

Training in Clinical Psychology and Law

The UNL Clinical Psychology 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. Forensic Psychology training may fall within two tracks, namely the *Ph.D.-M.L.S. track* or the *Forensic Psychology Minor* within the Clinical Psychology Training Program. Areas of study within clinical psychology and law include mental health law and policy, and forensic psychology. 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. Faculty interests are described at <http://www.unl.edu/psypage/>.

Ph.D.-M.L.S. Track

This track involves earning the Master of Legal Studies (M.L.S.) degree as well as the Ph.D. in clinical psychology.

The Master of Legal Studies Degree Program

The Master of Legal Studies (M.L.S.) 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 M.L.S. Degree is conferred upon the successful completion of the 33 credit hours and an oral final examination. More detailed information regarding the M.L.S. degree is available via the internet at <http://law.unl.edu/mls.html>.

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

Clinical Ph.D./M.L.S. 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.

J.D.-Ph.D. option

This option is available only to those students who wish to pursue interests that overlap across areas of mental health, criminal justice, or psycho-legal policy that would warrant obtaining both a clinical Ph.D. as well as a J.D. Applicants interested in this option

should contact faculty within their area of interest within both the Law-Psychology and Clinical training programs to discuss whether this option would be appropriate for their career goals. Students who pursue this option must be accepted to the clinical psychology program, the law college, and the law and psychology programs.

The Forensic Psychology Training Program

Forensic Psychology Training at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln includes the Ph.D. in clinical psychology and Masters of Legal Studies (M.L.S.). Students are admitted to both the Clinical and Law/Psychology 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 UNL Forensic Psychology Training Program 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 and Law Psychology programs. 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 many faculty within the Department of Psychology, Dr. Scalora and other forensic training faculty strive to integrate research activity within a 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
- military/threat assessment settings
- public sector mental health settings
- correctional settings

Clinical training is an important component of the Forensic Psychology Training Program. 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 Training Program. Graduates of the Forensic Psychology Training Program have proved very competitive for prestigious internships, where solid clinical preparation is prerequisite.

Forensic Psychology Minor

Students who desire specialized forensic psychology training but choose not to complete the MLS can complete a Forensic Psychology Minor.

For Forensic Minor specialization status, the following courses are 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
Law & Behavioral Sciences Prosem or Topics in
Law and Psychology

At least one of the following law courses for at least three credits after the above courses:

Criminal Law
Criminal Procedure
Family Law
Juvenile Law
Torts
(Other related legal coursework with the approval
of supervisory committee)

The **Forensic Minor** specialization also requires that at least 1000 hours of practicum activity be performed at a site involving assessment or services to legally-involved populations. If such experiences are unavailable, a set of relevant alternatives can be considered.

Forensic minor students are required to participate in the Law/Psychology research seminar and other related activities.