



Chicago

**Fall 2010
Practicum Applicant Information Packet**

**M.A. Clinical, Psy.D. Diagnostic, Psy.D. Therapy, and Psy.D.
Advanced**

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What is a practicum?

For students who are starting their first practicum and have had little or no experience working in a mental health setting, one way to understand practicum training is to view it as an *apprenticeship*.

The purpose of this apprenticeship is for you to learn how to apply your clinical knowledge effectively in helping clients with various presenting difficulties. Our practicum sites are geared specifically to facilitate this learning and to provide ample opportunities to work with clients.

As a practicum student, you will work closely with a supervisor – an appropriately credentialed mental health professional. A supervisor takes on the role of a teacher and consultant. Your supervisor assumes professional responsibility for your training and is someone with whom you meet **weekly** for supervision.

- Supervisors are required to provide **two hours of supervision per week** (minimum).
- Most supervisors provide one hour of individual (one:one) supervision per week and one hour of group supervision per week.

Practicum Intent Form

Please complete the Practicum Intent Form if you have not already done so. The Practicum Intent Form will be available on our website at <http://www.auconnection.net/chicago> as a PDF document. You will have to have Adobe Reader in order to complete the form. A free download of Adobe Reader is available at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. The deadline to submit this form is **Friday, November 12, 2010**.

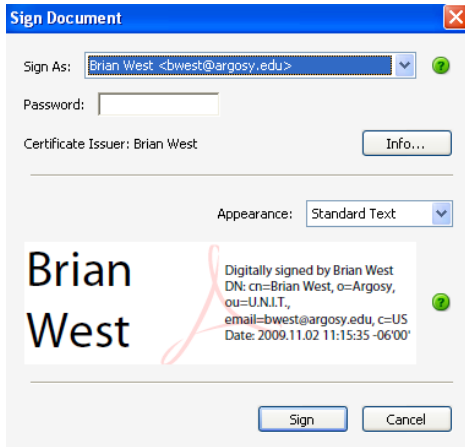
Download it and type all of the requested information. **We will not process any handwritten information, hard copy documents, or incomplete forms.**

Electronic Signature Instructions

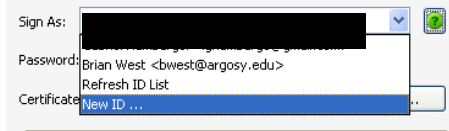
On many of the new electronic forms you will see an electronic signature box. This is not something you will sign physically but will create.

Student Signature 

When you click on the signature box, a prompt will appear:

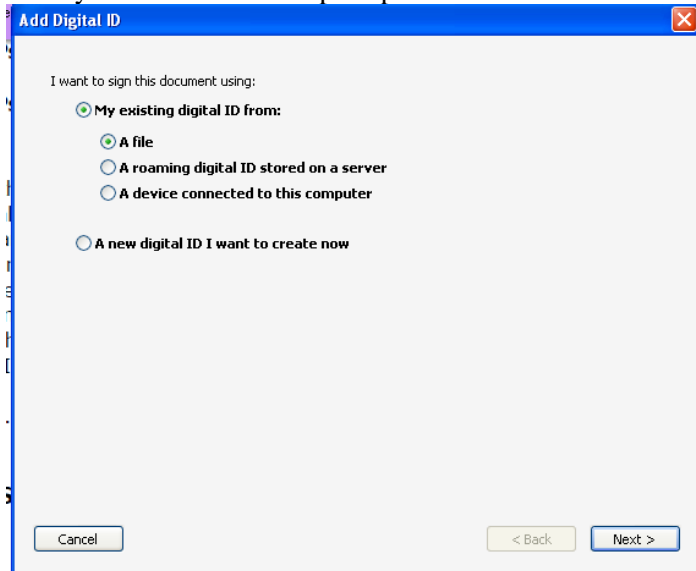


If you do not already have an ID, you will need to create one. From the drop down box select

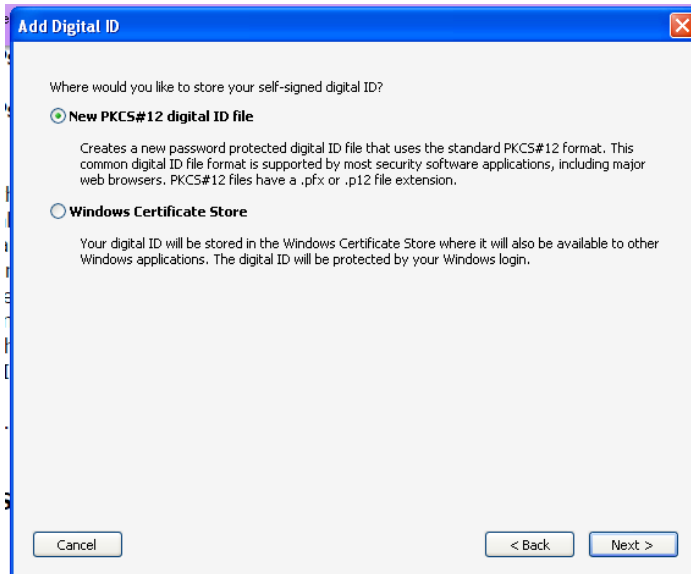


Create New ID:

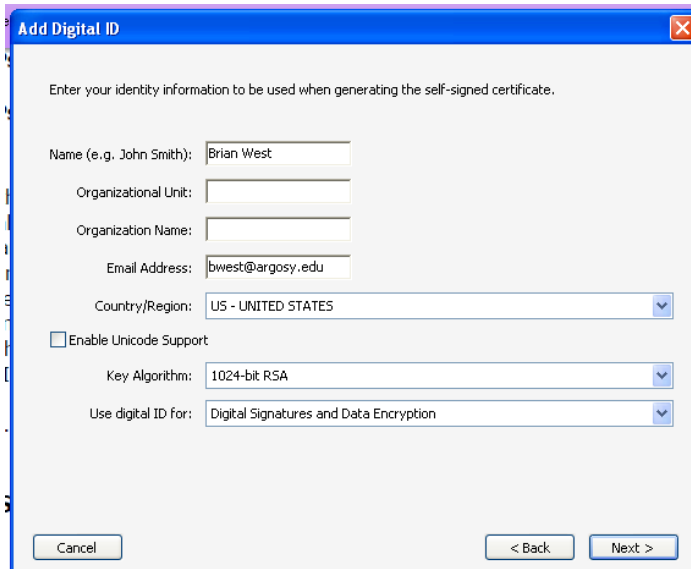
Then you will see another prompt:



If you already have an ID, you can import it; if not, you may at any time select “A new digital ID I want to create now.” Make sure it is on the first option shown here:



Fill out the form as shown below and hit next:



Then you will create a password which you will use to sign all of your electronic documents. A file is also created which is a copy of your signature. Make sure you keep this file as you will need to import it if you switch computers:

Click “finish” when you are done and the form should be signed.

For all future forms, you will simply click your key from the drop down menu shown in pictures 2 and 3 and then type in your password.

This form is necessary for the Training Department to add you to our computer database and to make sure that you are on our list for any communications sent specifically to practicum applicants. You may request verification of receipt of your intent via email to auchiclinicaltraining@argosy.edu.

After declaring your intent to apply for practicum, some students decide that they are not quite ready to begin the application process. If this happens with you, please send an email to the Clinical Training Department Coordinator Esther Martin-Hayes at emartin-hayes@argosy.edu formally indicating your decision to withdraw from the practicum process and defer your application until the following year.

There are several parts to the practicum application process, so it is important that you stay in touch with the Training Department throughout your pursuit. **Be sure to check your Argosy email several times a week. In addition, check our website and bulletin boards frequently for any pertinent information. The Training Department will send all email correspondence to your Argosy email address. If you do not use your Argosy email, make sure that your Argosy email is automatically being forwarded to your primary email address.**

☐ Practicum prerequisites

You must be in good standing to be eligible to apply for practicum training. Being in good standing means that:

- You are not on academic probation.

- You completed Argosy University, Chicago requirements to date (i.e., no "Incompletes").
- Your GPA is 3.0 or higher.
- All tuition and fees have been paid (if you are currently carrying a balance on your account—not including Spring registration fees, you must resolve this balance in order to proceed in the application process).

Practicum applicants must establish that they are eligible to apply for practicum. Pre-requisites differ depending on program, year entered, and declared minor (if applicable). In order to accept a practicum, students must have successfully completed the following academic prerequisites.

You are responsible for knowing your program requirements.

Academic Prerequisites for M.A. Clinical

- Argosy Foundation Courses
- Personal and Professional Development (2 semesters)
- Professionalization Group (2 semesters)
- Child and Adolescent Development
- Adult Development and Aging
- Health and Human Dysfunction I
- Health and Human Dysfunction II
- Clinical Interviewing
- Social Psychology and Difference
- Intervention Elective
- Assessment Elective

Academic Prerequisites for Psy.D. Diagnostic

- Argosy Foundation Courses
- Personal and Professional Development (2 semesters)
- Professionalization Group (2 semesters)
- Child and Adolescent Development
- Adult Development and Aging
- Health and Human Dysfunction I
- Health and Human Dysfunction II
- Clinical Interviewing
- Cognitive Assessment
- Objective Personality Assessment
- Projective Personality Assessment
- Social Psychology and Difference

Academic Prerequisites for Psy.D. Therapy

- All courses required for Psy.D. Diagnostic

Successful completion of Psy.D. Diagnostic Practicum

Audit of Prerequisites

Student Services and the Clinical Psychology Department will audit all students who request to apply for practicum in order for the Training Department to assess your eligibility for practicum. If your prerequisites for practicum are not fulfilled by the end of the Summer II semester you will not be eligible to continue in the application process (or will be pulled from a practicum site).

In addition, Core Faculty members will review all practicum candidates and decide on each student's eligibility to apply for a 2011 - 2012 practicum based on student performance in the program.

Training Manual

You should download The Training Manual from the Argosy University, Chicago website at www.auconnection.net/chicago/ispp/trn_manual.asp as you will be responsible for being familiar with its contents with regard to practicum requirements and policy. (**Please note:** The Training Manual is updated several times a year).

Your interests and goals

Your interests may relate to working with a certain age group (e.g., children), type of dysfunction (e.g., substance abuse), or therapy modality (e.g., family therapy). You should identify *primary* as well as *alternative* interests. Having an identified focus and an alternative set of interests will allow you to have a wide range of choices in the practicum search process.

Additionally, it is strongly advised for students to remain open and flexible in regard to the location and distance of sites to which you are applying. Sites that are in the immediate vicinity are often highly competitive due to their close distance. However, there are high-quality training sites outside the immediate area. Therefore, it is important for students to remain open to location in order to provide yourself with more opportunities to successfully match.

Letters of recommendation

Typically, students include two letters of recommendation, although some sites may ask for three. Approach professionals who know your work (e.g. - a current or previous clinical supervisor, an Argosy instructor, etc.) and ask if they will write a strong letter on your behalf. Give your letter writers plenty of time to write your letter (We recommend at least three weeks). November is not too early to ask in order to have letters ready to mail out with application materials. You should submit a **Request for Letter of**

Recommendation Form directly to each faculty member that you ask to write a letter of recommendation. All forms are available on our website.

Please note that the Training Department does not process or mail letters of recommendation and other practicum application materials.

Therefore, be sure you make arrangements with your letter writers about when and where to either pick up your letter or where it should be sent. It is a common and acceptable practice in the Chicagoland area for the Letters of Recommendation to not be individualized by site, (i.e. to begin with "To Whom it May Concern" or "Dear Training Director"). You may send photocopies of each letter of recommendation to each site, as many letter writers do not mail-merge specific site information for each letter.

The Cover Letter

The cover letter is a key introductory document in your application. It should be written clearly and concisely (i.e., no more than one page). It should highlight your experiences, skills, and training goals and how these match the requirements or emphases of the particular practicum site. Cover letters should be about *goodness of fit* with the site. Sample cover letters are available for you to view in Career Services.

Curriculum vita (CV)

Be sure your CV is clearly, concisely, and accurately written. CVs typically include information about your educational background, clinical work and training history, papers, presentation, or research (if any), awards (if any) and other important accomplishments, activities, or interests. Psy.D. students should note that they are completing a Clinical Research Project, not a dissertation, if you have begun this project.

Your cover letter and CV are a site's first impression of you, so take the time to make them look professional (e.g., do not attach pictures of yourself, or use elaborate fonts, colored paper, etc.). Sample CVs and recommended guidelines are available through Career Services.

Communication with the Training Department

The Training Department will send out all communications via Argosy email. If you have not yet set up this account and need assistance, please contact Associate Director of Student Services Jennifer FitzGibbon at jfitzgibbon@argosy.edu.

Training Department Point Person

Once you have been added to the database as a practicum applicant, you will be assigned a Training Department Point Person (either a Director of Training or the Training Department Counselor). Your point person is available to assist you with questions regarding practicum.

☐ **Training Department Counselor**

Training Department Counselor Ilene Kastel is also available to assist you with cover letter and CV preparation. In addition to reviewing your materials, Ilene is able to provide counseling to students who are trying to clarify their goals and interests in making decisions about training sites to apply to (e.g. setting, population, etc). Please contact her at (312) 777.7646 or ikastel@argosy.edu to schedule an appointment.

☐ **Training Department Post- Doctoral Fellows**

The Post-Doctoral Fellows are also available to provide assistance to students with regard to tailoring application materials to be clinically specific.

☐ **Career Services Center**

The Career Services Center provides mentoring and guidance to students who are preparing application materials as they undertake the practicum application process. You should make an appointment with a staff member in advance. Career Services also helps students with interviewing skills and has the capacity to use video equipment to assist in this process.

☐ **Review of Argosy Affiliated Training Sites**

The Training Department will provide access to a practicum site database for you to begin a preliminary search in early December.

There will be a different database file for each type of practicum (e.g. M.A. Clinical, Psy.D. Dx., etc.). **If you are not receiving emails from the Training Department by early December please contact the Training Department.**

In addition, the Training Department has materials on file for all practicum sites (e.g. description of training program, evaluations for the site from Argosy University, Chicago students previously placed at the site). Once you have conducted a preliminary search and identified a specific set of sites in which you are interested, you may review our hard files on these sites. When you come to the Training Department to look through the practicum site files, you will be asked to produce the practicum data form pages from your previous electronic search. **Therefore, you will need to print the practicum data form pages for the sites to which you are interested viewing files for.** This will ensure that you have done some initial research on the site to confirm “fit” with the site and your training requirements. **You will also be asked to present your Argosy badge in order to view the site folders.** Call the Training Coordinator (X7665) or e-mail her at emartin-hayes@argosy.edu to schedule a time to see these files. Copying information

from the folders will not be allowed and students are limited to one hour time slots to review the folders. More than one review period is allowed.

You may begin calling **December 6, 2010** to schedule an appointment any time during the weeks of **December 13, 2010 – January 13, 2011** to view files. Make sure to you give yourself plenty of time to conduct a thorough search for the affiliated training sites. We strongly recommend that you conduct and complete your search in December in order to submit your **Practicum Placement Request Form** (rank order list) by **Monday, January 17, 2011**.

Do not call practicum sites. All correspondence should be through mail or email if the site states that they have Internet access. Contact the Training Department if you need additional information about a site.

Please return all file materials or documents in the appropriate place once you are finished browsing them. Keeping these materials organized and complete allows you and your fellow students the opportunity to conduct an efficient and thorough search.

Argosy affiliated sites

The Training Department members work diligently to create and maintain practicum site affiliations. Many sites accept applications from several graduate programs in psychology in the Chicagoland area. Many sites, however, were developed by Argosy students, faculty and administrators and do not have training affiliations with other academic programs. For this reason we ask that you not share practicum site information with people outside of Argosy University, Chicago.

Developing a New Practicum Site

Each year several students develop new practicum sites. Guidelines for doing so are available at <http://www.auconnection.net/chicago> under **Developing a New Practicum Site**. If you are interested in developing a new site, please download the information from the website, read the documentation carefully and contact a Training Director to discuss your potential site. **You are not allowed to complete a practicum at your place of employment unless the two positions (practicum student and employee) are in completely separate parts of the agency with no overlap.**

The Practicum Fair

Each year, ACEPT sponsors a Practicum Fair. This is a wonderful opportunity for practicum applicants and Practicum Training Directors to meet each other informally and share information. This year, the Practicum Fair will take place on **January 14, 2011 at Roosevelt University**. It is strongly recommended that you attend the Fair.

The Practicum Placement Request Form

Once you finish reviewing practicum materials, complete the *Practicum Placement Request Form*. List up to 20 sites (in order of preference) to which you wish to submit applications.

In the Chicago area, students apply to a minimum of 12 practicum sites in order to secure a practicum. The practicum process in Chicago is highly competitive.

You must have the approval of the Training Department to apply to each training site. You obtain approval by submitting the Practicum Placement Request Form. Your careful research of site preferences, requirements, and opportunities in light of your critical review of personal experiences, interests, and goals will help you decide how to rank sites on the **Practicum Placement Request Form**. **Students must RANK at least 15 sites. Rank lists will not be processed until students rank at least 15 sites.**

Students must APPLY to at least 12 sites.

By December 1, 2010 students will be contacted by someone in the Training Department to set up a time to review their CV and cover letter.

Please be sure to address your documents to the Clinical Training Department. Your Practicum Placement Request Form will not be accepted until the Training Department has received your CV and interest & goals statement.

The Practicum Placement Request Form is available on-line at www.auconnection.net/chicago as a PDF document. You will have to have Adobe Reader in order to complete the form. A free download of Adobe Reader is available at <http://get.adobe.com/reader/>. You must submit this form electronically.

You must submit this form no later than **Monday, January 17, 2011** with a **brief description (one page) of your interests and goals for practicum**. Failure to meet this deadline could result in you having to wait a year to begin the practicum application process.

Please note an M.A. Clinical practicum does not count as a Psy.D. Therapy practicum. In addition, following the Psy.D. Diagnostic practicum, ALL Psy.D. students must complete a Psy.D. Therapy practicum before pursuing an Advanced practicum.

Receive approved list of practicum sites from the Training Department

Practicum sites expect that the Training Departments at each school will coordinate all applications; specifically, they expect us to place a reasonable

limit on the number of applications submitted to them. Abiding by this limit means that some students will not be approved to apply for certain sites, particularly if the sites in which you are interested are popular or highly competitive.

We use the following criteria to decide which of your requested sites we will approve: (1) your rank order of these sites, (2) your "match" with the site as determined by the information contained in your CV and written training interests or goals, (3) limits on the number of applications that practicum sites will receive from any one graduate program, and (4) Academic performance.

We plan to have this approved list of sites available to you by **Friday, January 28, 2011.**

The Complete Application

Applications typically consist of a cover letter, CV, 2-3 letters of recommendation, and a letter of verification from the Director of Training that you are eligible to apply for practicum. However, please be sure to carefully review our practicum site files. **Some sites have specific application forms and/or require you to submit additional materials** (e.g., a writing sample, personal statement). Applicants should also research sites on the internet for additional information or requirements.

On **January 28, 2011**, you will also receive a statement of eligibility from the Director of Training to include in your application packets. **A copy of this letter should be included in each application you send.**

Practicum Application Guidelines

The Association of Chicagoland Externship and Practicum Training (ACEPT) – of which Argosy University, Chicago is a member – set guidelines for sending out applications. You must read the Practicum Application Guidelines. They are posted on our web site and on the ACEPT web site <http://www.acceptchicago.com>.

You are not permitted to begin mailing your application before **February 11, 2011. Please be aware that some sites process applications on a first-come first serve basis, therefore it is important to send out your applications as close to this date as possible.**

Interview at sites

Prepare to interview at the sites to which you have applied. Much of the interviewing takes place in February through March, although some sites continue interviewing well into April and throughout the Spring. **If you do not receive at least three interviews by March 26, 2011, you must contact your Training Department Point Person about next steps.**

☐ **Accept or decline offer from sites**

The process for extending offers (from sites) and accepting or declining them is as follows: *As an Argosy University, Chicago Psy.D. student, you are not allowed to accept any practicum offers before Match Day. MA students may accept an offer at anytime after, February 11, 2011, the starting date for mailing out application materials.*

All applicants should refer to the ACCEPT guidelines that you will receive in January regarding how to navigate acceptance of practicum placements as well as how Psy.D. students should manage Match Day.

☐ **International Students**

If you are an international student and need to apply for CPT for your practicum, you need to make an appointment with the International Student Advisor Janice Anderson. You can email Janice at jlanderson@argosy.edu to schedule an appointment.

☐ **Students with Disabilities**

Students with Disabilities must speak with the Director of Student Services Eric Ziehlke at eziehlke@argosy.edu if they require accommodations in the practicum application process.