



Internship Interviews and Early Start Dates for Advanced Practicum Students: Tips for Managing the Process for Students and Agencies

One challenge with training advanced practicum students is their requirement to travel for internship interviews in December and January of their practicum year. BAPIC recognizes the need for balance between client care and supporting students to advance in their training. This posting is a reminder to all involved – practicum site supervisors, practicum applicants and accepted trainees -- to plan in advance and collaborate to minimize stress and inconvenience.

Sites generally understand that advanced students can be away for most of January for interviews. In fairness to these students, sites are responsible for communicating policies about leaves, interviews and other absences at two points in time: when interviewing prospective trainees and during orientation.

National APPIC and APA internship placement is required and/or strongly encouraged by many doctoral programs. Therefore, it is increasingly common for students to travel long distances for internship interviews. Most students are notified of interview offers in mid-December and most sites offer limited options for interview dates. Doctoral programs encourage students to plan their travel to minimize the amount of time they will be away from their current training obligations, but in reality students have limited control over scheduling. Under the circumstances, doctoral programs expect and emphasize that trainees communicate with their practicum supervisors and training sites appropriately and in a timely manner about their time away for interviews. In other words, client care is a priority whenever students are in a clinical setting and trainees are expected to coordinate appropriate clinical care with their supervisors before they travel.

An overlap between practicum end dates and internship start dates can be a second challenge and stress for students and practicum sites. Most students will have information about their start date by late February or late March, and they are expected to communicate this information to their practicum as soon as possible after the match if there is an overlap. Two weeks is a reasonable break between a practicum end date and internship start date, to allow for moving and resettling in a new community. Early departure from practicum should be reflected in an amendment to the student's practicum contract.