



## Clinical Psychology Training Program

(an APA accredited program)\*

Department of Psychology  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

238 Burnett Hall  
Lincoln, NE 68588-0308

Phone: (402) 472-3229

Fax: (402) 472-4637

<http://psychology.unl.edu/>

August, 2022



\*Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation

American Psychological Association

750 First St., NE

Washington, DC 20002-4242

Phone: (800) 374-2721; (202) 336-5500

<http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/index.aspx>

UNL is the flagship and land-grant university for Nebraska, and diversity and inclusion are central to our mission and pursuit of excellence. <https://diversity.unl.edu/>

# **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. 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; Hansen, Nelson, DiLillo, & Hope, 2014; 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.

APA accreditation guidelines (Standard I.C.2) requires that each student successfully complete: (a) a minimum of 3 full-time academic years of graduate study (or the equivalent thereof) plus an internship prior to receiving the doctoral degree; (b) at least 2 of the 3 academic training years (or the equivalent thereof) must be within the program; and, (c) at least 1 year must be in full-time residence (or the equivalent thereof) at the program. Please note that those are the minimum. Our students typically spend 4 to 5 years in full-time residence prior to the full-time predoctoral internship (3 to 4 years if they had a previous clinical psychology M.A.). Being in residence is expected for assistantship funding and the accompanying tuitions waivers.

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 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 requirement and, upon successful completion of all areas of training to date, the clinical faculty approves the student for a predoctoral internship.

**Future licensure:** As an APA accredited program, it is our intention to train students in all the particulars of health service psychology, such that they are equipped to be both excellent scientists and excellent clinicians. It is our expectation that most of our graduates will obtain professional licensure as psychologists and will be able to engage in clinical practice and supervise trainees. However, given that licensure is controlled by individual governmental bodies in all 50 US states (typically State Boards of Psychology under the Division of Occupational Affairs or Departments of Health in State Governments) and that every jurisdiction may impose their own unique requirements, we cannot guarantee that the specific training we provide will meet the criteria for licensure in any individual state.

That said, we are very successful at advocating for our students, and all graduates from at least the last 25 years has been able to obtain licensure if they have pursued it.

The Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (ASPPB) maintains information about psychology licensure requirements in the U.S. and Canada. Requirements for a location of interest can be found at on the ASPPB PSY/Book (<http://psybook.asppb.org/>). State regulations can change periodically, such that current regulations may or may not be in effect at the time of graduation.

## Course Requirements

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

### Core Clinical Courses

Clinical Proseminar	3 hrs
Seeking Equity and Understanding Oppression	3 hrs
Assessment I & II	6 hrs
Assessment & Conceptualization of Psychopathology	3 hrs
Psychotherapy	3 hrs
Ethics in Clinical Psychology	3 hrs
Clinical Supervision and Consultation	<u>2 hrs</u>
Total hours for core clinical courses:	23 hrs

### Other Requires Courses

3 Statistics and Research Design courses	9 hrs
Teaching Methods	1 hr
Clinical Intervention I & II	6 hrs
Practicum	12-24 hrs
Master's Equivalency Research	7 hrs
APA area courses (see below), area of emphasis, minors or elective courses	21-27 hrs
Dissertation	<u>18-24 hrs</u>
Total hours for other required courses:	68-98 hrs

**Total Program Hours Required: 91-121**

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 bases of behavior
- Affective bases of behavior

- Social bases of behavior
- Individual behavior
- Lifespan development

The Department of Psychology provides one or more seminars at the graduate level in each of these areas.

<b>SAMPLE PROGRAM</b>		
<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
<b>First Year</b>		
Statistics/Methods Assessment I Clinical Proseminar Master's Equiv. (MERP) 2 cr Teaching Methods	Statistics/Methods Seeking Equity and Understanding Oppression Assess. & Conceptualization of Psychopathology Master's Equiv. (MERP) 3 cr	Elective or Stats Modules
<b>Second Year</b>		
Clinical Intervention I Assessment II Psychotherapy Master's Equiv. (MERP) 2 cr	APA content area course Clinical Intervention II History & Philosophy Elective	Clin. Intervention/Practicum Elective or Stats Modules
<b>Third Year</b>		
Practicum Dissertation/Research Ethics in Clinical Psych. Elective and remaining courses	Practicum Dissertation/Research Supervision/Consultation Electives and remaining courses	Practicum Dissertation/Research
<b>Fourth Year</b>		
Practicum Dissertation Electives	Practicum Dissertation Electives	Practicum 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**

As previously noted, our primary goal is to prepare clinical psychologists capable of serving in a wide range of professional contexts. As such, we are dedicated to *broad and general training as the core* of our curriculum, so that students emerge with a broad foundation of clinical and research skills. Although there is a significant degree of breadth of training inherent in the general program requirements, students may additionally choose to focus their work in specific areas. While students vary in the extent to which they pursue focused experiences, we believe that the flexibility provided by this approach is the best preparation for future practice in a rapidly changing scientific and human services environment.

### **Areas of Concentration**

Among the many options for individualizing training, the CPTP currently offers two formalized Areas of Concentration. For example, students wishing to focus their training in clinical child or forensic psychology may complete a concentration in either Child and Family, Neuropsychology, or Forensic psychology, which each have a distinct, organized set of expectations beyond the general program requirements. In completing a concentration, students pursue structured, in depth opportunities for knowledge acquisition and practical experience in a specialty area. Child/Family students take additional courses including child psychopathology and assessment, child therapy, and couples and family therapy. Forensic students take forensic assessment, law and behavioral science, and mental health law. Each area also requires clinical experiences with relevant populations.

### **Individualized Programs of Study**

In addition to the more formalized Areas of Concentration, students may individualize their programs of study by choosing from a wide range of didactic coursework, research,



and clinical practicum opportunities. Students work with their advisor and members of their Supervisory Committee to select coursework, practica and other clinical opportunities, and research opportunities that help prepare them for work in specific clinical areas. Examples include Family and Relationship Violence, Substance Abuse, and Mental Health Policy.

## **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://psychology.unl.edu/clinical-psychology-training-program/JD\\_PhD.pdf](http://psychology.unl.edu/clinical-psychology-training-program/JD_PhD.pdf).

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 Emphasis** 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://psychology.unl.edu/clinical-psychology-training-program/JD\\_PhD.pdf](http://psychology.unl.edu/clinical-psychology-training-program/JD_PhD.pdf).

## **Training in Quantitative Methods and Diversity**

All clinical 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 the Quantitative Methods Concentration and/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 (see Appendices F and G). 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 they have 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 they, 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. For example, current specialty clinical and faculty supervisors include: Anxiety Disorders Clinic (Dr. Hope), Family Interaction Skills Clinic (Drs. Hansen and Flood), Substance Abuse Specialty Clinic (Dr. McChargue), and Telehealth Clinic (Drs. Hope and Nelson). 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.

## 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.

Each year we invite approximately the top 25-30 students who we believe will be a good match for our program to our Interview Weekend. It occurs in February and the specific dates are made available on our webpage. Initial Interview Weekend invitations will be sent out by mid-January. Space is limited in Interview Weekend and applicants may still under consideration even if they didn't receive an interview invitation. Unless an applicant has heard otherwise, their application is still being considered. Although we realize that circumstances sometimes require that an applicant conduct a phone or teleconference interview rather than visiting in person, we have found that students who attend our Interview Weekend are in a far better position to evaluate the merits of our program.



All of your application materials including letters of recommendation are to be submitted online by the posted 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: <http://psychology.unl.edu/>

## 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/scholf/a/>.

## Core Clinical Faculty

The Clinical Faculty are listed below. For additional information, including links to faculty lab webpages, please visit the CPTP webpage: <https://psychology.unl.edu/clinical-psychology-training-program/core-faculty>.

### Core Clinical Faculty

**Arthur “Trey” Andrews, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor  
Co-Director, Minority Health Disparities Initiative

**Rebecca Brock, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor

**Kathy Chiou, Ph.D.**, Assistant Professor

**David DiLillo, Ph.D.**, Willa Cather Professor  
Department Chair

**David J. Hansen, Ph.D.**, Professor

*Current* Director, Clinical Psychology Training Program (until 12-31-22)  
Director, Law-Psychology Program

**Debra A. Hope**, Ph.D., Aaron Douglas Professor  
Associate Vice Chancellor and Dean of Graduate Studies

**Anna Jaffe**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

**Tierney Lorenz**, Ph.D., Assistant Professor

**Dennis McChargue**, Ph.D., Associate Professor  
*Future* Director, Clinical Psychology Training Program (as of 1-1-23)

**Timothy D. Nelson**, Ph.D., Professor  
Associate Director, Clinical Psychology Training Program  
Associate Director, Rural Drug Addiction Research Center

**Cary Savage**, Ph.D., Professor  
Director, Center of Brain, Biology and Behavior

**Mario Scalora**, Ph.D., Professor  
Director, University of Nebraska Public Policy Center

**William D. Spaulding**, Ph.D., Professor Emeritus

**Peter Meidlinger**, Ph.D.  
Director, Psychological Consultation Center

## References

- Cole, J. K., & Magnussen, M. G. (1966). Where the action is. *Journal of Consulting Psychology, 30*, 539–543.
- DiLillo, D., & McChargue, D. E. (2007). Implementing elements of evidence-based practice into scientist-practitioner training at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 63*, 671-684.
- Hansen, D. J., Nelson, T. D., DiLillo, D., & Hope, D. A. (2014). The Clinical Psychology Training Program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. *the Behavior Therapist, 37*, 196-198.
- Hargrove, D. S. (1991). Training Ph.D. psychologists for rural service: A report from Nebraska. *Community Mental Health Journal, 27*, 293–298.
- Hargrove, D. S., & Howe, H. E. (1981). Training in rural mental health delivery: A response to prioritized needs. *Professional Psychology, 12*, 722–731.
- Hargrove, D. S. & Spaulding, W. D. (1988). Training psychologists for work with the chronically mentally ill. *Community Mental Health Journal, 24*, 283–295.
- Hope, D. A., Hansen, D. J., & Cole, J. K. (1994). The Clinical Psychology Training Program at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. *The Behavior Therapist, 17*, 73–74.
- Howe, H. E. (1974). An empirical description of a community-clinical training program. *Professional Psychology, 5*, 277–285.
- Howe, H. E., & Neimeyer, R. A. (1979). Empirical description of clinical training: A re-evaluation and validation. *Professional Psychology, 10*, 168–174.
- Jones, M. R., & Levine, D. (1963). Graduate training for community-clinical psychology. *American Psychologist, 18*, 219–223.
- Rivers, P. C. (1992). The Alcohol Training Specialty in community-clinical psychology: A twenty-year appraisal. Paper presented at the Southeastern Psychological Association.
- Rivers, P. C., & Cole, J. K. (1976). The Alcohol Training Specialty in community-clinical psychology. *Professional Psychology, 7*, 202–208.