This document has been prepared by the Placement Committee for the purpose of providing guidance for graduate students, faculty, and placement supervisors. The purpose of the Placement Committee is to oversee all psychology-related activities, including paid or volunteer clinical, research, and teaching activities. The primary objective of the committee is to ensure that students are receiving experiences appropriate to their training and that they are receiving adequate supervision. Both of these factors have significant implications for future professional activities, including, but not limited to licensure as a psychologist.

A practical function of the Placement Committee is to facilitate the optimal arrangement for the procurement of student placements, ongoing evaluations of student placements (by the student and the placement supervisor), and to provide a mechanism for the clinical area to oversee various placements and students who are occupying such placements. The document is divided into the following sections: overview of policy and procedures, specific student responsibilities, training guidelines, and evaluation criteria.

The Placement Committee is composed of the Director of Clinical Training, the Placement Chair, an additional Clinical faculty member, and two Clinical graduate students. The Chair of the Placement Committee for the 2010 - 2011 academic year is Cindy Cimino, Ph.D.

Overview of Policy and Procedures

All available placements are listed in the Placement Book located in the Clinic Bullpen so that all students may have equal access to information about existing and new positions. Information regarding all current possible placements - including the contact person, phone number and whether or not the position has been filled - is contained in the spreadsheet at the front of the book. The Placement Book also contains individual entries for every placement, and includes more detailed information about each one. These listings are monitored by the Placement Committee. Listings are based on the Placement Committee’s prior evaluations of the potential positions.

Information concerning potential positions (not yet listed) should be directed specifically to the Placement Committee for evaluation. (The Placement Chair will then contact the site and explain the proper procedure/application for submitting material for a potential placement.)
The only positions that will not be included in the Placement Book will be grant related research positions with core clinical faculty members. In these cases, it is in the best interest of the faculty member and the student that the position be filled by a student who is actively working with the faculty member in the specified area of research. Apart from these cases, all available paid and unpaid positions will be listed in the Placement Book.

Students may not apply for any position that has not been pre-approved by the Placement Committee. In addition, each student must obtain permission from his/her major professor to seek employment with any specific agency. Placement Application Approval Forms located in the Psychological Services Center Clinic Bullpen Room, must be signed by the major professor and received by the Placement Committee before the student may apply for the position during the Spring Placement Period. (For placements sought at non-traditional times, this form does not need to be completed, however, the Placement Chair will need to receive at least an e-mail from the major professor indicating her/his approval of the placement). Return the forms to Dr. Phares. Upon the committee’s approval, the forms (or information about the placement) will be forwarded to Rose Ford, who will enter the information into record and provide the student with a signed copy.

To insure equity and varied practicum experiences for all students, no student will be allowed to remain with one agency for more than one year. Exceptions to this rule may be granted, but only when highly unusual conditions exist. Petitions must be submitted to the Placement Committee for consideration. This petition should consist of a brief written statement indicating the overall benefits to the long-term professional goals that may be afforded by remaining in the current placement. The petition should also be accompanied by a letter of support from the major professor. These materials should be forwarded to Dr. Phares, who will review the petition with members of the Placement Committee. The one exception to this rule is for students hired on faculty grants in that such conditions provide optimal circumstances for students to become well-versed in a particular research domain as well as providing opportunities for them to make progress on their own thesis and dissertation research.

In order to respect the effort of some students in finding new placements, a student who “finds” a new placement will have the first opportunity at the placement the first year. In years afterwards, the placement will revert to the general pool of placements.

Priority for placements will be given to students who are in years 1 thru 5 at the start date of the position. Students who will be in their 6th year or above in the following year, cannot apply for any placements until all of the more junior students are funded. Students in years 6 and above will be strongly encouraged to primarily consider teaching and research positions.

No student may work more than 16 hours per week at a placement (note that this rule is not applicable to grant related research positions with core clinical faculty members and it is also not applicable to student’s who are teaching their own course as they will need to work as much as necessary to have their class properly prepared; this rule also does not apply to any positions that are non-Psychology related). The 16 hour limit includes volunteer clinical activities. Exceptions to this rule are granted (by the DCT and major professor if the student is making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree; i.e., timely completion of major
milestones listed on the Clinical Program Timeline (thesis, comps, dissertation) and has the advisor’s support (as indicated by an e-mail to the DCT? If the DCT determines that the student is not making satisfactory progress toward completion of the degree, but the student and the advisor still believe the extra placement hours are appropriate, then the petition must be approved by the clinical faculty. Note, however, that paid placement work for more than 20 hours per week must be approved by the Graduate Program Committee (via a petition submitted to the Associate Chair). See the graduate handbook for additional information about this policy.

After the student has decided to accept a specific placement’s offer (during the Spring Placement Period), he or she notifies the Placement Committee of that decision by way of the Placement Acceptance Form located in the Clinic Bullpen Room. This form should be returned promptly to Rose Ford. At nontraditional times of year, placements may be accepted via an e-mail to the Placement Chair (who will notify Rose for proper record keeping).
PLACEMENTS: POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Each year, a Placement Fair will take place that consists of external agencies meeting with our students to discuss their potential positions for the coming year. In general, this will be set for the month of March. All students and faculty are strongly encouraged to attend this meeting.

A specified period of time will be designated each year for outside agencies to conduct interviews. Following the completion of interviews, a specified period of time will be designated for outside agencies to make offers and for students to evaluate and accept offers. Agencies and students should adhere to these dates for conducting interviewing and for selection activities.

Student Responsibilities

In addition to the foregoing policies and procedures, graduate students are required to engage in a variety of behaviors which will facilitate the optimal management of the placement of students with external agencies.

Students are required to obtain malpractice insurance through an insurance company sponsored by the American Psychological Association (APA). You must be a student affiliate member of APA to apply for this insurance: APA Membership Services, 1200 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20036; phone number (703) 247-7760. For further information on APA insurance, call 1-800-296-7847 or 1-202-955-7780 or go to www.apait.org. Students are not permitted to see clients without this coverage, and all students should begin to obtain this coverage in the Fall of their first year. Evidence of insurance should be submitted to Rose Ford.

If a student hears about a potential placement, it is his/her responsibility to directly contact the Placement Committee, which will then interact with individuals responsible for the creation of the new position. If an agency contacts the student about a new position, the student should inform the agency of our administrative procedures for handling new positions (Completion of the Job Placement Information Form).

Students are required to evaluate their placements at the end of the year (this does not include placements with a student’s advisor). These job placement evaluation forms will be placed in your mailbox by the Placement Committee and should be returned to Jennifer in a timely manner. Please indicate on the form attached to your ratings whether you would like to make your ratings available to other students. Your evaluation of the supervisor will be detached from your ratings form and will be viewed only by faculty members of the Placement Committee. A separate Placement review Book will be compiled which will include the information about the placement as well as your overall ratings of the placement in general (minus supervisor ratings.)

For new placements, students should provide feedback (verbally or by e-mail) on a weekly basis for the first month of the placement and then on a monthly basis there after with their advisor. At the end of a semester, the placement should be reviewed with the placement chair/committee. Any issues raised at prior reviews, should be shared with the placement chair.

If there are any issues which the student feels need to be discussed regarding his or her
placement, the student should contact members of the Placement Committee immediately. These issues may include a variety of circumstances, but the key issue is the student’s unhappiness and/or distress regarding some component of the placement. These factors may include, but are not limited to, overload in terms of work assignment; inappropriate work assignments; sexual harassment; lack of training, etc.

**Training Guidelines for Placement Positions**

The Placement Committee notes that there are a variety of placement positions, with some emphasizing clinical training and others emphasizing research training. Nonetheless, it is important to devise minimum guidelines to insure that all students receive adequate training in these aspects of psychology. Therefore, the following requirements for “minimum training” are offered:

1. **Minimum training requirements for a “clinical” position:**
   a.) assessment experience (consisting of test administration, scoring, interpretation and report writing) and supervision
   b.) therapy experience (individual, family, behavioral parent training, couples, and/or group therapy)
   f.) involvement in clinical team meetings (if available)
   g.) clinically relevant research or program evaluation

   To meet the minimum requirements, a 16 hour per week placement should offer experiences in at least two of the above. Positions less than 16 hours per week need only meet one of the first five criteria. In addition, all clinical placements must provide two hours of face-to-face supervision (individual or group) per 16 hours of clinical work. One half of this supervision must be provided by a licensed psychologist, who must oversee the remaining supervision. Supervision in positions that are fewer than 16 hours per week should be prorated accordingly.

2. **Research training (for on-campus assignments also):**
   a.) involvement in the formulation of a research plan
   b.) involvement in research meetings
   c.) data collection
   d.) data analysis
   e.) project write-up or presentation

   Three of the above options should be offered for a placement to meet the minimum training requirements for research. However, if the site also offers access to at least one aspect of the above described clinical training components, that component could serve as one of the three necessary components for the minimum training requirement. (It should be noted that “data entry” does not count toward a minimum training requirement for the research position.)

3. **Teaching Assistantships:**
   One hour of face-to-face supervision per week is required (group or individual). If the student is involved in teaching, part of this supervision should include instructions in teaching skills.
**Guidelines for Evaluation**

All new placements will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **a.** Supervision by an individual approved by the Placement Committee. One half of the face-to-face supervision must be provided by a licensed psychologist, who must oversee the remaining supervision. If a placement and supervisor have already been approved and the supervisor creates a new position that is determined by the Placement Committee to be substantially similar to the original position, then the new position will be considered approved through blanket approval to the supervisor.

- **b.** No more than 16 hours work per week, with consideration of scheduled departmental colloquia and training events.

- **c.** Specific placement description, consisting of an adequate discussion of the responsibilities (approved by the Placement Committee for posting).

- **d.** Meets minimum training requirements as outlined above.

- **e.** Competitive salary/benefits (determined by the Placement Committee).

- **f.** Acceptable student ratings at the end of the first year of a new placement and potentially upon review at five years for established positions.

- **g.** **Required for new and existing placements:** Placement supervisors willing to provide evaluative feedback regarding student performance to the Placement Committee at the end of the placement year. These evaluation forms should be returned to Rose Ford. They are reviewed by the Placement Chair before being filed in a student’s confidential file. The Placement Committee is also trying to move away from this system to a web based system where the Placement Supervisor’s Evaluation of the Student Form is completed electronically on the USF Clinical Placement Website. Completion of this form would trigger an e-mail to the Placement Chair. The Placement Chair would then have an electronic record of the evaluation of the student without needing any paper forms. This form could then be shared electronically with the DCT.

- **h.** In general, commercial private practice settings will not be approved.

- **i.** Agencies who provide supervision by licensed psychologists from APA-approved programs will be given high priority for approval.

- **j.** Agencies will be asked to include a description of the role of the psychologist within the placement setting: e.g., how the psychologist functions, responsibilities, level of authority, etc.

- **k.** Whether the training experience and supervision is congruent with the program’s clinical scientist orientation, as indexed by factors such as drawing upon psychological research to support clinical decisions, and the use of empirically supported assessments and interventions.