1. **Definition:** In this internship program, psychological assessment refers to the evaluation of individuals and families. It is broadly defined to include, but not be limited to: clinical interviews, semi-structured interviews, observation, behavioral assessment, screening, intellectual assessment, educational assessment, cognitive assessment, neuropsychological assessment, personality assessment, symptom assessment, risk assessment, and forensic assessment.

2. **Purpose:** Psychological assessment serves a number of functions including, but not limited to: informing case conceptualization, differential diagnosis, treatment planning, and clinical decision-making; and monitoring the severity of behavioral health conditions and treatment progress.

3. **An Essential Competency:** Psychological assessment is one of the core competencies of the internship program and it is a required competency under the internship accreditation standards of the American Psychological Association. Given the importance of this professional practice, it is essential that fellows in this internship receive organized training in psychological assessment and that their skills in assessment are evaluated.

4. **Didactic Instruction:** Psychological assessment is a substantive topic in sessions within the internship’s Core Seminar. All Placement-Based Seminars will include sessions relevant to the assessment of the populations served within the placement.

5. **Brief & Comprehensive Assessments:** Assessment is an integral part of providing clinical care to clients. The internship differentiates between “brief” and “comprehensive” assessments. While the specific nature and content of these assessments are defined within the placement sites, they have the following general characteristics:

   a. **Brief Assessments** are relatively short, routinely conducted evaluation approaches tailored to the common health issues faced by typical clients served in a particular setting. A brief assessment might include: (i.) a clinical interview; (ii.) a review of additional information (e.g., from a referral source, significant others, and/or a medical record); and (iii.) a minimum of one objective measure or test. Some brief assessments are re-administered on multiple occasions to monitor change over time in clinical or health status.

   b. **Comprehensive Assessments** tend to be thorough evaluations comprised of multiple assessment measures or strategies. These are conducted on a less frequent basis to assess complex diagnostic, clinical, treatment planning, or forensic issues.

6. **Responsibility of Placement Sites:** It is the responsibility of the faculty psychologists within each placement, working in concert with the Chief of Psychology for the institution, to ensure the availability of the following:
a. **Written description of the psychological assessment services offered** within the placement site or otherwise available to the clients being served. This document should be available to faculty, fellows, and clinicians within the site.

b. **Written description of the brief and comprehensive assessments** used within the site. This document should be available to fellows and faculty. There should be one or more brief assessments used in each site and each brief assessment should include a minimum of one objective measure or test. The use of measures to monitor change over time is encouraged.

c. **Qualified supervisors** available to supervise fellows in psychological assessment.

d. **Psychological assessment and testing supplies** that are up to date and in adequate supply within the placement site. Chiefs of Psychology in the institutions should survey faculty in the spring of each year regarding assessment resource needs and then work with the institution’s administration to address those needs. In general, borrowing supplies is not considered practical given the multiple sessions often required to complete assessments, the frequency of client no-shows for assessment sessions, and the time involved for fellows in traveling to pick up and drop off supplies.

e. **A process for identifying clients within the site** who could benefit from psychological assessment. This involves working with clinicians in the site regarding the indications for psychological assessment and teaching fellows to consult with clinicians on potential referrals.

f. **A timely orientation for fellows to psychological assessment in the placements.** This should cover: assessments offered, assessment materials, referral processes, supervision, and report formats.

g. **Time for fellows to complete assessments.** This should be factored into the 50 hour per week schedule. The process of assigning and scheduling assessments should be designed to minimize, to the extent possible, the disruption of fellows’ other responsibilities.

7. **Assessment Training Requirement:** The training experience for each doctoral fellow will be shaped by the clinical needs within the placement site and the clinical interests of the fellow. The experience will include the following:

   a. Each fellow will receive placement-based training and practical experience in consistently using one or more brief assessments in the natural flow of delivering services to clients. This will occur in all clinically oriented primary and secondary placements.

   b. Each fellow will complete a minimum of two comprehensive assessments during the course of the internship year. Preferably these will be conducted at the fellow’s placement site with clients from that site. However, at the Primary Advisor’s discretion, these can be conducted with clients from other sites and/or at locations other than the placement site. For fellows with a primary and secondary placement, the assumption is that the required comprehensive assessments will be conducted at the primary placement site unless the Primary Advisor takes the initiative to negotiate a different arrangement with the Secondary Advisor. Fellows with a placement at The Consultation Center will conduct all brief and comprehensive assessments at their other placement site, and that other site will provide the supervision of those assessments. For fellows with a primary placement at The Consultation Center, the time to conduct the two comprehensive assessments will be allocated from their scheduled time at The Consultation Center. The requirements above do not apply to fellows in the CMHC Psychological and Neuropsychological Assessment Service, as the Service sets expectations for its fellows.
8. **Conveying Expectations to Fellows:** The internship’s approach to training fellows in psychological assessment is documented in this policy, the internship handbook, the internship brochure, and the general sections and the placement-specific sections of the program’s website. These expectations also will be reviewed during the Visit Days with prospective applicants and during the orientation of new fellows.