

USF Clinical Psychology Doctoral Training Program  
Competence, Progress, and the Pre-Internship Evaluation (PIE)

The USF Doctoral Training Program in Clinical Psychology strives to train students to excel in all areas of academia: coursework, research, practice, and professional development. As noted in the Psychology Graduate Handbook, students must achieve a B- or better in all of their required classes. Also in the Psychology Graduate Handbook, there is a timeline provided for completion of various tasks throughout the program.

**Clinical Timeline**

<u>Task</u>	<u>Aspirational Goal</u>	<u>Probation Deadline</u>	<u>Final Termination Deadline</u>
Propose M.A. thesis	Fall, Second year	End of Third year	End of Fourth Year
Defend final M.A. thesis	Fall, Third year	End of Fourth year	End of Fifth Year
Pass Comps	Spring, Third year	Fall of Fifth year	Fall of Sixth Year
Propose dissertation	Fall, Fourth year	End of Fifth year	End of Sixth Year
Defend dissertation	Spring, Fifth year	End of Sixth year	End of Seventh Year
Attend/complete internship	Sixth year	End of Seventh year	End of Eighth Year

Goals are meant to keep students on track, but sometimes students and their major professors intentionally exceed the suggested deadlines in order to maximize the students' academic training while at USF (e.g., to enhance their CVs with additional publications before they go on the job market, to master a new research methodology).

Note that the end of the year is defined as the end of the summer (e.g., "end of third year" means end of the summer after the third year).

Probation deadlines are the last possible time that students can complete each milestone and remain in good standing. Students who fail to meet a deadline will be placed on probation (usually for one year). In conjunction with the major professor and with the approval of the clinical faculty, the Director of Clinical Training will write a letter to the student (filed with the college and graduate school) that outlines the nature of the deficiency and the required remedy. Failure to meet the terms of the probation will be grounds to recommend dismissal of the student from the program.

In extraordinary circumstances (e.g., student's serious health problem, massive problems with data collection such as new HIPAA-type regulations that are not the fault of the student) the clinical faculty can allow a student to exceed these established deadlines without penalty.

**Student Evaluation and Feedback:** The Clinical Faculty meet at the end of the fall semester to review overall student progress and meet at the end of the spring semester to review student progress in detail (including coursework, research skills, clinical skills, and professional development). Faculty mentors monitor student progress throughout the year, but the Clinical Faculty use this yearly evaluation meeting to discuss students' overall progress and accomplishments.

Given the importance of competencies in working with diverse clinical populations, students' annual report of their progress will be reviewed by the faculty each spring to make sure that students have adequate exposure and competency in working with diverse populations. If by chance a student is found lacking in this area and if they are reaching the end of their time on the USF campus, then remediation plans are put into place (usually with the plan that a student seek a particular externship or clinical placement in order to enhance their understanding of culturally diverse clinical populations).

Students are provided written feedback from the Director of Clinical Training each year. In order to remain in the program, students must conduct themselves with behavior that is consistent with APA ethics and with the standards of the profession of clinical psychology.

The overwhelming majority of students complete the program with excellence in all areas of skill and competence. There are, however, rare circumstances in which a student is not able to live up to the requirements of the program, including but not limited to—inadequate course grades, failure to meet the imposed timeline limitations, inability to live up to the ethical standards of APA, or inability to conduct herself/himself in a standard that is consistent with the profession of clinical psychology.

In these rare circumstances, a number of remediation mechanisms might be put in place (depending on the situation). At a minimum:

- The student will be alerted verbally and in writing of the clinical faculty members' concerns about their behavior (with the behavior described concretely),
- They will be given a concrete remediation plan through which to rectify the situation and unless contraindicated, they will be involved in the development of the remediation plan,
- They will be given a time-frame in which the situation should be rectified, and
- They will be alerted to the consequences if they fail to remediate the problem in the established time frame.
- Most likely, the outcome would be termination from the Department of Psychology, but there might be some circumstances where the student would be allowed to complete a Ph.D. in a non-clinical area of Psychology or would be told of some other possible outcome.

Consistent with the Department of Psychology Grievance Policies and with due process (<http://psychology.usf.edu/policies/forms/grievancepolicy.pdf>), students have a right to grieve the remedial plan that is established and they have a right to grieve the situation at any time during the process. These grievance and due process procedures allow students to meet with faculty relevant to the remediation/termination process and they are allowed to provide evidence that is relevant to these proceedings.

Note that it is possible that a circumstance might occur whereby these procedures would have to be implemented rapidly (e.g., if a student was judged to be incompetent to see clients, then their clinical duties might be curtailed immediately until the situation was clarified). In any situations that arise in this domain, students' rights are upheld to the best of our ability, but rights of others (such as clients, research participants, undergraduate students) are also upheld.

Note also that there are other domains of training in which dismissal from the program are considered. As noted in the Clinical Comprehensive Exam Policies posted on the web at: [http://psychology.usf.edu/policies/forms/CompsRules\\_03012005ToStudents.doc](http://psychology.usf.edu/policies/forms/CompsRules_03012005ToStudents.doc) “If a student fails both sections of the [comprehensive] exam, then they are subject to dismissal from the program, pending review by the clinical faculty.” Specifically, “If the student fails comps two times (i.e., they are presented with three different sets of questions and can not meet criterion with revise and resubmit type feedback) then they are subject to dismissal from the program. If a student can not pass comps after two tries, then the clinical faculty will decide whether dismissal is appropriate. Thus, failure to pass both sections after two full attempts is grounds for dismissal.”

It is expected that students are flourishing in the program unless they hear otherwise. As one final safety measure to ensure students’ competence, clinical faculty will be surveyed on the Pre-Internship Evaluation (PIE) below, which asks about students’ competencies. Before students are allowed to apply for internship, the answers to all of the questions below must be “yes” by all of the clinical faculty who have first-hand knowledge of the student. If any question is answered “no” by any faculty member, then a remediation plan will be put into place (as noted above).

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#### Pre-Internship Evaluation (PIE)

- A. Evaluation of student by all who know her/him—From APPIC  
(Before a student can apply for internship, all faculty who have first-hand knowledge of the student must report “yes” on every question on which they have information).
1. This student has possessed the emotional stability and maturity to handle the challenges of graduate training to this point.
  2. This student possesses the theoretical/academic necessary foundation for effective clinical work.
  3. This student possesses the skills necessary for translating theory into integrated practice.
  4. This student demonstrates awareness of, and practices according to, the current ethical guidelines for psychologists.
  5. This student demonstrates the capacity to participate in supervision constructively and can modify his/her behavior in response to feedback.

B. Competence

Does the student show adequate competence in the areas listed below?

(Before a student can apply for internship, all faculty who have first-hand knowledge of the student must report “yes” on every question on which they have information).

Academic areas/skills

6. Professional standards and ethics
7. Theories and methods of assessment and diagnosis
8. Theories and methods of effective intervention
9. Theories and methods of consultation
10. Theories and methods of supervision
11. Theories and methods of evaluating the efficacy of interventions
12. Issues of cultural and individual diversity
13. Attitudes essential for lifelong learning, scholarly inquiry, and professional problem-solving