

**YALE CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY:
MISSION, PHILOSOPHY, AND PROGRAM STRUCTURE**

Yale University
Department of Psychology
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Accreditation Status: Fully Accredited by the Committee on Accreditation (CoA)
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TRAINING MODEL AND OBJECTIVES

Mission and Underlying Philosophy

The mission of the Clinical Psychology Program at Yale University is to educate the next generation of leading academic and research psychologists and to create an environment for advancing theory and research for both students and faculty. Within this context, clinical training is designed to help students investigate theoretically important and clinically relevant questions. 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 objectives 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. Provide exposure to a range of client populations through highly structured and supportive practicum experiences.
4. Ensure development of the skills necessary for competent clinical practice in preparation for internship through close supervision and regular feedback regarding skills in both assessment and treatment.

RESEARCH TRAINING

Consistent with the mission and objectives of the program, research skills are obtained in the classroom, as part of clinical training, and in specific research endeavors. It is the integration of these experiences that provides broad research training in clinical psychology. The purpose is to promote excellence in research that will contribute to the theoretical and empirical base of psychology.

Research Objectives

The object of research training is for students to acquire research skills, to be challenged and rewarded by the research experience, and ultimately, to become researchers. This training is designed to help students meet the following objectives.

1. Critically evaluate existing theory and research.
2. Use theory as the foundation for conceptualizing, designing, and interpreting research and applications of research.
3. Demonstrate understanding and practice of ethical research behavior.
4. Carry out research and contribute to knowledge in the field by disseminating this work.
5. Develop the research skills necessary to function as an independent clinical scientist upon graduation

Structure of Research Training

Faculty members work closely with students as mentors with the goal of nurturing the research interests of the students. The goal is excellence in research, not the conduct of research in predefined areas.

Students may work with one or more faculty members, including Department faculty outside the clinical area, as well as faculty outside the Department of Psychology. Students are free 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 from among the primary faculty in the Department of Psychology during their first year in the program. The expectation is that during the first year, students will work in this research setting. The purpose is to introduce students to the research process and to provide adequate supervision during completion of the first year project. 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. These requirements include the Pre-dissertation, Theme Essay, and Dissertation projects.

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 psychology seminar for four years, and there is the presumption that the 4th year will be a productive time for research with members of the faculty.

CLINICAL TRAINING

Clinical training is fundamental to the mission and objectives of the program. Training is integrated with the curriculum and research experience, and is designed to stimulate critical thinking, the application of theory to human problems, and ongoing evaluation of assessment, therapy, process, and outcome.

Closely supervised direct clinical experience is critical to graduate training in clinical psychology. Among the array of clinical experiences available to students are those associated with the Yale Anxiety and Mood Services and the Yale Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic (two services directed by faculty within the Department). Placements within the University and surrounding community provide additional opportunities to work with diverse clinical populations. Apart from core training experiences, additional clinical experiences are tailored to the individual interests and goals of the student.

Clinical Objectives

Clinical training in the Department is defined as the application of psychological knowledge toward applied ends. Training in clinical services is designed for students to develop specific skills not only in providing treatment, but in conceptualizing and diagnosing psychopathology as well as evaluating treatment to advance client care. The specific goals of clinical training are for students to:

1. Develop experience in multiple clinical settings with diverse client populations.
2. Develop experience in a range of clinical activities including assessment and treatment.
3. Develop fundamental skills in the delivery of mental health services. These skills include interviewing, empathic listening, and attending to a variety of verbal and nonverbal cues during assessment and treatment.
4. Develop critical appraisal of diverse treatments. Training is designed to foster an appreciation for the current empirical status and limitations of different techniques.
5. Integrate systematic assessment and evaluation in an ongoing fashion so that critical processes and progress are examined. Central to delivery of service is ongoing evaluation of the impact of treatment in light of the treatment goals.
6. Develop awareness of and sensitivity to ethics in treatment delivery and appreciation for cultural diversity through exposure to multiple clinical settings and populations.
7. Demonstrate adequate preparation for internship and licensure.

The aim of clinical training is to provide the knowledge, skills, and environment in which students draw from relevant disciplines, apply knowledge in an empirically and clinically informed way, and evaluate both theory and practice at all stages of the therapy process.

Clinical training is integrated in both principle and practice with the discipline of psychology. The discipline includes a body of theory, research, and evaluation methods that continually evolves. Beyond psychology, research from other disciplines is used for understanding, treating, and preventing psychological problems. Treatment draws from a broad knowledge base and multiple methods of inquiry to maximize the benefits for the individual.

Central Role of Theory, Research, and Evaluation

The utilization of theory, research, and evaluation occurs with each case, and forms a basis for learning about psychopathology, personality, psychotherapy process and outcome, and the development and use of assessment methods. Theory is used to conceptualize clinical problems, contextual factors, and treatment. Students are encouraged to conceptualize clinical problems from different perspectives as a means of identifying various features of presenting problems and the domains to which treatment may be directed.

Assessment and evaluation are critical to clinical practice. Two types of assessment are broadly defined as relevant. At the point of intake, systematic diagnostic assessment is used to provide a comprehensive characterization of the client's current situation, concerns, and functioning. This includes a semi-structured diagnostic interview (i.e., SCID) to assess areas of psychopathology, functioning, and demographic information. Additional assessments are added that focus on the client's specific concerns.

The second type of assessment begins and continues throughout the treatment process. Treatment is evaluated to assess client progress, critical processes, clinical or research hypotheses, and attainment of goals. This assessment combines with clinical impressions and anecdotal information for understanding the case, and is by nature individualized for a given client. At the point a treatment plan is formulated, methods for evaluating treatment are planned and are described explicitly. The information obtained from this ongoing process is used as the basis for sustaining or modifying the nature of treatment.

Guiding Principles for Delivery of Clinical Care

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. Empirically supported 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 nature of treatment 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.
6. Assessment and treatment are conducted to ensure the protection of the individual client and are consistent with ethical guidelines.

Clinical Teams and Other Practicum Opportunities

Members of the Clinical Faculty direct clinical teams that embody the integration of science with practice. Each team carries out research in its specialty and/or bases its work on the latest research and theoretical work in the field. Students take part in clinical experiences, are exposed to research, and in some cases, may chose to be engaged in research projects.

The clinical teams share a common set of values derived from the mission of the clinical program. These teams, and all approved practicum placements share these values and:

1. Provide structure in the form of meetings and other training experiences that integrate research with clinical work.
2. Engage in the empirical evaluation of treatment.
3. Provide supervision that is consistent with the values of the program and relies on current research to guide treatment planning.

Structure of Clinical Training

Year 1 begins the mentoring process by which students are exposed to the different clinical teams offered by the program and take relevant course work (Introduction to Psychotherapy Technique, Psychopathology and Diagnostic Assessment, and Ethics and Clinical Practice) to begin the development of clinical skills. Students begin doing intake evaluations, may observe clients being treated, and may take part in supervision meetings. Students with interests relevant to a given team may take part in that team in any year, subject to approval by the team leader, but students in their first year will not be assigned treatment cases and will not register for any team as a course.

During the first semester of the first year, students:

1. Learn relevant local laws pertaining to mental health practice and ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct.
2. Role-play an initial evaluation with an advanced graduate student who takes the part of a client, and discuss this interview with the advanced student and supervisor.
3. Learn about the phenomenology and assessment of both Axis I and II psychopathology.
4. Observe an initial diagnostic evaluation (i.e., SCID) conducted by an advanced graduate student, postdoctoral fellow, or faculty member, and meet with the therapist and supervisor (if relevant) to discuss the intake.

During the second semester of the first year, students:

1. Conduct at least three structured diagnostic intake interviews under the guidance of a postdoctoral fellow or faculty member.
2. Write a history report based on information obtained during the interview.
3. Attend case conference meeting to formally present the case and determine a disposition.
4. Develop proficiency in conducting initial evaluations so that the intensity of supervision is gradually diminished.

By the end of the second semester, students should be able to conduct an initial evaluation, present the case at case conference, write an integrated history, psychosocial, and diagnostic assessment report, and provide treatment recommendations.

During the second year of the program, students are required to take part in placements in one of the two core departmental clinics, which include placements related to adult psychopathology (Yale Anxiety and Mood Services) and childhood psychopathology (Yale Parenting Center and Child Conduct Clinic). These placements involve work over 1-2 years. The census for each team will vary depending on instructional plans and student interest. The minimum and maximum number of students on each team will be determined by the team leader. In the event that more students wish to participate on a team than can be accommodated in a given year, students doing research in the topic area addressed by the team (e.g., students whose main advisor is the team leader) will be given priority. The second criteria for matching students with teams will be seniority.

Placements on clinical teams are designed to offer students an introduction to a specific clinical population, the training necessary to conceptualize a clinical problem in light of theory and existing research, and supervision in assessment and treatment. Students wishing more intensive training may remain with a team (with permission) for as long as desired.

Students must complete two additional years (years 3 and 4 of the program) of clinical training either in the departmental clinics or in external clinical placements. Students may choose training experiences in approved external practicum sites beginning in year 3. To be approved for work in such a site, students must meet with the Director of Clinical Training who will ensure that the training is consistent with the mission and objectives of the clinical program, and that an adequate supervision plan is in place. The DCT will serve as the liaison between the external practicum site and the clinical program, eliciting input from both the student and the supervisor on a periodic basis (no less than twice each year). Information provided by external supervisors will be communicated to the clinical faculty at bi-annual meetings reviewing student progress.

CURRICULUM

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 research 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 enriched by the application of science. The curriculum, in conjunction with clinical experiences, also prepares students for internship and licensure.

Educational Objectives

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. Although any two students will rarely complete the exact same sequence of courses, the specific curriculum completed by each student must meet the overall educational objectives of the training program, the CoA, and state licensing boards.

1. Complete coursework in the breadth of psychology while completing sufficient specialized coursework in clinical psychology to provide the basis for effective clinical research and practice.
2. Demonstrate mastery of both broad and specialized content covered through coursework.

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. Information on departmental requirements may be obtained from the Registrar of the Department of Psychology, as discussed later in this document. Clinical students are expected to complete the following courses specifically within clinical psychology in the first four years of training.

Required Courses

PSYC 518	Data Analysis: Quantitative Variables
PSYC 539	Psychopathology and Its Treatment
PSYC 541	Research Methods in Psychology
PSYC 643	Diagnosis and Assessment
PSYC 684a	Introduction to Psychotherapy Technique
PSYC 684b	Introduction to Psychotherapy Technique
PSYC 689	Psychopathology and Diagnostic Assessment
PSYC 690	Ethics and Clinical Practice
PSYC 720	Current Works in Clinical Psychology
PSYC 7--	Research Topics (each year)
PSYC 8--	Clinical Team Rotation I
PSYC 8--	Clinical Team Rotation II
PSYC 8--	Clinical Team Rotation III

Courses Meeting Remaining APA and Licensure Requirements (students must take at least one course from each major content area)

Biological Aspects of Behavior

PSYC 522: Mapping the Human Brain
 PSYC 526: Research Methods in Human Neuroscience
 PSYC 532: Gene-Environment Interplay

Cognitive/Affective Aspects of Behavior

PSYC 523: Cognitive Neuroscience
 PSYC 524: Concepts and Categorization
 PSYC 605: Emotion and Cognitive Control

Social Aspects of Behavior

PSYC 509: Social Cognition
 PSYC 557: Social Psychology and Relationships

History and Systems of Psychology

PSYC 543: History and Development of Psychological Theory
 PSYC 615: Psychology and Psychotherapy: History, Systems & Practice

Individual Differences in Behavior

PSYC 505: Stereotyping and Prejudice
 PSYC 528: Gender and Psychopathology
 PSYC 670: Personality and Individual Differences

Human Development

PSYC 501: Social-Cognitive Development
 PSYC 556: Developmental Psychopathology

Recommended Elective Courses

PSYC 504 Neurobiology of Emotion
 PSYC 507 Health Psychology
 PSYC 520 Multivariate Statistics: Observable Variables
 PSYC 521 Multivariate Statistics: Latent Variables
 PSYC 616 Psychopathology and Cognitive Processing
 PSYC 630 Graduate Seminar in Writing
 PSYC 636 Psychological and Methodological Diversity
 PSYC 637 Emotion Function & Dysfunction
 PSYC 659 Addictive Behaviors

We recommend psychotherapy, assessment, and research methods courses early in training. However, the sequence of these 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. Special courses are offered in several topic areas related to assessment, models of personality, intervention, clinical work, and others.

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, and a clinical internship. Content areas that are relevant for licensure in many states are included in the following excerpt from the document entitled "State of Connecticut, Department of Health Services, State Licensing Requirements for Psychologists" (2004):

"Acceptable evidence of applicant course work shall document satisfactory completion of a minimum of six graduate semester hours...of study in scientific methods of psychology, including the study of research design and methodology, statistics, and psychometrics. Not less than three graduate semester hours...of the applicant's study in scientific methods of psychology shall be in research design, methodology, and statistics."

"The applicant shall demonstrate that the content of his doctoral program was primarily psychological by completion of classroom instruction in at least three of the following four substantive basic sciences areas:

"(A) BIOLOGICAL BASES OF BEHAVIOR, for example, physiological psychology, comparative psychology, neuropsychology, sensation and perception, psychopharmacology.

"(B) COGNITIVE-AFFECTIVE BASES OF BEHAVIOR, for example, learning, thinking, motivation, emotion.

"(C) SOCIAL BASES OF BEHAVIOR, for example, social psychology, group processes, organizational and systems theory.

"(D) INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES, for example, personality theory, human development, abnormal psychology.

"Acceptable evidence of applicant course work shall document satisfactory completion of a total of at least twenty-one graduate semester hours...of classroom instruction encompassing at least three of the four substantive content areas specified in this criterion. The requirements of this subsection shall not be satisfied by any course which had a predominately applied or clinical focus."

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.

DEPARTMENTAL OPPORTUNITIES AND REQUIREMENTS

This document describes graduate study at Yale specific to clinical psychology. Information on general department issues, such as teaching opportunities and requirements for the dissertation, may be obtained from the Registrar, Department of Psychology, Yale University, Box 208205, New Haven, CT 06520-8205 (203-432-4518).