

PSYC 461: Special Topics: Undergraduate Practicum in Psychology

Instructors: Robyn Mehlenbeck, Ph.D.
Center for Psychological Services
10340 Democracy Lane, Suite 202
Fairfax, VA
(703) 993-1371 (office)
E-mail: rmehlenb@gmu.edu

Weekly Meeting: Fridays 9-10am, GMU Center for Psychological Services
Office Hours: Tuesdays 10-11am, GMU Center for Psychological Services

Course Description: This course will provide undergraduate students with the opportunity to have exposure to the GMU Center for Psychological Services, a training center that serves the community. Students will learn about basic psychology skills needed to provide reception room service to clients of the center. Students will also be exposed to aspects of the center administration, including how confidentiality and HIPAA apply to a mental health center. Finally, students will be exposed to advanced graduate students to explore career paths and discuss how working in a center can contribute to graduate school applications.

Course Professionalism: As the Center is a community oriented mental health center, students are expected to present themselves in a professional manner while on site at all times. This includes professional dress (business casual). Jeans and/or revealing clothing may not be worn at the Center.

Course Responsibilities:

On site at GMU CPS for 9 hours week (3 credit course) or 6 hours a week (2 credit course)

5 (2 credits) or 8 (3 credits) hours will be helping Center clients in the waiting room, being available and visible for clients (during the hours of 9-5; M-F)

- Answering questions for clients/parents
- Informing therapists/examiners when clients are here
- Supervising wait room to make sure no unsafe behaviors
- Other duties related to helping families/clients in the Center as they come up
- Keep weekly time sheet to track hours appropriately
- Note: There may be opportunities to help with the Center research data collection/database as well

• 1 hour would be our weekly class

- Go over any administrative issues
- Educational component – each week we will discuss a different topic related to the Center or professional development (i.e. crisis management, interacting with patients, graduate student presentations, etc.)

Readings will be provided as appropriate to the topics discussed weekly.

At the end of the semester, each student is expected to write a paper describing their experience and following the guidelines provided (details to follow).

Course requirements and grading: All students are expected to attend the weekly meeting, as well as all individually assigned hours at the Center. Grades will be assigned based on professionalism, reliability, participation in weekly meetings (75% of grade) and final paper (25% of grade). Final paper will be due by 5pm on Monday May 6, 2013.

Official Communications via GMU E-mail: Mason uses electronic mail to provide official information to students. Examples include communications from course instructors, notices from the library, notices about academic standing, financial aid information, class materials, assignments, questions, and instructor feedback. Students are responsible for the content of university communication sent to their mason e-mail account, and are required to activate that account and check it regularly.

Honor code: The Honor Code of George Mason University deals specifically with cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing. Students should be familiar with the code and connected policies, set out at <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/apolicies>. This course will be conducted in accordance with those policies. I reserve the right to enter a failing grade for any student found guilty of an honor code violation.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All accommodations must be arranged through that office, and must be initiated immediately, prior to any anticipated need.

Add/Drop Deadline:

Last day to add this course is Tuesday January 24, 2013.

Last day to drop this course is Friday February 22, 2013.