

**CPTP**  
**Clinical Psychology Training Program**  
(an APA accredited program)\*

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# **Clinical Psychology Training Program**

## **Department of Psychology**

### **University of Nebraska–Lincoln**

The Clinical Psychology Training Program (CPTP) at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln is accredited by the American Psychological Association. The program exists within the Department of Psychology in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln campus. It is one of the oldest clinical training programs in the country, having had continuous accreditation since 1948. The program's historical roots and orientation to training through the years have been described in numerous professional articles (Cole & Magnussen, 1966; DiLillo & McChargue, 2007; Hargrove, 1991; Hargrove & Howe, 1981; Hargrove & Spaulding, 1988; Hope, Hansen, & Cole, 1994; Howe, 1974; Howe & Neimeyer, 1979; Jones & Levine, 1963; Rivers, 1992; Rivers & Cole, 1976).

Historically, the University of Nebraska's Clinical Psychology Training Program was described as community-clinical. This description represents a fundamental alignment with clinical psychology's focus on understanding the troubled person while recognizing the importance of the community context on the lives of individuals, and the necessity for intervention at both the individual and community level. Our students are confronted (through therapy and assessment) with individuals who have problems coping with life. Our students also become involved with the social institutions and agencies that have a significant effect on these people, through practicum placement consultation, supervision, teaching, and/or program development. The program emphasizes research training, both applied and basic, that involves both clinical and community agencies or resources.

To accomplish our goal of training within this perspective, we emphasize individually supervised involvement by students in both research and professional activities. Formal courses and seminars supplement the student's research and professional development. This approach requires a one-to-one relationship between faculty and students. We also believe clinical psychologists must have their roots firmly established in the general principles of psychological science. Scientific competence requires progressively developed, hands-on research experience. Clinical competence requires intensive clinical training that emphasizes practice in a multicultural context with the flexibility to adapt to changes in the profession. A program oriented toward technological skills, survey knowledge of general psychology, limited professional exposure, or cursory training in research methodology cannot hope to produce students who can cope with the social and individual demands of psychology today and in the future. We expect students to develop the skills necessary to become the leaders and innovators in an ever-changing profession.

The CPTP follows the Boulder Model of clinical training and places responsibility for both research and professional training primarily within the doctoral program of studies. The certification and assurance of competencies in both areas remains a core responsibility of the faculty. The epistemological suppositions of understanding behavior within a multicultural social system, measurement principles, and conceptual and scientific views

of aberrant human conditions are incorporated into this process. Consequently both professional and research training are continuous processes within the program that are supervised and monitored by the faculty. Neither professional training nor research training is secondary or adjunctive to the other; rather both are interrelated and both are equal values of training. We believe a therapist should also be a scholar and vice versa.

The Department of Psychology, including the CPTP, follows a “junior colleague” training model. Graduate students are encouraged to become involved in the ongoing development of the program and students are viewed as colleagues in a common endeavor with the faculty. The Graduate Student Association (GSA) in the Department serves as a forum for student participation. Students elect peers to serve as voting members in Department faculty meetings, Department Committees, and the Clinical Faculty meetings. Department and CPTP policies are significantly influenced by student participation. Students are also involved in the overall evaluation of the program. Graduate students are expected to collaborate with faculty on research rather than being research assistants apprenticed to individual faculty.

We take pride in the collegiality among the students themselves and between students and faculty. A strength of this program has been the common pride in professional development among students and faculty, and the rapport and sense of relatedness that we share. We also take pride in our commitment to recruit and train a diverse student body. We believe that experience with diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds and traditions are essential for clinical psychologists, and that the survival of psychology as a professional and scientific community depends on diverse representation among its membership. It is important to us that this atmosphere continues to be a significant characteristic of the Clinical Psychology Training Program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

## **Is This Program for You?**

The Clinical Psychology Training Program at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln is well suited for the individual who is interested in a professional career that involves both the scientific understanding of people and the application of this knowledge to human problems in living. A number of programs currently emphasize clinical or professional training with research and scientific training comprising a limited, adjunctive or secondary part of the program. Alternatively, a number of programs in the country emphasize research training with comparatively less emphasis on clinical training. The Clinical Training Program at Nebraska emphasizes the development of both clinical and research skills.

If you are interested primarily or exclusively in a program that emphasizes clinical skills, then our program is probably not for you. If you are primarily interested in a research career in clinical psychology, our program may fit your needs. To best determine this, you should carefully evaluate current research interests of individual faculty for your consideration of collaborative relationships.

To be successful in our program, the graduate student must be serious about developing both research and professional skills. It is crucial that you have sound ethical sensitivity to the rights and welfare of others, because you will be involved with sensitive and serious human problems during your training. Academic skills are important, but just as important are the maturity and consistent dedication required by our demanding program. If you have strengths in the ability to relate to others effectively, and if you have maturity and persistence grounded in sound intellectual competence and high ethical standards to develop your potential as a scientist-practitioner, then our program may meet your needs. Indeed, we believe that with our current faculty, program, and students, we have one of the top clinical training programs in the country. We take pride in the morale of our program and the mutual support we receive from one another, faculty and students together, as we undertake the learning enterprise.

## **Program Requirements**

The CPTP provides a systematic, progressive, and individualized program of training. Although a master's degree is included in the sequence of training, the program is oriented towards the Ph.D. degree as the final certification of accomplishment. For most students, training will consist of four years of full time training followed by a full time, fifth year, predoctoral clinical internship. Students also seeking the Master of Legal Studies (MLS) degree should expect to add an additional year of predoctoral training given the additional requirements. Students who have received prior graduate training may accelerate their training if the faculty approves the adequacy of prior training. All clinical and academic training is normally completed before the predoctoral internship is undertaken. All students must have their dissertation proposals approved prior to applying for internship, and are encouraged to have their data collected before leaving for internship.

The pre-internship phase of training is divided roughly into 2 two-year segments. The first two years of the program emphasize a core curriculum in psychology and the development of entry-level research and clinical skills. Courses in the first year emphasize basic psychological knowledge, research methodology and psychometrics, an introduction to the area of clinical psychology, individual assessment, psychopathology, psychotherapy, and ethical principles in science and practice. During the first semester of the first year, students participate in faculty research groups and develop a research prospectus. In their second semester they work with a research advisor, develop a research proposal and initiate a master's equivalence research project. During the second year of the first phase of training, students work on their master's equivalence research project, begin their first supervised practicum (Clinical Intervention I & II) through the Psychological Consultation Center (the Clinical Psychology Training Program's clinic for research, training, and service), and complete their core curriculum. This second year of clinical training is postponed for MLS students who participate in legal studies at the UNL College of Law during this time. Other clinical training requirements are simply delayed for one year as a result.

At the end of this first phase of training (after the second semester of the second year), each student in good standing in the program takes an oral exam conducted by three clinical faculty members. The purpose of this exam is to demonstrate that the student can take an evidence-based approach to clinical practice and has entry level clinical skills in assessment and therapy. In effect, the clinical faculty then certifies these skills by conferring the master's degree upon successful completion of this exam and the first two years of professional and research training. This exam also serves as the first exam of the Ph.D. comprehensive examination process, which will be completed in the fourth year.

Phase two occurs during the third and fourth year in the program. This phase of training includes continued practicum training in the Psychological Consultation Center as well as placements in community-based research or clinical agencies. Clinical practica focus on improving basic assessment and therapeutic skills and providing training in specialized clinical areas. Current practicum sites include a variety of community agencies in Lincoln, including outpatient and residential settings for children, adolescents, and adults.

During the third year of training, students who have not already done so are finishing their master's equivalency research project and beginning to develop ideas for a dissertation proposal. At this level of training, students are also expected to disseminate the results of their research efforts in the form of local and national conferences and publications. By the fourth year of training, most students are primarily involved in their individually tailored research and professional training activities with most course curricula completed except for a few advanced seminars. During this phase, students develop and present their dissertation research proposals, and begin collecting dissertation data. Also in the fourth year, students complete the Ph.D. comprehensive exam and, upon successful completion of all areas of training to date, the clinical faculty approves the student for a predoctoral internship. A capstone ethics and professional issues course is taken during the final semester prior to internship.

## Course Requirements

The minimum course and credit hour requirements for the Clinical Psychology Training Program are as follows:

Core Clinical Courses	18 hours
Clinical Proseminar	
Psychopathology Proseminar	
Assessment I & II	
Psychotherapy	
Diversity course	
3 Statistics and Research Design Courses	9 hours
2 Ethics Seminars	2 hours
1 Teaching Methods	1 hour
Interviewing	3 hours
Clinical Intervention I & II	6 hours

Practicum	12–24 hours
Master’s Equivalency Research	8 hours
APA area courses (listed below), area of emphasis, minors or elective courses	24–27 hours
Dissertation	18–24 hours
<b>TOTAL</b>	Approximately: 101–117 hours

Included in the above minimum course requirements must be at least one course from each of the following areas:

- History and systems
- Biological bases of behavior
- Cognitive and affective bases of behavior
- Social bases of behavior
- Individual behavior

The Department of Psychology provides one or more seminars at the graduate level in each of these areas. Proseminars can be selected from the following: Conditioning and Learning, Cognitive, Developmental, Personality, Social Behavior, Sensation-Perception, and Physiological. The Clinical, Psychopathology, and History and Philosophy proseminars are required of all clinical students.

## Sample Program

	Fall	Spring	Summer
<b>First Year</b>	Statistics/Methods Assessment I Clinical Proseminar MERP Teaching Methods	APA content area course Evidence-Based Clinical Interviewing Psychopathology MERP Ethics	MERP
<b>Second Year</b>	APA content area course Clinical Intervention I Assessment II Psychotherapy MERP	APA content area course Clinical Intervention II Statistics Course MERP	Practicum MERP Elective
<b>Third Year</b>	Practicum Research Electives and remaining courses	Practicum Research History and Philosophy	Practicum Research
<b>Fourth</b>	Practicum	Practicum	Practicum

Year	Dissertation Electives	Dissertation Ethics	Dissertation
<b>Fifth Year</b>	One-year predoctoral internship		

## Advising and the Supervisory Committee

When students arrive on campus for orientation, they are assigned faculty advisors to assist in registering for courses and to guide them in planning their program. Students who are entering the CPTP for the first time are expected to attend the Orientation Program, which is conducted during the week prior to the first semester of the first year. The Orientation Program provides practical guides to graduate training, an overview of training expectancies, and basic graduate training principles and philosophies.

During the second year of training, students who have successfully completed all requirements to that date (including an approved master’s equivalency research proposal, two statistics courses, and three semesters in the program) form a Supervisory Committee. The Supervisory Committee comprise at least four faculty members, two of which must be members of the clinical faculty, one of which must be a faculty member in the department but outside the clinical faculty, and one of which must be from outside the Department.

The Chair of the Supervisory Committee functions as the advisor once the Committee is appointed by the Office of Graduate Studies. Additional advising is available from the Director of the CPTP. In cooperation with their Supervisory Committees, students develop an individualized program of study that is filed with the University Graduate Office. The program of study officially specifies the coursework, practical experiences, research, and other training for which the Ph.D. is awarded. It must include all program requirements (e.g., core clinical courses, other required courses, dissertation, an APA approved internship, etc.) but also has significant flexibility for electives and specialization. Students use their electives to pursue additional coursework, clinical training, and/or research in a particular area(s).

## Program of Study

Our program offers a breadth of opportunities with regard to coursework, research projects, and practicum experiences. As indicated above, students work with their advisors and supervisory committees to develop individualized plans of study, which may emphasize depth or breadth. That is, while there is a significant degree of breadth of training inherent in the general program requirements, students vary in the extent to which they focus their work in specific areas.

At the broadest level, training can be divided into “adult” and “child and family” areas. Within each of these broad areas, however, a wide variety of topics are represented in

course offerings, and research and practicum opportunities. For example, in the adult area, courses are offered in assessment, psychopathology, and psychotherapy. Courses specific to child and family include child psychopathology and assessment, child therapy, marriage and family therapy, and family violence.

A wide variety of practicum experiences are also available and may be specific to adult populations, child populations or both. For example, all of our students see clients through our in-house clinic, the Psychological Consultation Center (PCC). The clients seen at the PCC include adult, child, couples, and families. We also have placements at the Lincoln Regional Center (an inpatient state psychiatric hospital) in the adult forensic mental health services unit and in the Lancaster County Community Mental Health Center (outpatient and partial hospitalization programs). Various community based substance abuse practicum opportunities such as the placement at Houses of Hope are also available. In addition, there are practicum placements at Lincoln Correctional Center, People's Health Center (a primary care facility), a Premier Psychiatric (a private psychiatric practice), and the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services. These practica are conceived as educational partnerships between the CPTP and outside agencies. As such, they serve as clinical assistantships that come with a stipend and a tuition waiver granted by Graduate Studies. This arrangement eliminates the need for students to maintain an additional assistantship while completing outside practica.

## **Examples of Program of Study Emphases**

Although the following divisions do not fully capture the range of opportunities available to students in our program, they provide an overview of the types of experiences from which students may choose to become involved. The areas listed below each have coursework, practica, and research experiences associated with them.

### **Clinical and Experimental Psychopathology**

Psychopathology is the scientific study of psychological disorders. Students wishing to create a program of study focused on clinical and experimental psychopathology have numerous opportunities. Current research programs focus on schizophrenia, PTSD, information processing models of psychopathology, and adult anxiety disorders.

### **Family and Relationship Violence**

A number of students choose an individualized program of study that emphasizes family and relationship violence issues. Courses taught related to this topic include Family Violence, Marriage and Family Therapy, and occasional related developmental and clinical seminars. Research topics studied under this heading include the investigation of characteristics of perpetrators, the correlates and consequences of child abuse, and

assessment and intervention with child abusive families. Research opportunities have occurred in collaboration with community agencies, domestic violence shelters, the police department, and the Nebraska justice system. Family violence clients are seen at a number of our placement sites.

## **Forensic Psychology**

An increasingly popular topic of study within the clinical program is forensic psychology. As with the other areas discussed, students with an interest in forensic psychology can avail themselves of coursework, practicum placements, and research projects with this emphasis. For example, courses are offered in forensic assessment and various mental health law classes which cover a wide array of topics (e.g., stalking, domestic abuse). Practicum placements include the forensic mental health unit at the Lincoln Regional Center (a state psychiatric hospital), and Lincoln Correctional Center. Furthermore, many faculty have forensic research interests. What also sets apart forensic training is the opportunity to receive law instruction that is integrated into clinical training (See **Training in Clinical Psychology and Law** below).

## **Mental Health Policy**

The clinical psychology program offers additional options for students interested in integrated studies of mental health, law, and social policy. Coursework in this area could include the department's seminar in program evaluation, law courses that address mental health and related topics, and various policy-related courses in the political science, sociology and public administration departments. Research opportunities include therapeutic jurisprudence (using the law for therapeutic benefit), clinical decision making related to law and policy, and mental health system reform. Practicum opportunities include placements in the state health and human services department and various mental health agencies. Students who wish to specialize in this area should consider including the Master of Legal Studies (MLS) track of the UNL Psychology-Law Program, or the University's multi-departmental Public Policy Certificate Program, in their program of studies.

## **Treatment Process and Outcome**

There are also various opportunities for studying treatment process and outcome. Specific research projects in this area have included examining predictors of successful treatment, adapting protocols developed for research to non-research clinical settings, treatment outcome of cognitive therapy for chronic schizophrenia, behavioral parent training, social skills assessment and intervention with children and adolescents, the treatment of child victims of sexual abuse, treatment effectiveness of programs for domestic violence perpetrators as well as for battered women and children living in a shelter, and treatment effectiveness related to adult forensic and sex offender populations.

## **Neuropsychology Opportunities**

We do not offer a specialized program of study in traditional neuropsychology. However, many of our students, especially in experimental psychopathology and forensic psychology, consider neuropsychology and related areas to be an important part of their training. A graduate course in neuropsychological assessment is available, and several practicum placements provide clinical experience in this area. In addition, courses in neurosciences, such as neuroanatomy and neuroendocrinology, are available in other departments of the University. Students from this program who wish to continue training toward formal specialization and credentialing in clinical neuropsychology have been successful in gaining admission to nationally recognized internship and postdoctoral training programs for that purpose.

## **Training in Clinical Psychology and Law**

The UNL Clinical Psychology Training Program collaborates with the UNL Law Psychology program to prepare students for careers in research and clinical practice that combine behavioral science, mental health, and legal scholarship. This may include earning the Master of Legal Studies (MLS) degree as well as the Ph.D. in clinical psychology. Areas of study within clinical psychology and law include mental health law and policy, therapeutic jurisprudence (using the law for therapeutic purposes) and forensic psychology. Students interested in forensic psychology should consider the Forensic Psychology Training Program and forensic minor options. Students interested in mental health law, policy, therapeutic jurisprudence or other applications of law in clinical psychology should contact clinical faculty with interests similar to their own.

**The Master of Legal Studies Degree Program** is designed for individuals who are interested in developing a formal understanding of the law as it affects their research and practice in psychology. It is not for individuals preparing to practice law. Students enrolled in the program are required to complete 33 credit hours of coursework in the College of Law, including three hours of Legal Research and Writing and six hours of Contracts, Property, or Torts. The MLS degree is conferred upon the successful completion of the 33 credit hours and an oral final examination. More detailed information regarding the MLS degree is available at <http://law.unl.edu/mls.html>.

Clinical Ph.D./MLS applicants must apply to the College of Law for the MLS degree after admission to the Clinical Program.

Clinical Ph.D./MLS students should expect an extra year duration for their graduate training compared to other graduate students. Their law coursework will be completed in the second year of graduate school, although their involvement in law psychology research and practicum training extends throughout their Ph.D. program of studies. MLS students

are required to participate in the Law/Psychology research seminar and other related activities. In addition, MLS students will be required to perform relevant psycholegal research related to Masters-level and Dissertation research projects.

**Training in Forensic Psychology at UNL** is designed to prepare students for careers in research and clinical practice related to forensic and legal processes. The program is operated jointly by the Clinical Psychology Training Program and the Law Psychology Program. Both programs strive to train scientist-practitioners who engage in legally sensitive clinical and research activity. This program best suits the applicant who desires to engage in active research and clinical activity. *The Forensic Psychology Training Program is not intended for individuals who desire training in “behavioral profiling” or “criminal investigative analysis.”*

Consistent with the philosophy of the Department of Psychology, faculty strive to integrate research activity within multiple clinical and other applied contexts. Graduates who have obtained extensive forensic training have subsequently been employed in a wide range of settings, including forensic hospitals, academia, policy settings, federal law enforcement, and public sector mental health settings.

Forensic psychology training at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln includes the Ph.D. in clinical psychology and the Master of Legal Studies (MLS). Students completing the Ph.D. and MLS are admitted to both the Clinical and Law-Psychology Training Programs. The goal of training is specialization in forensic practice and research. Individuals with such training are expected to perform legally-informed research and clinical practice related to forensic mental health issues.

**The Forensic Psychology Minor** is designed for students who desire specialized forensic psychology training but choose not to complete the MLS. For a Forensic Minor, the following coursework is required in addition to the regular Clinical Training requirements (there may be some overlap of these requirements in some students’ program of studies): Forensic Assessment, Mental Health Law, and Law & Behavioral Sciences Proseminar or Topics in Law and Psychology. In addition, students must take at least one of the following law courses for at least three credits: Criminal Law, Criminal Procedure, Family Law, Juvenile Law, or Torts.

Clinical training is an important component of the forensic minor. Forensic students receive at least 1000 hours of practicum experience involving assessment or services to legally-involved populations. Forensic students also have access to other practicum opportunities in the clinical psychology program. Students who choose to minor in forensic psychology have proved very competitive for prestigious internships, where solid clinical preparation is prerequisite. For more information on Clinical Psychology and Law training at UNL see: [http://www.unl.edu/psypage/grad/JD\\_PhD.pdf](http://www.unl.edu/psypage/grad/JD_PhD.pdf).

## Training in Quantitative Methods and Diversity

All students are required to take 9 hours of quantitative methods/statistics and 3 hours of a diversity course. However, additional training in both of these areas is available in the

department as a whole. Graduate students in psychology, including clinical, may choose to complete an informal “quant minor” or “diversity concentration” that involve additional coursework inside and outside the department and a comprehensive exam. The specific courses for these concentrations are identified with the supervisory committee, in accord with established guidelines. The diversity concentration typically focuses on gender, race/ethnicity, or sexual minorities. Methodology training and the science of psychology is clearly reflected in all courses, practica and research experiences in the clinical program. Similarly, it should be noted that classes and practicum training clearly reflect the contemporary multicultural context in which we all live and practice psychology. However, we recognize that some students may wish to seek additional formalized training related to quantitative methods or diversity.

## **Prior Graduate Training**

Students who enter the CPTP who have had prior graduate training may, with individualized approval of the CPTP Faculty, accelerate their Ph.D. training program. Students who have a master’s degree based upon an empirical thesis may substitute the master’s thesis for the master’s equivalency research project requirement of our program if the thesis has been read and approved by two UNL Department of Psychology faculty members. A student’s Supervisory Committee has the option to review and approve prior graduate academic work as a substitute for program of study course requirements when that graduate work is academically equivalent to graduate coursework normally approved by the Graduate Committee and is consistent with the overall program of courses. For students who do not yet have a Supervisory Committee, approval to substitute a prior course for a current course is granted by the professor who teaches that course in the Department and the student’s advisor.

Students with prior clinical training may petition the Clinical Faculty to have that training substitute for existing CPTP clinical courses and practicum requirements. A review of prior training by the CPTP Faculty must demonstrate that the training is equivalent to the required stages of training in the CPTP. Included in this review must be some type of evaluation of the student’s clinical training or experience from one or more qualified supervisors. For example, some students with prior practicum training and a master’s degree may petition for a community practicum placement earlier than the normal third year in the program. The student must provide documented evidence that he/she has entry level clinical skills, a master’s degree, and is in good standing in the CPTP before being placed in a community practicum placement. The Evidence-Based Interviewing and Clinical Intervention courses are required of all students in the CPTP.

## **Master’s Degree**

Students are expected to obtain a master's degree as they progress toward the Ph.D. degree. The master's degree in the CPTP represents the successful completion of the first two years of training including the development of an approved master's equivalency research proposal, and completion of the clinical oral exam. The oral exam for this degree is given at the end of the second year and serves three functions:

1. It is the final exam for the two course Clinical Intervention I & II sequence.
2. It is the first exam of the Ph.D. comprehensive examination, which will be completed in the fourth year.
3. It is the oral exam for the master's degree.

In effect, the master's degree is the public assurance and certification by the clinical faculty that the student has entry-level clinical skills. Specifically, the student must demonstrate to the clinical faculty that she/he, under supervision, can sustain a productive therapeutic relationship with a client, apply scientific understanding to clinical activity, and write a meaningful statement assessing an individual problem.

The master's degree represents a midpoint in professional development as a student progresses toward the Ph.D. degree. It should be noted that the master's degree is considered to be part of the overall Ph.D. program of studies. Students are not accepted into the CPTP specifically to pursue the master's degree.

## **Clinical Training**

In recent years, the Clinical Psychology Training Program has systematically integrated the APA evidence-based practice model across all of our clinical training. The model has been referred to as a "three-legged stool" of integrating the best research evidence, clinical expertise, and client preference and characteristics. For example the report writing in our training clinic and the clinical oral examination explicitly use the evidence-based practice model as a framework. We believe this is an ideal model for a Boulder program because it explicitly guides developing psychologists to incorporate scientific evidence, their growing clinical expertise, and important personal and cultural factors for the client in psychological assessment and treatment. Although evidence-based practice does not imply a particular theoretical framework, the faculty conceptualize cases primarily from a cognitive behavioral or behavioral framework and this model guides much of the clinical training.

All students take core clinical coursework, including a year-long assessment sequence, a basic psychotherapy course, and specialty seminars that meet students training goals (e.g., child therapy, marriage and family therapy, psychopharmacology, etc.). Practicum training begins in the second year with a two-semester course called Clinical Intervention I & II that is conducted in the Psychological Consultation Clinic (PCC), our in-house clinic for research, training, and service. Students comprising the second-year class spend 8 hours in

the clinic with a faculty member. Students receive intensive supervision via live observation and immediate feedback on their performance. When not seeing a client themselves, students join the faculty member in the observation room and observe their peers. Students give and receive feedback and participate in didactic activities throughout the day as well. Although the observation can be intimidating at first, students quickly adjust and rapidly build fundamental clinical skills through the immediate feedback and extensive modeling. The second year of training is capped by the clinical oral examination described earlier.

At the beginning of the third year, students are typically placed in community agencies that provide general and specialized clinical services. Placement supervision is typically conducted on-site by clinical psychologists. At least one placement in an outside community agency is required. Although a community placement is not required in the fourth year of training, most students take a second placement. (Other options include teaching and/or research assistantships). In addition to community placements, students are required to maintain a small caseload in the PCC in the third and fourth years. This allows students to continue general clinical training under faculty supervision, even if they are placed in a community agency that provides more narrowly focused, in-depth specialty training. For MLS students, the second year is devoted to legal training with other clinical training resuming in the third year.

The clinical faculty has the prerogative to decrease or increase the amount of practicum necessary for any student. Practicum progress is evaluated at the end of each semester, at the end of the second year with the oral examination, and during the final phases of the clinical comprehensive examination.

## **The Psychological Consultation Center**

The CPTP operates an on-campus clinic that provides hands-on training for the development of the student's core clinical skills. The PCC provides a variety of mental health services to the people in the surrounding communities of southeast Nebraska. Students receive psychotherapy and assessment training along with specialized intervention approaches. The PCC also serves as a center for applied research for the program. Supervision is provided by the clinical faculty or approved clinical associates located in the surrounding community. An adjunct faculty member serves as the PCC Director and an advanced student serves as clinic assistant director. Other students and faculty are involved in the development and administration of the PCC. The clinical faculty along with an elected student member serves as the PCC's Board of Directors, which determines PCC policy. Unlike many training clinics, the PCC is open year-around, allowing students the opportunity to see cases over many months, if appropriate.

## **Specialty Clinics**

Students may also receive training through a number of specialty clinics that are supervised by program faculty with expertise in particular areas. These clinics operate through the PCC and provide students with opportunities for supervised clinical experience with specific client populations. Current specialty clinical and faculty supervisors include: Alcohol Skills Training Program (Dr. McChargue), Anxiety Disorders Clinic (Dr. Hope), Family Interaction Skills Clinic (Drs. Hansen and Flood), Substance Abuse Specialty Clinic (Dr. McChargue). Specialty clinic teams are often vertical; that is, they consist of both new and advanced students who work together, sometimes as co-therapists, under the supervision of a faculty member. For more information about specialty clinics see faculty Webpages or contact faculty supervisors.

## **Internships**

Students in the CPTP are required to complete a one-year, predoctoral, full-time internship at a site accredited by the American Psychological Association. Obtaining an accredited internship is a competitive process in part because there are more applicants than available internships each year. However, our students have been very successful in gaining admittance to APA internships. Students must be approved by the Clinical Faculty as meeting minimal pre-doctoral and pre-internship training requirements before applying for an internship. Students typically complete their internships during their fifth year of study, although some elect to complete it in their sixth year. (See program website for full disclosure data on internship acceptance rates and average time to program completion.) Students who enter the program with approved training (e.g., a student with a master's degree and supervised clinical experience) may be permitted by the clinical faculty to go on internship at an earlier date.

## **Research Training**

The CPTP is designed to develop a continuous and progressive program of research for each student. Often this research is integrated with clinical training activity, so that both represent one continuous process. However, for some students, non-clinical research with non-clinical faculty may be developed independent of clinical training and can represent highly productive accomplishment and training for the student.

Students become involved in research their first week on campus by attending Research Teams. It is expected that students unsure of their specific research interests will attend a variety of research teams including non-clinical faculty research groups if they wish. Other students who may have already identified a particular area of interest may choose to focus immediately on a particular topic and work with one faculty member.

By the end of their first semester, students are required to produce a research prospectus under the supervision of a faculty member. During the second semester of the first year, students are required to develop a full proposal for their master's equivalency research

project that is approved by two faculty members (the advisor and one other faculty member). Students are encouraged to complete the master's equivalency research project by the end of their second year.

Although students identify one faculty member as a primary research mentor, many students participate in more than one Research Team and have multiple research projects going at any given point in time. Both students and faculty frequently collaborate with peers resulting in rewarding cross-fertilization of ideas. Students are also expected to participate in the dissemination of research activity through scholarly publications and through participation in local and national conferences.

## **Research Teams**

To facilitate student research development, and to expose students to ongoing research activities, faculty members supervise research groups that meet on a regular basis to discuss, plan, and evaluate research activity and proposals in each particular faculty member's research area of interest. In the first semester, students are expected to rotate across research teams until they develop a research advisor relationship with a faculty member. Both clinical and nonclinical faculty members of the Department of Psychology are available for research advising and mentoring. A list of all faculty and their research interests can be found below and on the Departmental website.

## **Student Evaluation**

All clinical students are evaluated each semester in terms of academic, research, and professional development. At the end of each semester, the Department Graduate Executive Committee meets to evaluate students who have not been assigned Supervisory Committees. Evaluation is based on successful completion of course work, research progress, and performance of assistantship responsibilities (e.g., teaching and research assistantships). After Supervisory Committees are formed, the student's individual Supervisory Committee assumes responsibility for evaluating student progress towards the Ph.D. degree (note the section on Supervisory Committees).

The Clinical Faculty also meets each semester to evaluate student progress in the Clinical Program. When relevant, the Clinical Faculty makes recommendations to the Department Executive Graduate Committee or to the student's Supervisory Committee regarding progress in clinical training. The Clinical Faculty is responsible for evaluating clinical competency and potential professional ability among the clinical students.

***To remain in the clinical program, clinical students must demonstrate the potential to become competent clinicians, and they must show continuous progress in this area. In addition to intervention, assessment and consultation skills, our concept of clinical competency includes an ethical and sensitive awareness of the welfare and needs of others.***

Thus, it is important to recognize that there are two arenas of student evaluation. The traditional evaluation of academic and research progress is conducted primarily by the

Graduate Executive Committee initially and then the student's Supervisory Committee. Clinical competence is evaluated by the Clinical Faculty and includes professional skills, as well as ethical sensitivity and interpersonal abilities.

In addition to semester evaluations, the second-year oral exam and the clinical comprehensive examination are utilized by the Clinical Faculty to evaluate students in the development of their competencies and to approve students' applications for internship. We accept into our program only the number of first-year students we feel we can train to Ph.D. level. All students are expected to be successful. Over the years, the vast majority of students entering our program have successfully completed the first year of training and continued on in the program.

## **Student Participation in Program Policy**

Graduate students are encouraged to become involved in the ongoing development of the program. Successful students become colleagues in a common endeavor with the faculty. A Graduate Student Association (GSA) in the Department of Psychology serves as a forum for student participation. Students elect peers to serve as voting members of Department faculty meetings, Department committees, and the Clinical faculty meetings. Department and Clinical program policies are significantly influenced by student participation. Students are also involved in the overall evaluation of the program. We take pride in the collegiality that takes place among the students themselves and between students and faculty. We feel a strength of this program has been the common pride in professional development among students and faculty, and the rapport and sense of relatedness that we share together. It is important to us that this psychological atmosphere continues to be a significant characteristic of the Clinical Psychology Training Program.

## **Admissions**

In recent years the Clinical Psychology Training Program has admitted classes of 8 to 10 students from a pool of 150 to 250 applications. In making admissions decisions, match with a current faculty mentor is an important consideration. Applicants should mention in their essays specific faculty members with whom they share research interests. Emphasis is also placed on GPA, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, and previous research and clinical involvement. Applicants are encouraged to visit our website for full disclosure data showing the average GPAs and GRE scores of recently admitted classes. We do not use firm cut-offs for these scores; relative strengths in one area are sometimes viewed as compensating for relative weaknesses in another area. That being said, students with GPAs or GRE scores that are below the average of students admitted in recent years are at a competitive disadvantage. We do not require the Psychology subtest of the GRE. However, applicants needing to demonstrate basic knowledge in the field of psychology (e.g., those who did not major in psychology) are encouraged to submit Psychology subtest scores. The CPTP, as well as the Department, actively recruit a diversity of students and

approximately 25% of the students in recent classes have identified themselves as ethnic minorities.

All of your application materials including letters of recommendation are to be submitted online by the early January deadline via our online Admissions system called GAMES. We recommend that applicants familiarize themselves with the admissions procedures as outlined on the Admissions website prior to the deadline. Questions about admissions should be directed to our Admissions Secretary, Jamie Longwell at (402) 472-3229, [jlongwel@unlnotes.unl.edu](mailto: jlongwel@unlnotes.unl.edu), or visit our website at: [www.unl.edu/psypage/](http://www.unl.edu/psypage/)

## Financial Support

Typically, all students, including first-year students, receive stipends from a variety of graduate assistantships, including teaching, research, and clinical assistantships. Financial support cannot be guaranteed for the entire graduate training period. However, in the past, we have been able to provide support for all clinical students in good standing in the program. Continuously appointed graduate assistants are eligible for full tuition waiver plus a portion of health insurance costs. Applicants to our doctoral program, who have a GPA of at least 3.5 in their previous degree program or who present evidence of other outstanding creative accomplishment, may be nominated by the department for one of several fellowships administered by the Office of Graduate Studies. These fellowships provide stipends ranging from \$1500 to \$8000 for up to three years, and are supplemental to the stipend provided by our regular teaching and research assistantships. Additional financial assistance information may be found on the Scholarships and Financial Aid website: <http://www.unl.edu/scholfa/>.

## Core Clinical Faculty

**David DiLillo** received a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Oklahoma State University in 1997 and joined the UNL faculty in 2000 following post-doctoral work at the University of Missouri. He is currently Director of Clinical Training. His primary research interests lie in the areas of family violence, and marital and couple relations. In the area of family violence, he is particularly interested in the long-term adjustment of adults who have experienced various forms of childhood trauma and maltreatment (e.g., sexual abuse, physical abuse, exposure to domestic violence). His work has explored several aspects of this issue, including the interpersonal functioning of adult survivors, and possible mediators of the long-term impact of abuse, such as emotion regulation. Recently, Dr. DiLillo has investigated the longitudinal course of marriage among newlywed couples. Part of this work consists of a NIMH-funded project exploring associations between childhood abuse history and adult marital functioning. Dr. DiLillo has also conducted research on the causes and consequences of accidental injury. His

teaching activities include a graduate level psychotherapy course, marital and family therapy, and supervision of clinical practicum.

**David J. Hansen** received his Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Mississippi in 1985. Dr. Hansen is Chair of the Department of Psychology. A primary research area is child maltreatment (sexual abuse, physical abuse, and neglect), including factors related to identification and reporting, assessment and intervention with victims and families, and the correlates and consequences of maltreatment. An additional area of research is social-skills assessment and intervention with children and adolescents. His research emphasizes procedures enhancing the effectiveness of clinical interventions, through assessing and improving adherence, generalization, maintenance, and social validity. Dr. Hansen is the co-director of the Family Interaction Skills Clinic (with Dr. Mary Fran Flood) and director of Project SAFE, a clinical treatment program for sexually abused children that is one of the specialty clinics within the Psychological Consultation Center (Please see Dr. Hansen's Child Maltreatment Research Team website for additional information on research and clinical service/training opportunities). His graduate teaching includes the clinical proseminar (for first year students), supervision of clinical practica, and a family violence readings course.

**Debra A. Hope** received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University at Albany-State University of New York in 1990 and joined the department in the same year. Her current research interests include assessment and treatment of anxiety disorders (particularly social anxiety disorder). Dr. Hope is the director of the Anxiety Disorders Clinic, one of the specialty services within the Psychological Consultation Center. Her work on psychopathology emphasizes information processing models that describe the role of attention and memory in social phobia and the impact of these cognitive processes on interpersonal functioning. She is also interested in gender effects in anxiety. Dr. Hope has ongoing research on both the outcome and process of psychotherapy. Research on psychotherapy outcome includes examining predictors of successful treatment, the mechanisms underlying cognitive-behavioral treatment for anxiety disorders, and dissemination of evidence-based practice in anxiety disorders. Recently Dr. Hope has developed the Rainbow Project, a collaborative research group with interest in the current psychological topics related to sexual minorities and transgender.

**Dennis McChargue** received his Ph.D. in clinical psychology at Oklahoma State University. Before joining the faculty in 2005, he finished his postdoctoral training in 2000 and transitioned into a Research Assistant Professor position at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Health Research Scientist at the Edward Hines VA Hospital. His overall research interest examines biobehavioral vulnerability factors that predispose individuals to addictive and unhealthy behaviors. Specifically, neuronal abnormalities, affective expressions, and trait predispositions underlying a psychopathological vulnerability are believed to be powerful motivating variables that maintain addictive and unhealthy behaviors. His research program uses human models of conditioned reinforcement, behavioral economics,

and diathesis-stress to experimentally examine comorbid vulnerabilities with addictive and unhealthy behaviors. His secondary goal is to use the experimental findings to develop cognitive-behavioral modification interventions for addictive or health behaviors. Dr. McChargue teaches Undergraduate Abnormal Psychology and Graduate Courses in Evidence-Based Clinical Interviewing and Clinical Intervention. Dr. McChargue serves as the Associate Director of Clinical Training. He is also the Director of the Substance Abuse Specialty Clinic in the Psychology Consultation Clinic, an Associate member of the UNMC Eppley Cancer Center, a board member of CentrePointe (a dual diagnosis substance use treatment agency), a board member of the Community Correction Justice Behavioral Committee, and the Chair of the Training Committee for the Society for Nicotine and Tobacco Research.

**Timothy D. Nelson** received his Ph.D. in clinical child psychology from the University of Kansas in 2008 following a clinical internship at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. He subsequently completed his post-doctoral fellowship in pediatric psychology in the Stanford University School of Medicine before joining the UNL faculty in 2009. Dr. Nelson's research interests are in pediatric psychology. Specifically, his work focuses on three main areas of inquiry: (1) examining psychosocial factors affecting pediatric health behaviors (e.g., physical activity) and, ultimately, health outcomes for children and adolescents; (2) developing, evaluating, and disseminating promising interventions to improve pediatric health; and (3) methodological considerations in child health research. In his recent work, he has pursued these interests by studying a variety of chronic pediatric conditions, including obesity, chronic headache, and cancer. Dr. Nelson's teaching interests are in clinical and clinical child psychology. He anticipates teaching courses in clinical assessment, child psychopathology, abnormal psychology, and child treatment.

**Mario Scalora** received his Ph.D. in clinical and law-psychology from the University of Nebraska in 1989 and joined the faculty in 1997. His research interests primarily focus upon targeted violence (including threat assessment, sexual offending, workplace violence, threats to political officials, counterterrorism). In collaboration with local and federal law enforcement, Dr. Scalora's research is assessing the predictive risk factors of individuals who stalk and engage in threatening behavior toward political figures and institutions. Research involving the investigation of epidemiological risk factors related to a broad sample of workplace violence is also taking place. Dr. Scalora currently supervises graduate students performing clinical service and research within the state's Forensic Mental Health Service. His graduate teaching activity currently includes courses on forensic assessment and clinical intervention, and supervision of clinical practica.

**William D. Spaulding** received his Ph.D. from the University of Arizona in 1976 and Completed a postdoctoral Fellowship in Mental Health Research and Teaching at the University of Rochester, 1976–1979. He joined the UNL faculty in 1979. His research interests address various aspects of schizophrenia and other severe

disorders, including clinical and experimental psychopathology, the effectiveness of treatment and rehabilitation, and service systems and social policy. Recent projects in his research group have included neuropsychological impairment in schizophrenia, cognitive and neuropsychological predictors of success in treatment and rehabilitation, neuroendocrine aspects of schizophrenia, assessment of stress and coping in rehabilitation, social cognition in psychosis, the effectiveness of cognitive treatment, state hospital reform and involuntary treatment. Dr. Spaulding is Chair-elect of the American Psychological Association's Task Force on Serious Mental Illness and a member of the Research Council of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. His graduate students include individuals in the regular clinical Ph.D. track and clinical students in the Ph.D./MLS track of the Law-Psychology Program. His law-psychology students are generally interested in law and social policy related to severe mental illness, and therapeutic jurisprudence (using the law for therapeutic purposes). Dr. Spaulding also has general interests in psychopharmacology and the integration of psychopharmacological and psychological treatment. He teaches graduate courses on psychopathology, psychopharmacology and the history and philosophy of psychology, and supervises clinical practica.

## **PCC Director**

**Mary Fran Flood** received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology from the University of Nebraska in 1998. Dr. Flood is a part-time clinical faculty member and Director of the Psychological Consultation Center. Her research and practice focuses on assessment and intervention with young children, including infants and toddlers, and their families. Her interests include child maltreatment (physical abuse, sexual abuse, and neglect), psychosocial needs of children with chronic or life-threatening illnesses or developmental disabilities, and family interaction approaches for children with behavioral or emotional disorders. Dr. Flood directs a mental health consultation project for the local Head Start and Early Head Start through the Psychological Consultation Center. Dr. Flood is in clinical practice as a pediatric psychologist at a family practice residency program in Lincoln in addition to her responsibilities at the Psychological Consultation Center.

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