

2000 Demand for Predoctoral Internships Survey: Summary of Results

Prepared by
William Pate II
January 2001

Research Office
American Psychological Association
750 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20002-4242
(202) 336-5980
research@apa.org

Since the Spring of 1996, the American Psychological Association (APA) Research Office has collected data on the demand for internship placement. This effort was initiated in direct response to increasing concerns about a perceived imbalance between the demand for and supply of predoctoral internships. Continuing in this effort, a survey was mailed to the chairs of 378 doctoral departments in September 2000. As in previous years, the survey inquired about student enrollments by year, numbers of students seeking internships as of February 2000, numbers of students not placed on Uniform Notification Day (UND), placements subsequent to UND, primary reason for nonplacement, and expected numbers of internship applicants for 2001 through 2004. In 1998, a demographic section was created seeking information on the number of female students and students of color seeking internships and the number of female students and students of color not placed on UND. Last year, a question asking for the number of students placed in paid or unpaid internships was added to the demographic section.

Seventy-six percent of the doctoral **departments** (N=287) surveyed responded. Ninety percent of responding **departments** (N=257) indicated having one or more health service provider (HSP)¹ programs, yielding 293 **programs** included in these analyses (see Appendix A for response rates of APA-accredited programs). Sixty percent of the total number of HSP programs were clinical (N=175), 20% were counseling (N=60), 16% were school (N=47), and 4% were listed as "other" HSP program such as health psychology or a combined program (N=11).

According to responding departments, 2,337 students sought internships during the February 2000 internship cycle. Eighty-three percent were successful in obtaining an

¹ In this report, the term "health service provider" refers to programs in clinical psychology, counseling psychology, school psychology, health psychology or any combination of these programs.

internship by UND. By comparison, 75% of students were successful in obtaining an internship in 1996. Seventy-five percent of students not placed on UND obtained subsequent placement. The remainder of this year's students in the internship process fell into one of two categories: dropped out of the placement process (17%) or still awaiting placement (7%; see Table 1).

Female students and students of color represented 72% and 16% respectively, of those who sought internships for the 2000-2001 academic year. Thirteen percent of female students seeking internships were not placed on UND, while 11% of students of color seeking internships did not find placement (see Table 2a). In comparison, 29% of male students and 18% of non-minority students seeking internships were not placed on UND. Although this discrepancy in gender and minority placement exists as of UND, it is unclear if this bias persists after subsequent placement. That is, with 75% of those originally not placed by UND finding subsequent placement after UND, these percentages most probably changed. However, minority status and gender classification information was not obtained for those placements after UND. Overall, 95% of students placed on UND were placed in paid internships, nearly 4% were placed in unpaid internships, and less than 1% were not specified (see Table 2b).

Table 3 presents a breakdown of the primary reason for nonplacement by type of HSP program. The three most common reasons for nonplacement were geographic restrictions (27%), needing half-time internships (16%), and applying to all highly competitive programs (15%). Geographic restrictions have consistently been the most common reason for nonplacement over the past five internship cycles. Departments indicated that 28% of the applicants from clinical programs had geographic restrictions as the primary reason for nonplacement.

Twenty-two percent of clinical students not placed on UND applied to APA-approved half-time programs that did not conform to UND. These students represent one professional school that has a standing arrangement with a specific APA-approved internship program. All students from this program were placed into paid internships with that program without use of UND. Therefore, this unique arrangement represents an isolated situation that falls outside the typical bounds of UND and is only mentioned due to its conspicuous magnitude.

In counseling programs, the primary reason for nonplacement was geographic restrictions (30%). For school programs, 23% did not apply to either APA or APPIC member internship sites and 21% had indicated that their students sought school-based internships. Other reported reasons for nonplacement included applying to programs that were too specialized, given the student's background and poor application procedures.

The departments predicted that a total of 2,696 students would seek internships in February 2001 (see Table 4). This estimate is comprised of 2,030 clinical psychology students (75%), 434 counseling psychology students (16%), 208 school psychology students (8%), and 24 students from other psychology programs (1%). The Research Office **estimated** a "total count" using these numbers and the numbers of APA-accredited programs (see Appendix B). This estimate was for 2,950 internship applicants from APA-accredited programs **alone** in February 2001. Based on the number of available APPIC-member internship sites in 2000-2001 and the **estimated demand** in 2001, it may be that 16% (N=464) of these students will not find placement in a full-time, funded internship. Four percent of those students from APA-accredited programs seeking internships could find placement in a funded half-time internship, an unfunded half-time internship, or an unfunded full-time internship site. It is possible given these numbers

that 12% (N=348) of unplaced students from APA-accredited programs will not find placement in any APPIC-member internship in 2001.²

Table 5 provides the distribution of student enrollment by type of HSP program and year for the departments responding to the survey. A reported 16,940 students were enrolled for the 2000-2001 academic year. Of this total, 74% were in clinical psychology programs, 15% were in counseling psychology programs, 9% were in school psychology programs, and 2% of the students were in other HSP programs.

² The percentage of non-placement in funded, full-time APPIC internships is equal to the difference between the number of students seeking internships and the number of available *funded, full-time slots*. The result is then divided by the number of students seeking internships. The same formula is used for calculating overall non-placement; only the difference between students seeking internships and *total available slots* is used.