



**McALESTER  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATES**

**McAlester Psychological Associates**

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Located in rural southeastern Oklahoma in the midst of the Choctaw Nation, MPA offers interns a unique, small-town practice experience with a culturally varied clientele.

Incorporated in 2004, facilities include a 2,500 square foot freestanding office with ADA accommodations, three therapy rooms, a large waiting room (pictured), kitchen/staff room and additional private office area. Support staff members include an office manager and HR/billing coordinator who have worked for MPA for 10 and 16 years, respectively. MPA has an up-to-date library of assessment tools for evaluation of children and adults, printing/faxing/computers/data storage and a VOIP telephone system for scheduling and smooth communication between departments. MPA's offices have expanded to other areas of Oklahoma and Kansas, and the interns also have the opportunity to learn the expanding practice of telepsychology.

Interns at MPA participate in the assessment and treatment of a wide variety of mental illnesses and diagnoses as often seen in a general practice. It's worth noting that MPA serves 23 counties in rural Oklahoma, so the clinic is often the first referral for physicians, counselors, and community agencies. Initially, the intern will have the opportunity to shadow assessment (from battery selection to administration, scoring, analysis and results consultation) and treatment interventions.

Dr. Ward maintains competencies in cognitive behavioral therapeutic interventions and initial learning objectives for the incoming intern include active exploration of the intern's own theoretical orientation. For example, the intern may observe a therapeutic exchange that sparks a theoretical discussion of, say, a psychoanalytic interpretation of the presenting problem. The goal is the intern's ability to grow in capacity to connect theory to evidence-based practice, emerging with a clinical toolbox that readies them to enter the field as an independent practitioner. As the intern begins to demonstrate knowledge of not only the "what" of the clinical plan but the "why"-generating a meaningful scientist-practitioner explanation of the intervention, the intern becomes ready to take the lead in an emergent caseload with oversight and supervision. Record-keeping is countersigned and monitored for the duration of the internship.

MPA adheres to and follows the OKPPTC Internship Capstones. Dr. Ward, with support from the MPA team and collaboration with the OKPPTC faculty, is committed to guiding the intern from foundational knowledge to functional competencies as they become readied to enter the field.