

New York State Office of Mental Health



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Department of Psychology

**Clinical Externship Program**

**2021-2022**

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**Creedmoor Psychiatric Center**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**Clinical Externship Program in Psychology**

**Facility**

Creedmoor Psychiatric Center is one of the largest adult psychiatric centers under the auspices of the New York State Office of Mental Health. It provides a continuum of inpatient and outpatient psychiatric and related services to all persons in Queens County, eighteen years of age and older, whose psychiatric condition and level of functioning necessitates such care. The care is rendered regardless of an individual's race, religion, ethnicity, gender, or ability to pay. The direct responsibility for the administration of the facility is vested in the Executive Director, Martha Adams Sullivan, D.S.W., M.A.

Creedmoor's mission is to provide compassionate, high quality mental health services. The institution's goals are to: partner with recipients in recovery by promoting self-help and empowerment in formulating and attaining goals related to living, learning, working, and socializing through individualized, age appropriate, culturally competent, and evidence-based treatment; and, to ensure a safe and secure environment through the development and implementation of safety programs which promote recipient, staff, and community safety. Creedmoor provides treatment for in-patients and out-patients who present a diverse clinical population with varied cultural backgrounds.

**Program**

The purpose of the externship program is to provide a formalized and systematic program of supervised training which assists students in integrating their graduate education and training into a current model of professional practice consistent with the needs of a public health agency. The training faculty have a wide range of experience with this population and have successfully adapted several theoretical frameworks for working with psychiatric patients. The externs are offered a rich and broad experience which is appropriate for the education and training of professional psychologists. The time commitment is two days weekly, one of which must be a Tuesday from 8-4:30. The program will begin in September.

**Faculty**

Dr. Constance Freeman, Director of Psychology  
Dr. Kimberly Ostolaza, Extern Supervisor, Seminar Instructor  
Dr. Lawrence Shapiro, Extern Supervisor, Seminar Instructor  
Dr. Scott Weisner, Extern Supervisor, Seminar Instructor  
Dr. Joseph Spinelli, Seminar Instructor  
Psychology staff as well as multi-disciplinary staff of the facility are also seminar presenters

## **Training Sites**

Training sites as listed are each linked with a full-time in-patient supervisor:

- Two wards, one of which is a DBT focused female ward and the other is a rehabilitation focused Spanish-language male ward. The extern will co-lead groups with the supervisor, conduct individual therapy, and complete psychological assessments. Supervisor: Dr. Kimberly Ostolaza
- One male ward specializing in treatment of patients with histories of chronic mental illness and substance abuse focusing on recovery skills treatment. The extern will co-lead groups with the supervisor, conduct individual therapy, and complete psychological assessments. Supervisor: Dr. Lawrence Shapiro
- Two wards, one of which is a female ward for patients with a longer length of stay which has a focus of building interpersonal skills, and the other is a male ward for patients with a longer length of stay, many with forensic issues. The extern will co-lead groups with the supervisor, conduct individual therapy, and complete psychological assessments. Supervisor: Dr. Scott Weisner

## **Extern Responsibilities**

Externs are responsible for direct care in providing individual and group psychotherapy and family contacts as needed, and for completion of psychological assessments.

Externs attend ward clinical rounds, discharge meetings, case conferences, and therapeutic community meetings.

## **Supervision**

Externs receive, at a minimum, one hour weekly of formal one-to-one supervision by their on-site supervisors as well as on-going informal supervision. Groups are co-led with the extern's supervisor. There is one hour monthly of group supervision by the Director of the Psychology Department. Externs are required to attend weekly hour-long training seminars on Tuesdays on topics related to numerous treatment issues of psychiatric patients. They are encouraged to attend monthly Psychology Department meetings, Grand Rounds, workshops, seminars, and OMH teleconferences.

## **Goals of the Externship**

- To integrate theoretical knowledge with clinical skills in carrying out psychological services in the diagnosis, treatment, and assessment of adult psychiatric patients. Externs will sharpen their skills as therapists with this population and will attain an initial competency in providing therapeutic services to psychiatric patients in individual and group therapy.
- To use psychological tests as a means of obtaining valuable information for the diagnosis and treatment of patients. Externs will develop an initial competency in the writing of assessments for psychiatric patients. The reports will reflect the

sequential development of their testing skills with this population. They will present and discuss the report and its recommendations at team meetings.

- To enhance their theoretical models and a view of themselves as professional psychologists. Externs will develop a more secure sense of themselves as psychologists with sound clinical judgment by honing their integration of several appropriate theoretical models from which they provide treatment. They will develop a greater ability to work independently and understand the impact of their treatment on the patients.
- To work effectively with staff, both professional and paraprofessional, on the team and in the facility. Externs will gain an understanding of the complex nature of multidisciplinary teams, both as individual units and as a blending of individuals. Externs will learn to maneuver effectively within the system, forming productive working alliances with staff, and establishing themselves as valued professionals within the team.

## **Application**

Please submit the following:

- a letter of interest
- a current resume
- one psychological assessment on an adult client
- two letters of reference, one from a previous externship placement supervisor and one from a university faculty
- a transcript of doctoral coursework (this does not need to be an official copy)

Applications are to be e-mailed to Dr. Freeman at: [constance.freeman@omh.ny.gov](mailto:constance.freeman@omh.ny.gov). Interviews for qualified candidates will be held in February.

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