

THE CLINICAL PASTORAL EDUCATION (CPE) INTERNSHIP

For some students, particularly those whose career goal is hospital chaplaincy or some other field where extensive CPE experience would be of particular value, the Clinical Pastoral Education experience may offer the best opportunity to meet their learning needs. In this case the internship requirement may be satisfied by successful completion of a full CPE residency (usually 4 consecutive units) at a center accredited by the Association for Clinical Pastoral Education, Inc. (ACPE). A number of hospitals in the DFW metroplex, among them Baylor, Children's, Methodist, Parkland, and UT Southwestern in Dallas and the THR Harris Methodist Health System in Fort Worth, offer excellent CPE programs. A full list of CPE centers in the Dallas and Houston areas may be found in the CPE display rack across from the student mailboxes on the first floor of Kirby Hall.

CPE programs in other areas are listed in *The ACPE Directory*, which is available along with CPE application forms and other useful information on the ACPE web site at www.acpe.edu.

CPE residency internships are considered full-time internships, with the same recommended courses before internship and the same tuition/registration requirements. There is, however, a difference in length, as other internships are nine months long (two consecutive semesters), while a four-unit CPE residency is approximately 12 months long. (A few CPE centers do offer a three-unit, nine-month residency, but applicants must have completed a previous unit of CPE.)

Important considerations for students considering a CPE internship:

- You may **not** receive *both* six hours of academic credit in Pastoral Care for a single unit of Clinical Pastoral Education (*Basic Clinical Pastoral Education, PC7639*) **and** six (M.A.M.) or 12 or nine (M.Div.) hours of academic credit for a CPE residency internship—or at least you may not count both toward the hours required for your degree. If, as sometimes happens, you take an introductory unit of CPE for six hours of academic credit in Pastoral Care and then decide through that experience that your vocational goals would best be met by a yearlong CPE internship, you may still choose that option; however, the earlier six credit hours

will not count toward your degree. In most cases the Pastoral Care course represented by those six hours remains on your transcript, but you will have to take six additional hours to fulfill the graduation requirements for your degree plan. See the Perkins registrar for details. (Those initial six credit hours may, however, be used to fulfill some of the requirements for the Concentration in Pastoral Care. If you are working on that concentration, talk to Pastoral Care Professor Jeanne Stevenson-Moessner for more information.)

- A CPE residency is generally four units long and runs for a full 12 months. Most area CPE residencies begin and end in August. If you are doing a CPE internship at the end of your degree program and are accepted for one of these residencies, please be aware that you will not graduate until August (though you can participate in the May graduation ceremony). Talk to your intern faculty supervisor early in the placement process about your graduation plan. United Methodist students are urged to speak with their district superintendent about the implications for appointment.
- Most CPE programs require applicants to have completed a unit of CPE before beginning a residency. If you have not done so, some programs may accept you for the residency contingent upon your completion of an introductory (summer or extended) unit before the residency begins, but that unit will not be considered part of the residency required for internship credit. You will in most cases receive a salary and benefits from the hospital for the residency. The introductory unit is either unpaid or accompanied by a small stipend, depending on the center.
- **CPE programs have their own rhythm and supervisory process within the hospital setting**, so unlike other interns, you will not be required to attend Intern Orientation and you will not meet with other interns in the Internship Seminar. (We do, however, offer CPE interns the services of the highly experienced mental health consultants who work with the Intern Program if they wish to meet with a consultant to process the CPE experience. Contact your intern faculty supervisor for details.)

Your intern faculty supervisor will check in with you and your CPE supervisor several times over the course of the year to make sure your

learning is on track. See Items 6 and 7 below for more information on how your internship will be assessed.

If you desire a CPE internship, please follow the following process.

1. You will complete the internship application and enter the placement process just as any other student seeking a full-time internship would do. During the initial placement conversation, talk with your intern faculty supervisor about how your learning needs and vocational goals can best be addressed. If you both conclude that a CPE residency could provide the kind of learning experience you are seeking, you are ready to begin the CPE placement process.
2. Check with your conference or denominational judicatory to make sure that a CPE residency will meet its internship requirement.
3. Apply for a CPE residency through the standard ACPE process. (Get more information at www.acpe.edu.) Contact the accredited centers in your area to get information about available programs and openings. Prerequisites, tuition and stipends vary from program to program. Fill out and submit an application to the accredited CPE centers to which you wish to apply. (Note: The application includes essay questions to which you are expected to respond at some length and with evidence of a good capacity for self-reflection.) We recommend that you apply at several centers to increase your chances of being accepted. As a general rule, you should apply no later than the end of November for a residency beginning the following August. Finally, interview with one or more of the CPE supervisors at the center. Be sure to keep your intern faculty supervisor apprised of your progress.
4. When you have been accepted into a residency program, immediately notify your intern faculty supervisor. Give the Intern Office a copy of the communication from the CPE program stating that you have been accepted and giving the beginning and ending dates of your residency. This will confirm your placement. (If you do not receive such a letter or email, please ask the CPE office for one.) If you will be doing a summer CPE unit before beginning the residency, we would like to have a copy for your permanent file of that acceptance letter as well.

5. You will register for your CPE internship at Perkins and pay for the same number of hours of academic credit as any other intern. Perkins will then pay the fees and tuition charged by your CPE center. After you have paid your Fall tuition to SMU, ask the CPE program's financial officer to send a bill for the total annual CPE fees and tuition to Perkins School of Theology, to the attention of Judy Gibbons, Assistant to the Director of the Intern Program. (If you have to pay some CPE fees and tuition before you pay your SMU tuition, ask for a receipt clearly showing the items and amounts and indicating that you have paid them, and submit the original receipt to Ms. Gibbons for reimbursement.)
6. You will be assigned an intern faculty supervisor who, though not directly involved in your internship, will stay in contact with you over the course of the internship and will work with your CPE supervisor to obtain occasional assessments of your learning and growth during the CPE experience, particularly before grades are due.
7. Toward the end of your CPE residency, we will remind you to ask your CPE supervisor to send a letter or email to the Intern faculty supervisor stating that you have successfully completed the program and giving a thoughtful assessment of your work. In addition, after the final unit ends, we ask that you give your faculty supervisor a copy of your certificate of completion of the residency. The intern faculty supervisor is ultimately responsible for determining whether you pass the Perkins internship requirement. Moreover, if denominational boards contact the Intern Office during the ordination process, we need those documents in your permanent file to be able to respond appropriately.

Your CPE supervisor will give you a written evaluation of your work and learning after each unit; you may share these evaluations with your Intern faculty supervisor if you wish, and he or she would be glad to receive them, but this is strictly voluntary and not in any sense required.