics: Legal and Ethical Issues, Supervision, Violence Risk Assessment, Motivational Interviewing (MI), Working with Gender and Sexual Minority Veterans, Psychopharmacology, Sexual Health, and Substance Use Disorders.

Presenters: Various

#### **Diversity Seminar**

The goal of the weekly Psychology Diversity Seminar is to increase trainees' understanding and appreciation for diversity and culture. Central to this training will be the willingness to examine various dimensions of our own social identities and see how our own cultural, privilege, and diversity characteristics impact our relationships with others. In the seminar, interns will learn frameworks to work effectively with all areas of individual and cultural diversity and provide competent care for individuals whose cultural identity/worldview differ from their own (e.g. race, religion, sexual

orientation, ability status, gender identity, national origin, etc.). To support trainees in this work, interns will attend diversity seminars that include diversity related didactics, regular case presentations/consultations, and self-reflection on their own reactions and interactions with others. Interns will also be asked to complete a semi-formal presentation on a topic of their choice related to diversity/culture.

Supervisors: Drs. Dautenhahn, Nuñez, and Petty

### **Team Training Meeting**

Interns attend a monthly psychology team training meeting, which is attended by psychology staff and other mental health professionals. Training staff and invited speakers cover a range of subjects including psychotherapy, assessment, professional development issues, and ethics. Each intern also provides a research presentation on a topic of interest at this meeting twice during the training year.

Supervisors: Dr. Newsom and invited speakers

### **Legal/Ethical Issues Seminar**

Interns attend a weekly brown bag lunch in which legal and ethical issues are discussed in relation to California Law, the APA Ethics Code, and situations that arise in the course of clinical care.

Supervisor: Dr. Jablon

### **Supervision Seminar**

A monthly seminar on supervision is provided to students that contains both didactic and experiential components. It will cover APA's competencies for supervision including supervisor competence, diversity, supervisory relationship, professionalism, assessment/evaluation/feedback, professional competence problems, and ethical/legal/ regulatory considerations. The seminar will foster an awareness of the important parts and potential challenges in each of these domains. There will be opportunities for group discussion and the roleplaying of complex supervision vignettes.

Supervisor: Dr. Steinberg

## **Requirements for Completion of Internship**

The internship is a full-time, year-long program involving 2080 hours. Approximately 85-100% of the training hours can be spent in required programs and activities, with no more than 15% coming from elective activities.

Interns must complete the full year of training and spend at least 10% of their time in supervision and 25% of their time in direct patient care. In addition, the intern must complete all program requirements unless given permission to be excused from a particular requirement.

### **Minimum Levels of Achievement**

In order to remain in good standing at the 3- and 6-month evaluations, interns need to perform at the "satisfactory performance/meet expectations" level of performance, number "3" on a scale of 1-5 (see below), on the majority of items (at least 50%) in any category of our nine profession-wide competency areas. If this does not occur, the intern will be placed on a remediation plan with the intent to improve the intern's skills so that he or she can attain this level. If the intern's performance still does not meet required competency levels after remediation, additional steps may be taken following the Due Process and Grievance Procedures policy (please see this described later in this brochure for details).

In order to successfully complete the program, interns need to perform at the "satisfactory performance/meet expectations" level of performance, number "3" on a scale of 1-5 (see below), on ALL items in each required area. These are the minimum levels of achievement required to graduate from internship. If a student does not meet this requirement, the program will follow the due process policy outlined below to address the intern's deficiencies.

### **Evaluation Rating Scale**

- 1 = Seriously deficient
- 2 = Below expected level
- 3 = Satisfactory performance/meets expectations
- 4 = Above average/exceeds expectations
- 5 = Area of particular strength or aptitude

### **Facility and Training Resources**

Centrally located in the heart of downtown, LAACC has occupied an important place in the LA community for the past sixty years. Relocated to a newly constructed, state-of-the-art building in 1993, LAACC has been a downtown fixture providing comprehensive medical and mental services to its Veteran population. The clinic is bright and sunny, encourages social interaction, and is easily accessed by disabled patients and staff. Our department has group rooms with one-way mirrors, videotape equipment, and digital recorders for recording patient sessions. We have excellent psychological testing resources with software to score and interpret most major tests. Interns have their own private offices with telephones, voicemail, and computers. We provide Microsoft Office software, internet access, and electronic charting through CPRS. Interns have full use of all clinic resources including LCD projectors for presentations, and electronic research databases through the Medical Library. There is free parking in an off-site lot close to the building. Ms. Leona Payton-Franklin, our departmental administrative assistant, is available to the interns for non-patient related clerical support, and our Medical Support Assistants provide patient-related clerical support.

### **Administrative Policies and Procedures**

#### **AUTHORIZED LEAVE POLICY**

Psychology interns accrue 13 days of Annual Leave (AL) and 13 days of Sick Leave (SL) over the course of the year at a rate of 4 hours per pay period. Interns also receive 10 paid federal holidays. LAACC provides a maximum of five additional days of educational leave to psychology interns that can be used for off-site educational purposes. The following professional activities qualify for educational leave: defending one's dissertation, postdoctoral residency or job interviews, conferences and workshops, presentations at professional meetings, and graduation. Requests for educational leave must be made in advance and approved by the Primary Supervisor and the Training Director.

#### **FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE**

The internship program allows for parental leave as well as for leave in the event of serious illness. Family and Medical Leave are granted for the birth of a child and care of a newborn, or placement of a child with oneself for adoption or foster care; a serious health condition of a spouse, son or daughter, or parent; or one's own serious health condition. Interns are required to complete the full

2080-hour requirement; any leave time will result in an extension of the training contract. Interns are encouraged to address any requests for leave with the Director of Training as early as possible.

### **NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY AND RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY**

LAACC highly values cultural and individual diversity. We are an equal opportunity employer, and prohibit discrimination based on race, religion, gender, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or status as a parent. In addition, we aim to foster a training environment that supports trainees in gaining greater competence in issues of diversity as they relate to patient care.

### **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS**

It is the policy of VA to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified applicants and employees with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). LAACC is committed to providing access for all people with disabilities and will provide accommodations, as needed.

### **LIABILITY PROTECTION FOR TRAINEES**

When providing professional services at a VA healthcare facility, VA-sponsored trainees acting within the scope of their educational programs are protected from personal liability under the Federal Employees Liability Reform and Tort Compensation Act 28, U.S.C.2679 (b)-(d).

### **PRIVACY POLICY**

We will collect no personal information about you when you visit our website.

### **SELF-DISCLOSURE**

Our program sets no requirement for self-disclosure unless the information is necessary to evaluate or obtain assistance for interns whose personal problems could reasonably be judged to be preventing them from performing their training-related activities in a competent manner or if posing a threat to others.

### **DUE PROCESS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES**

All trainees are afforded the right to due process in matters of problematic behavior and grievances. A copy of our due process policy is available on request and is provided to all interns at the beginning of the training year.

## **Training Staff**

The Psychology Training Committee currently consists of eighteen (four starting in Fall 2020, below indicated with a \*) full-time psychologists and three part-time psychologists. Training staff come from diverse academic backgrounds and represent a variety of theoretical orientations, including cognitive-behavioral, interpersonal, family systems, and psychodynamic. Our staff members hold appointments at local academic institutions including Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, University of California, Los Angeles, and University of Southern California. All staff psychologists at LAACC participate in the training program and all training supervisors are involved in direct patient care. Many of our staff members have worked at this facility for over 10 years, and staff retention is excellent as the staff at LAACC enjoy their jobs as well as the opportunities to work with psychology trainees. The recruitment of staff is quite effective, and jobs fill quickly and easily with well-qualified psychologists. In fact, we expect at least two new psychologists to join the team in the coming year, both of whom will be available supervisors for the psychology internship program by the 2020-2021 training. Many former

interns voice a preference to work at this facility after their training year and are often hired when appropriate positions become available. Six current staff members were interns here at LAACC, and additional staff members were interns at other local VA facilities.

**Psychology Training Supervisors include the following full-time psychologists:**

**Nanci Argueta, Ph.D.**

Site Lead, Trauma Recovery Services (TRS)

*Doctoral Program:* The University of Texas at Austin, 2013

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2015-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Anxiety Disorders, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, Emotion Regulation, Multiculturalism and Diversity, Substance Abuse, Mental Health Treatment in Homeless Populations

**Jesse D. Barglow, Ph.D.**

Director, LAACC Addictive Behaviors Clinic (ABC)

*Doctoral Program:* Fordham University, Clinical Psychology, 2015

*Doctoral Internship:* VA West Los Angeles, General Track

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* VA West Los Angeles, Interprofessional Integrative Health Track

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2016-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Substance use, trauma, psychosis, group psychotherapy, program development, interdisciplinary collaboration

**Hannah Brunet, Ph.D.**

Gero-Neuropsychologist

Memory Clinic, Neuropsychological Assessment Clinic

*Doctoral Program:* Palo Alto University, 2017

*Doctoral Internship:* West Los Angeles VA, Geropsychology Track

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* Cleveland Clinic Lou Ruvo Center for Brain Health

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2019-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Neuropsychology, neurodegenerative disease, dementia caregiving

**Elizabeth Chereji, Ph.D.**

Staff Psychologist, Primary Care-Mental Health Integration Program

*Doctoral Program:* University of Southern California, 2014

*Doctoral Internship:* West Los Angeles VA Medical Center

*Postdoctoral Residency:* Tibor Rubin VA Medical Center—VA Long Beach Healthcare System

*Clinical Interests:* Psychosocial adjustment to medical concerns, coping with chronic illness, substance abuse (e.g., motivational interviewing, abstinence- and harm reduction-based approaches)

**Katherine Dautenhahn, Ph.D.**

Staff Psychologist, Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team (HPACT)

*Doctoral Program:* Loma Linda University, 2018

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Pacific Islands Healthcare System

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* PTSD Fellow at Central Arkansas VA Healthcare System

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2020-Present (PSY31795)

*Clinical Interests:* PTSD, DBT, social justice, advocacy, diversity/multicultural issues, and serving houseless individuals, underserved populations, and the LGBTQ community.

**Carolyn Feigel, Ph.D.,**

Coordinator, PTSD Clinical Team (PCT) at ELA Clinic

*Doctoral Program:* University of Southern California, 2003

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2004-Present

*Clinical Interests:* PTSD assessment and EBTs for trauma (e.g., CPT, PE, EMDR); HIV treatment and medication adherence; health psychology, end of life issues; psychology and spirituality, ethnic minority mental health

**Carole Goguen, Psy.D.**

Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Clinic

*Doctoral Program:* Pepperdine University, 1998

*Doctoral Internship:* Patton State Hospital, Patton, CA

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2001-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Psychotherapy and research of PTSD and sexual trauma; forensic psychology; community violence; disaster mental health; existential psychology

**Kathryn Harrell, Ph.D.**

Neuropsychologist, Clinical Director, Veterans' Cognitive Management and Assessment Program

*Doctoral Program:* Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, 2011

*Doctoral Internship:* VA West Los Angeles Healthcare Center

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* VA West Los Angeles Healthcare Center

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2013- Present

*Clinical Interests:* Geriatric Neuropsychology, Teleneuropsychology, Dementia Care Management

**Christine Holland, Ph.D., BCB**

Program Lead, LAACC Primary Care-Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI)

*Doctoral Program:* University of Illinois at Chicago, 2011

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Long Beach Health Care System

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* VA Loma Linda Healthcare System

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2013- Present

*Clinical Interests:* HIV, Chronic Illness, Health Behavior Change, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, Interaction of Health and Trauma, PTSD, SMI, MST, LGBTQ issues

**Michael Karakashian, Ph.D.**

Chief, VA GLAHCS Primary Care–Mental Health Integration (PC-MHI) Section

Facility Training Lead, VA GLA Primary Care Mental Health Integration Section

*Doctoral Program:* University of Memphis, Ph.D. Counseling Psychology, 2011

*Doctoral Internship:* VA-Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* Harbor-UCLA Medical Center; Behavioral Medicine/HIV Mental Health

*Licensure:* Psychologist: California, 2017-present; Illinois, 2012-present

*Clinical Interests:* Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, Clinical Application of Mindfulness and Compassion, Experiential Psychotherapy, Emotion-Focused Therapy, HIV Mental Health Care, PTSD, Substance Misuse, Motivational Interviewing, Primary Care-Mental Health Integration

**Paul Lo, Ph.D.**

Chief, Mental Health Services Section (LAACC, ELA)

*Doctoral Program:* Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, 2001

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2003-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Military Psychology; Prolonged Exposure Therapy and Treatment of PTSD; Anxiety Disorders Treatment; Spirituality and Mental Health; Crisis Negotiation; Substance Abuse Treatment

**Kimberly Newsom, Ph.D.**

Director of Psychology Training

Mental Health Clinic, Behavioral Medicine Program

*Doctoral Program:* University of Kentucky, 2004

*Doctoral Internship:* Wilford Hall Medical Center, Lackland Air Force Base, TX

*Licensure:* Psychologist, Delaware, 2008-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy; Military Psychology; PTSD/Trauma; Women's Issues; Behavioral Medicine/Health Psychology; Children and Adolescents

**Esmeralda Nuñez, Ph.D.\***

Staff Psychologist, East Los Angeles CBOC-Mental Health Clinic

*Doctoral Program:* Loma Linda University, 2019

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Los Angeles Ambulatory Care Center, 2018

*Postdoctoral Fellowship/Residency:* Holistic Mental Health Resident, VA Loma Linda Healthcare System

*Licensure:* N/A

*Clinical Interests:* Cultural Psychology, Diversity and Cultural Issues in Health Disparities, Race-based Traumatic Stress, Latinx Mental Health, Mental Health Integration, Holistic MH, Acceptance-based Psychotherapy, Evidence-based Practices

**Jadah Petty, Ph.D.\***

Staff Psychologist, Trauma Recovery Services (TRS)

*Doctoral Program:* Saint Louis University, 2019

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center, 2019

*Postdoctoral Fellowship/Residency:* VA Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center, 2020

*Licensure:* N/A

*Clinical Interests:* Assessment and treatment of PTSD, Race-based traumatic stress, Culturally-responsive treatment of PTSD, Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

**Jared Rensberg, Ph.D.\***

Neuropsychologist

Memory Clinic, Neuropsychological Assessment Clinic

**Elizabeth Romero, Psy.D.\***

Staff Psychologist, Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC)

*Doctoral Program:* Pepperdine University, 2016  
*Doctoral Internship:* Didi Hirsch Community Mental Health  
*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* Harbor UCLA-Behavioral Medicine  
*Licensure:* Psychologist, Hawaii, 2019-Present  
*Clinical Interests:* Serious Mental Illness Rehabilitation, Whole Health, Trauma, Integrative Care/Behavioral Medicine, Dual-Diagnosis, Advocacy, and Applied Research

**Tamara Rumburg, Ph.D.\***

Staff Psychologist, Homeless Patient Aligned Care Team (HPACT)

**C. Amanda Schweizer, Ph.D., MPH**

Staff Psychologist, Women's Mental Health Program

*Doctoral Program:* San Diego State University/University of California, San Diego Joint Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology, 2015

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Sepulveda Ambulatory Care Center

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* VAGLAHS Advanced Fellowship in Women's Health

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2017-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Emotion regulation, trauma-related disorders, dual diagnosis, behavioral medicine/health psychology, diversity, social justice, culturally-informed treatment, trauma-informed care, women's mental health

**Part-time Psychology Training Supervisors include:**

**Sharon Jablon, Ph.D.**

Staff Psychologist, Mental Health Clinic

*Doctoral Program:* California School of Professional Psychology, 1989

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Medical Center, Sepulveda, CA; UCI Medical Center

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 1990-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Depression, interpersonal issues, stress management, legal and ethical issues, psychodynamic psychotherapy, group therapy

**Debra Sobol, Ph.D.**

Coordinator, Behavioral Medicine/Health Psychology Program

*Doctoral Program:* University of Southern California, 2000

*Doctoral Internship:* VA Ambulatory Care Center, Los Angeles

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 2003-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Behavioral medicine; pain management; primary care/health psychology; hypnosis; conflict resolution; parenting education; multicultural issues

**Susan Steinberg, Ph.D.**

Lead Psychologist, Women's Mental Health Program

*Doctoral Program:* Clark University, 1989

*Doctoral Internship:* Palo Alto VA Medical Center

*Postdoctoral Fellowship:* Harbor-UCLA Medical Center

*Licensure:* Psychologist, California, 1991-Present

*Clinical Interests:* Rorschach assessment; Brief Psychodynamic Therapy; Supervision; Psychology of Women; Couple's Therapy; Mindfulness

**Our departmental Administrative Assistant is *Mrs. Leona Payton-Franklin*, who oversees many of the administrative employee issues for the psychology interns.**

**Interns also frequently interact with a variety of agency personnel from other disciplines (e.g. psychiatry, social work, nursing, primary care, etc.).**