

1999 Demand for Predoctoral Internships Survey: Summary of Results

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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 385 doctoral departments in September 1999. As in previous years, the survey inquired about student enrollments by year, numbers of students seeking internships as of February 1999, 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 2000 through 2003. 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. This year, a question asking for the number of students placed in paid or unpaid internships was added to the demographic section.

Sixty-six percent of the doctoral **departments** (N=254) surveyed responded. Ninety-five percent of responding **departments** (N=242) indicated having one or more health service provider (HSP)¹ programs, yielding 278 **programs** included in these analyses (see Appendix A for response rates of APA-accredited programs). Sixty-one percent of the total number of HSP programs were clinical (N=169), 21% were counseling (N=58), 16% were school (N=45), and 2% were listed as "other" HSP program such as health psychology or a combined program (N=6).

According to responding departments, 2,440 students sought internships during the February 1999 internship cycle. Eighty-five 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-one 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 (21%) or still awaiting placement (7%; see Table 1).

Female students and students of color represented 70% and 16% respectively, of those who sought internships for the 1999-2000 academic year. Fourteen percent of female students seeking internships were not placed on UND, while 13% of students of color seeking internships did not find placement (see Table 2a). Ninety-one percent of all students placed on UND were placed in paid internships, 3% were placed in unpaid internships, and 7% 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 (32%), applying to all highly competitive programs (14%), and applying to too few programs (12%). Geographic restrictions have consistently been the most common reason for nonplacement over the past four internship cycles. Departments indicated that 33% of the applicants from clinical programs had geographic restrictions as the primary reason for nonplacement. Seventeen percent of clinical students applied to all highly competitive programs. In counseling programs, the primary reason for nonplacement was geographic restrictions (37%). For school programs, 35% had indicated that their students sought school-based internships and 25% did not apply to either APA or APPIC member internship sites. Other reported reasons for nonplacement included poor letters of recommendation and poor interviewing skills.

The departments predicted that a total of 2,603 students would seek internships in February 2000 (see Table 4). This estimate is comprised of 1,989 clinical psychology students (76%), 378 counseling psychology students (15%), 210 school psychology students (8%), and 26 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 3,372 internship applicants from APA-accredited programs alone in February 2000. Based on the number of available APPIC-member internship sites in 1999-2000 and the **estimated demand** in 2000, it may be that 23% (N=776) 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 19% (N=647) of unplaced students from APA-accredited programs will not find placement in any APPIC-member internship in February 2000.²

Table 5 provides the distribution of student enrollment by type of HSP program and year for the departments responding to the survey. A reported 16,419 students were enrolled for the 1999-2000 academic year. Of this total, 74% of the students were in clinical psychology programs, 15% of the students were in counseling psychology programs, 10% of the students were in school psychology programs, and 1% 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.