

YALE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY: MISSION STATEMENT, PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND REQUIREMENTS (8.18.17)

The Clinical Psychology Program at Yale University aspires to educate the next generation of leading academic and research psychologists and to create an environment for advancing theory and research related to psychopathology and its treatment. While the program is decidedly research oriented, clinical training is viewed as essential to the development of outstanding clinical scientists. In line with this we thus strive for excellence in research and clinical training from a clinical science perspective. Clinical training is designed to educate students in scientific principles that will enable them to investigate theoretically important and clinically relevant questions and to ensure competence in the provision of evidence-based practice. We emphasize integration of research and clinical work to develop innovators who will advance the theoretical and empirical bases of knowledge in clinical psychology. The goals of the program are to:

1. Provide broad and general training in the science and practice of psychology as a foundation from which students can develop specific research and clinical skills;
2. Provide students with opportunities that facilitate the development of research skills necessary for research productivity during and following graduate training;
3. Ensure development of the skills necessary for competent evidence-based practice in preparation for internship and licensure.

RESEARCH TRAINING

In the research domain, students progress from the first-year project to the pre-dissertation and theme essay, to the dissertation. The first-year project can involve secondary analyses of existing data or pilot work that sets the stage for later research. The pre-dissertation project (comparable to the Master's Thesis in many institutions), is based on independent research conducted by the student but is expected to be less complex than the dissertation project. The theme essay provides an opportunity for the student to conduct an extensive literature review at a broad level, but often in the same general research area as the dissertation. Students are closely supervised at all stages of project development by primary faculty members. These projects typically lead to publications, poster presentations, and/or invited talks at scientific meetings. Students are trained by research mentors to apply for fellowships and grants from the National Science Foundation, National Institute of Mental Health, and other public and private agencies in order to support their research and to gain experience with applications and grant writing. In addition, Yale University offers seminars throughout the year on grant writing, sponsored through the Yale Office of Grant and Contract Administration, as well as, the Yale Medical School. Although the specific sequence of research projects outlined above represents an important aspect of research training, consistent with the mission and objectives of the program, research acumen and experience are also obtained through experiences in the classroom, through participation in lab meetings and mentorship with a variety of primary faculty, through

participation with a community of scholars in the current work in clinical psychology series and departmental colloquia, and through clinical training. It is the integration of these experiences that provides broad research training in clinical psychology.

Structure of Research Training

Faculty mentors work closely with students with the goal of nurturing the research interests of the students. The goal is excellence in research in whichever substantive area is the focus.

Students may work with one or more faculty members of their choosing, including department faculty outside the clinical area. Students are encouraged to work with several members of the faculty in the service of broad experience and are free to change research supervisors. This flexibility is a hallmark of the Yale program.

Students begin their research experience from the time graduate training begins. In addition to receiving research training in classes, students are encouraged to attend the research meetings (lab groups) of their advisor and other faculty members whose work is of interest.

Students are required to arrange for a research supervisor (primary mentor) from among the primary faculty in the Department of Psychology and to report the choice of primary mentor to the Director of Clinical Training. The expectation is that during the first year, students will work with their primary mentor. The purpose is to introduce students to the research process. Working closely with a mentor on a specific project will enable students both to observe and to be involved in a project from planning through presentation. Students are free to work with other faculty members during or following this research experience and are free to select different areas of research emphasis following this initial supervised experience.

During the subsequent years in the graduate program, students are expected to fulfill other general departmental research requirements, as outlined in the "Description of Formal Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree" available from the department.

The clinical program requires students to be in residence for 4 years. Course work is often completed in the first several years, but the program requires attendance at the clinical current work seminar for four years, and there is the presumption that the 4th and 5th years will be a productive time for research with members of the faculty.

Evaluation of Students' Research Performance, Feedback, and Retention in the Graduate Program

Formal written policies regarding student performance evaluations and requirements for retention in the graduate program are presented in the *Yale University, Department of Psychology, Description of Formal Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree*, which can be found at: http://psychology.yale.edu/sites/default/files/files/PsychGradReqs_Update-5-29-14.pdf The clinical program must follow all Yale University and psychology department procedures regarding academic competence, remediation, and termination.

Research mentors of clinical students complete an additional rating form each semester that allows for evaluation of competencies relevant to the research goals and objectives articulated in the mission statement of the clinical program. If a student receives a rating of “needs work” on any of the rating scales, a remediation plan is developed collaboratively by the student and his/her research mentor. The remediation plan will include additional training opportunities that target the deficiencies in specific competencies, a clear time frame for completion of remedial training, and a process for reassessment of the identified deficiencies. These remediation plans are designed to increase the likelihood that the student will successfully complete all departmental requirements.

CLINICAL TRAINING

Clinical training is integrated with the curriculum and research aspects of the program. The training is designed to stimulate critical thinking, the application of theory and evidence-based assessment and treatment to human problems, and ongoing assessment and evaluation of therapy process and outcome. Clinical training begins in the first year with courses that focus on the theoretical basis for clinical work, development of clinical skill in a broad range of treatment techniques, knowledge of contemporary diagnostic approaches, training in structured clinical interviewing, knowledge of ethical principles and approaches to supervision and consultation, awareness of the importance of considering cultural diversity, and evaluation of the efficacy of clinical interventions. Students’ initial exposure to clinical treatment is through structured clinical intake interviews that are conducted during the second semester of the first year within the Yale Psychology Department Clinic (YPDC). YPDC is equipped with video cameras that allow for discreet recording of students’ assessment and therapy sessions. Videotapes of students’ work are reviewed by clinical supervisors as well as by advanced students in clinical psychology (in the fourth or fifth year of clinical training) who have been selected by the clinic director to serve as student directors. Diagnostic assessments are presented orally during weekly case conferences, and written reports are edited by student directors and reviewed by clinical supervisors. Prompt and detailed feedback is provided after each of these activities, and formal written feedback is provided at the end of each semester.

Building upon the diagnostic assessment work conducted in the first year, training in psychological measurement and assessment is also initiated in the first, second, or third year. Students learn how to evaluate assessment instruments; select instruments that will help to answer specific referral questions; administer and interpret cognitive, achievement, memory, and personality measures; integrate information gathered from multiple reporters using multiple methods; communicate assessment results orally to clients and professionals during feedback sessions; and prepare written professional reports.

Students begin providing evidence-based practice to community referrals in the 2nd year at YPDC, under the direct supervision of core and associated faculty members. Clients are carefully screened so that they are well suited for graduate students in the beginning stages of training and well matched to the competencies of our clinical supervisors. Approximately one videotaped session per week is viewed for every student by clinical supervisors who provide feedback about the implementation of specific therapy techniques. Students have the option of requesting additional supervision from student directors who view videotaped therapy sessions

and provide feedback in individual and group contexts. The student directors' supervision is supervised by the faculty member leading the practicum, and allows for more advanced clinical skill development (e.g., training in supervision) for the more experienced students.

In the third, fourth or fifth year of training, once students have met clinical competency benchmarks and have received approval from their research mentors, students have the opportunity to gain additional experience with diverse client populations through external clinical placements in the Yale/New Haven community (e.g. Yale New Haven Hospital, Connecticut Mental Health Center, Yale Child Study Center). See the Practicum Opportunities listing for more information. Students who begin graduate training with relatively little prior training in conducting therapy are likely to spend their second and third years of practicum training at the Yale Psychology Department Clinic. Also, students must be well advanced in developing a program of research before applying to participate in an external practicum. At each stage of clinical training, students receive extensive supervision from licensed clinical psychologists, and are encouraged to engage in reflective practice, completing evaluations of their own skills and identifying goals for professional growth and development each semester. By the end of the fifth year students are well prepared to engage successfully in clinical internships. Most students have successfully defended the dissertation toward the end of their fifth year prior to engaging in the clinical internship during the 6th year of training.

Clinical training is integrated in both principle and practice with the discipline of psychology. Evolving theory, research, and evaluation methods from other areas of psychology including developmental, social, and cognitive inform both research and clinical training. Beyond psychology, research from other disciplines (e.g. neuroscience, nutrition, public health) is used to improve understanding of etiology, treatment, and prevention of psychological problems. Treatment draws on the contemporary scientific knowledge base and methods of inquiry to maximize benefits for each individual client and forms a basis for learning about psychopathology, personality, and psychotherapy process and outcome research. Theory is used to conceptualize clinical problems, contextual factors, and treatment. Specifically, students are encouraged to conceptualize clinical problems from a variety of perspectives and to consider various facets of the presenting problem and domains to which treatment may be directed.

An additional way in which clinical practice and research are integrated is through systematic evaluation of clinical outcomes and mechanisms of change. When a treatment plan is formulated, methods for evaluating treatment are described explicitly in the client file. Changes in client symptoms and functioning and hypothesized mechanisms of change are evaluated regularly using the progress monitoring measures. The information obtained from ongoing assessment is used as the basis for sustaining or modifying the treatment approach.

In addition to the clinical utility of progress monitoring, these data also can be used to bridge clinical work and research. As data from a large sample of clients accumulate manuscripts are submitted for publication. For example, graduate students, post-doctoral students, and faculty have presented findings at conferences and in published manuscripts based on research conducted with the clinical sample at YPDC. In these ways, science and practice are continually integrated.

Students, research mentors, and the DCT work together to match students with clinical placements that are closely related to students' research interests so that clinical and research experiences are mutually informative. For some recent examples, students participating in coursework or conducting research on addictions with Dr. Baskin-Sommers have participated in the practicum at the Substance Abuse Treatment Unit at the Connecticut Mental Health Center; students studying mood and anxiety disorders with Drs. Joormann or Holmes have participated in clinical training at YPDC, Yale New Haven Hospital, and/or the Child Study Center; students studying schizophrenia with Dr. Cannon have sought clinical training opportunities at the Specialized Treatment Early in Psychosis (STEP) and PRIME Psychosis Prodrome Research Clinics at the Connecticut Mental Health Center; and students study the use of Dialectical Behavior Therapy with Dr. Kazdin at the Yale School of Medicine.

Guiding Principles for Delivery of Evidence Based Practice

Clinical care is designed to draw on theory, research, and evaluation in ways that benefit the client. The guiding principles are:

1. The means and goals of treatment are explicit, are written, and are agreed upon by client and therapist;
2. The choice of treatment is guided by literature on assessment and intervention, prevailing standards of practice, theory, and a thorough discussion of alternative approaches. Evidence based treatments are used whenever possible;
3. Treatment is based on a thorough assessment consisting of clinical interviews and the use of assessment approaches with documented reliability and validity. In the absence of such approaches, assessment is grounded in theory and undertaken with the goal of formulating a treatment plan;
4. Assessment is ongoing throughout treatment and is used to evaluate whether treatment is helping the client accomplish his or her goals and whether the treatment approach should be altered. The client is a partner in this process and is informed of the results of evaluation;
5. Referral to another setting is considered when such a setting would be better suited to the specific needs of the client, or when evaluation indicates that treatment is not promoting progress toward the goals of treatment; and
6. Assessment and treatment are conducted to ensure the protection of the individual client and are consistent with ethical guidelines.

Evaluation of Students' Clinical Performance, Feedback, and Retention in the Clinical Program

Students' clinical competencies are evaluated every semester. In the first semester, students are graded on their clinical coursework and are expected to earn grades of "high pass" or

“honors.” During the second semester students are expected to complete three intake evaluations with clients, which include a diagnostic interview with the SCID-5 and the administration of additional assessment measures. Students present each intake evaluation at a case conference and write a history report that integrates findings from the assessment measures into a preliminary diagnostic formulation and treatment plan. The graduate student director and at least one clinical faculty member review audio and/or videotapes of each intake, participate in the case conferences, and review the history reports. This work is rated on the “Evaluation of Clinical Competence in Diagnostic Assessment” form and students receive prompt and detailed feedback regarding their performance. Every student is expected to obtain ratings of “3” (demonstrates moderate competency; clinician requires routine supervision) on every scale by the end of the second semester of graduate training. Only after a student has met criteria for clinical competence in diagnostic assessment will he or she be allowed to begin supervised training in psychotherapy.

All students who have met criteria for clinical competence in diagnostic assessment begin training in psychotherapy in the second year practicum at the Yale Psychology Department Clinic (YPDC). Students are assigned individual supervisors, licensed clinical psychologists, who review audio or videotapes of student therapy sessions and meet weekly with each student to discuss treatment progress and planning. At the end of every semester, supervisors complete written evaluations of students’ work on the “Evaluation of Clinical Competence” form and discuss the evaluations with students. Students are expected to obtain a rating of “meets expectations” on every scale of the form.

In October of the third year of training, all students who have met expectations on the Clinical Competence form will be given the choice of remaining at the YPDC for an additional year (or years) of training, or of applying to an external practicum that has been vetted and approved by the DCT and clinical faculty. Before applying to a clinical practicum, students are required to discuss their plans with the DCT and their research advisors. Students must be well ahead in meeting all research requirements in order to apply to external practica that are time intensive (such as the Intensive Outpatient Program, the Substance Abuse Treatment Unit, etc.) The clinical practicum year begins in September and ends in June each year, although there is some variability in external practicum sites. Students apply to practicum sites every November – February.

During every semester of clinical training during years 2-5, every student’s clinical supervisor(s) will complete the “Evaluation of Clinical Competence Form,” review the form orally with the student and then send the form to the Director of Clinical Training (DCT) to review and place in the student’s clinical file.

Students are asked to complete self-evaluations of their clinical competence every semester and to set goals for their own growth and development as clinical scientists.

The clinical psychology program requires students to complete approximately 500 direct contact hours before applying for an APA approved clinical internship. Since clinical students are advised to spend no more than 10 hours/week on all clinical activities during their time at Yale, it typically requires 5 years of training to complete these hours. Students typically apply to internship during the fifth year, and complete the internship during the 6th year of training.

Remediation and Termination.

Any significant problems that arise during clinical training should be discussed promptly with the DCT and the student's research advisor. If a student is not earning expected grades in clinical courses, and/or is not receiving ratings of 3 or above on all rating scales, a remediation plan will be formulated together with the Director of Clinical Training and clinical faculty. The remediation plan will include additional training opportunities that target the deficiencies in specific competencies, a clear time frame for completion of remedial training, and a process for reassessment of the identified deficiencies. If remediation efforts have not resulted in significant improvement within the specified time frame, the student will become ineligible for continuation in the clinical program. If the student remains in good standing with respect to all other departmental requirements (coursework and research requirements), and the deficiency identified within the clinical training program is unlikely to compromise the student's ability to succeed in another area of graduate study in psychology (cognitive, developmental, social, neuroscience) the student will be eligible to petition to transfer into another area. The student and clinical faculty would discuss this possibility with the Director of Graduate Studies, who would discuss this option with the psychology faculty at a departmental meeting. The faculty would vote on the transfer of areas and the decision of the faculty would be communicated to the student.

Criminal Background Checks

Successful completion of the Yale graduate program in clinical psychology requires participation in a clinical practicum every year as well as an APA-approved clinical internship. Some of the practicum placements and all internship sites require completion of a criminal background check prior to initiating clinical duties. Some sites will consider individuals with even a minor misdemeanor on their records to be ineligible for participation. Similarly, some state licensing boards consider a misdemeanor as evidence of "moral turpitude" and will not grant a license to practice psychology to anyone with a criminal record of any kind. It is important that you are aware of this before applying for training in clinical psychology at Yale so that you can make sure that your background is suitable for clinical practice, internship and licensure requirements.

Once enrolled at Yale, students must meet standards of personal conduct described in the Yale Graduate School of Arts & Sciences Programs and Policies (http://www.yale.edu/printer/bulletin/htmlfiles/grad/policies-and-regulations.html#personal_conduct), which includes the following statements about students: "They are expected to abide by the regulations of the University. They are also expected to obey local, state, and federal laws, and violations of these may be cause for discipline by the Graduate School. Students are required to report misdemeanor and felony charges to their associate dean."

Licensure

Students may also be interested in meeting requirements for state Licensure to practice Clinical Psychology. These requirements vary by state. The requirements include course work, supervised training in evidence-based practice, and a clinical internship. Content areas that are relevant for licensure are included in the course requirements of our clinical doctoral program.

Although the requirements specified above are typical of most state licensure boards, it is the student's responsibility to investigate any particular licensure requirements in states where they may ultimately be employed. Resources and consultation are available from the Director of Clinical Training.

CURRICULUM

Purpose and Rationale

The curriculum in clinical psychology is designed to advance the mission of the program. As such, it is integrated with clinical and research training and is focused on the development of conceptual and practical skills. The ultimate aims are for students to apply these skills in innovative research projects and for both the conduct and evaluation of clinical work to be guided by the application of science. The curriculum, in conjunction with clinical experiences, also prepares students for internship and licensure.

The Department of Psychology at Yale has a tradition of flexibility in the curriculum, while emphasizing that students need to be trained in a consistent philosophy of science and must acquire essential research skills. The curriculum, therefore, provides more structure in the early years of training, and more flexibility in later years.

Courses

Students in clinical psychology must meet all the requirements of the Department in relation to core courses, statistics, and progression toward the Ph.D. degree. In addition, students must meet breadth requirements so that they are eligible for licensure upon completion of an APA approved internship and all Ph.D. requirements. Clinical students are expected to complete the following courses in the first four years of training.

Required Courses

Biological Bases of Behavior

Psyc 513: Biological Bases of Psychopathology (Tyrone Cannon)

Cognitive Bases of Behavior

Select ONE of the following courses:

Psyc 579: Thinking (Woo Kyoung Ahn)

Psyc 509: Social Cognition (John Bargh)

Affective Bases of Behavior

604- Cognitions and Emotion: (Matthias Siemer)

605 – Social and Emotional Relationships (Margaret Clark)

Social Bases of Behavior

Select ONE of the following courses:

Psyc 509: Social Cognition (John Bargh)

Psyc 625: Cognitive and Social Bases of Perception (Brian Scholl)*

*pending approval by APA

Psychopathology

Psyc 539: Psychopathology and Its Treatment/Advanced Psychopathology (Jutta Joormann)

Psychological Measurement, Research Methods, and Treatment Evaluation

Psyc 541: Research Methods and Treatment Evaluation in Clinical Psychology

Psyc 643: Psychological Measurement and Evidence-Based Assessment of Psychotherapy

Outcome and Individual Differences in Cognitive Functioning and Personality

Human Development

Psyc 556: Human Development and Developmental Psychopathology

Techniques of Data Analysis

Psyc 518: Multivariate Statistics (Jara-Ettinger)

History and Systems of Psychology

Psyc 719: Current Work in Clinical Psychology: History and Systems

Professional Issues: Ethics, Diversity, Consultation and Supervision

Psyc 690/800: Diversity, Ethics, Supervision, Consultation, and Assessment Practicum

Theories and Methods of Assessment and Diagnosis

Psyc 689: Diagnostic Interviewing

Psyc 643: Psychological Measurement and Evidence-Based Assessment of Psychotherapy

Outcome and Individual Differences in Cognitive Functioning and Personality

Theories and Methods of Effective Intervention

Psyc 684a and b: Introduction to Psychotherapy

Psyc 800: Clinical Practicum Series

Clinical Area Speaker Series

Psyc 720: Current Work in Clinical Psychology

Lab Meetings with Primary Faculty

Psyc 700 Series: Research Topics

We recommend advanced psychopathology and research methods courses early in training. However, the sequence of these 500 courses is not fixed, due in part to course availability and scheduling of other courses that are required (e.g., statistics). Students beginning their first year in clinical psychology plan their program in consultation with the Director of Graduate Studies and Director of Clinical Training.

In addition to the courses listed above, students are welcome to select among other offerings to meet interests and career aims.

Recommended Course Sequence for First and Second Year Students:

Fall – 1st year

1. Psyc 684a: Introduction to Psychotherapy (O'Brien)
2. Psyc 539: Psychopathology and Its Treatment/Advanced Psychopathology (Joormann)
3. Psyc 689: Diagnostic Interviewing (O'Brien)
4. Psyc 518: Multivariate Statistics (Jara-Ettinger)
5. Psyc 720: Current Work in Clinical Psychology (possible focus on diversity or history and systems, offered every 3 years).
6. 1st year research
7. Psych 700 series: Research lab meeting with primary faculty
8. Optional additional 500 level courses (e.g., social, cognitive, biological or affective bases of behavior, or human development)

Spring – 1st year

1. Psyc 684b: Introduction to Psychotherapy (O'Brien)
2. Psyc 690/800: Diversity, Ethics, Supervision, Consultation, and Assessment Practicum (O'Brien)
3. 500 level course (ideally Research Methods)
4. 500 level course (e.g., social, cognitive, biological or affective bases of behavior, or human development)
5. Psyc 720: Current Work in Clinical Psychology (possible focus on history and systems)
6. 1st year research
7. Psyc 700 series: Research lab meeting with primary faculty
8. Psyc 643: Psychological Measurement and Evidence-Based Assessment of Psychotherapy Outcome and Individual Differences in Cognitive Functioning and Personality (Mary O'Brien)

Fall – 2nd year

1. Psyc 720: Current Work in Clinical Psychology
2. Psyc 800 series: Clinical Practicum at the Yale Psychology Department Clinic
3. Psyc 700 series: Research lab meeting with primary faculty
4. 500 level course (e.g., social, cognitive, biological or affective bases of behavior, or human development)
5. 500 level course (e.g., social, cognitive, biological or affective bases of behavior, or human development)
6. Teaching Fellow Assignment

Spring – 2nd year

1. Psyc 720: Current Work in Clinical Psychology
2. Psyc 800 series: Clinical Practicum at the Yale Psychology Department Clinic
3. Psyc 700 series: Research lab meeting with primary faculty
4. 500 level course (e.g., social, cognitive, biological or affective bases of behavior, or human development)
5. 500 level course (e.g., social, cognitive, biological or affective bases of behavior, or human development)
6. Teaching Fellow Assignment

DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

This document describes graduate study at Yale specific to clinical psychology. Information on general department issues, such as requirements for the dissertation, may be obtained from the Yale website: