

Good news for students: CPA electronically posted a student-initiated guide to applying for Clinical Psychology Internships

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Pursuing pre-doctoral psychology internship can be an exciting and stressful experience for students. As a student who has recently been through the internship process, I wanted to share some of my insights while they were still fresh in my mind.

I appreciated when students in my department who had already been through the process organized informal student-driven internship info sessions. Dr. Lori Brotto (UBC PhD 2003), author of three internship-related Psynopsis articles, and Dr. Christine Chambers (UBC PhD 2001), past CPA student Section President, shared their experiences during the two-year period before I applied. I greatly benefited from these students' (now successful psychologists) endeavours and want to continue the tradition of students helping students.

In Winter 2003, I organized a meeting with panelists, which included 10 University of British Columbia (UBC) students who recently completed the internship application process. Students who attended the meeting ranged from first year M.A. students to students who were already planning their internship applications for the fall. The meeting was productive; however, many students had questions the panel did not have time to answer. Several students emailed me after the meeting with questions.

I realized that there might be a need for a how to guide suitable for Canadian students at all stages of their graduate careers. So I set to work writing and recruiting a topflight group of collaborators for a workbook intended to assist psychology doctoral students with the internship process. The result? *Match Made on Earth: A Student Guide to Navigating the Psychology Internship Application Process*.

"The title "Match Made on Earth" was chosen because this workbook is meant to guide you to choose programs that are a good match for YOU. The "you" that lives here on earth, rather than the one in your dreams. This is not to say that a student should not go for it and apply where they really would most like to be. On the contrary, I suggest that a choice made on earth will lead to a good match for you; perhaps even one you would consider a match made in heaven. Apply to Ivy League schools if you want to... apply to a site in your own hometown, if that's your dream. But, make these choices as you are grounded in reality. Choose the best programs for you professionally and personally, but be prepared to match to a site where you are a good fit professionally." Excerpt from Preface on page ii.

In the past two years, I have learned much about the process of applying for and completing an internship. Perhaps the most valuable bonus of the application process was the impetus to explore my professional goals and personal expectations. After setting my personal, career and internship goals, and prioritizing, program selection and ranking became easier. In addition to providing food for thought regarding decision-making, the workbook includes materials to assist students with the application process itself including written applications, interviews and navigating the match.

The workbook is comprised of 182 easy-to-read pages divided into eight pensive parts (e.g., self-exploration & assessment, learning about & choosing programs) and 36 contemplative chapters including such favourites as: “A Realistic Timeline”, “The Do’s & “Don’t’s of Pre-application Contact“, “The Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs – What you need to know “, “Diversity Issues”, “How ‘The Match’ Works“, “Reference Letters”. “Cover Letters”, “Completing the AAPI Form”, “Composing a ‘Winning’ CV“, “Applying to sites in the USA: A primer for Canadian Citizens“, “The Couples Match”, “Interviewing: Preparation & Performance”, “Making Decisions” and “Helpful Hints from a Director of Internship Training for Individuals Who are Early on in Their Graduate Careers”.

“While there are many books available to guide students through the internship process, unique issues relevant to Canadian Students or students wishing to apply to Internship Sites in Canada are seldom addressed. This handbook IS different. The authors explicitly included information for Canadian students where relevant and applicable.

The contributors to this workbook are all committed to assisting students with the practical aspects of the internship application process as well as helping them to obtain the best personal match. While some of the steps discussed come naturally and are based on common sense, we think that having them all written in one place will help reduce the stress that accompanies a host of internship-related practical tasks on your list of things to do and existential questions swirling around in your head.”
Excerpt from Preface on page ii.

On behalf of myself and my collaborators, I would like to express our gratitude to CPA for supporting this student-initiative from its inception through to posting on the CPA website at: http://www.cpa.ca/documents/Internship_workbook.pdf

Melanie Badali completed her psychology internship in June 2004 and is currently a doctoral candidate at the University of British Columbia.