



DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM (PSY. D.)Updated: 08/29/03

Psy.D. Program Model and Goals

The philosophy of the program follows a scholar-practitioner model of training. This means that graduates of the program are trained as practitioners of clinical psychology as an empirically informed field. Training within the program emphasizes the importance of critical inquiry at all levels of clinical practice, from treatment planning for individual clients, to the assessment of program outcomes, to the design and execution of rigorous, empirical research.

Because the program offers the successful student a Psy.D. as opposed to a Ph.D., the emphasis in the training is on the development of high-quality clinical skills. This should not be taken to mean that research has no place in the program. As previously stated, good clinical training is rooted in basic research. However, the primary emphasis in the Psy.D. Program is the training of clinical practitioners as opposed to clinical researchers.

The orientation of the program is eclectic. Although the perspectives of clinical faculty vary, they share a commonality in their mission to provide training that is solidly grounded with empirical support. By choosing to espouse an eclectic orientation, the faculty recognizes that the care for the mental health of clients is a complex process. Multiple systemic and individual factors must be considered in developing a cooperative relationship between client and therapist that will ultimately lead to more positive life experiences for the client. As such, the eclectic orientation of the program serves as a model to students that the field of clinical psychology is as diverse as the human population it serves. Therefore, one must always be open to a variety of possibilities when considering the treatment of the client as an individual.

The program has several pertinent goals. They are as follows:

1. Our primary goal is to provide the highest quality of graduate training in professional psychology for our students. There is an emphasis on the role of empirical knowledge as it pertains to the field of clinical practice and a dedication among the faculty to maintain a current body of knowledge with respect to their particular fields of expertise. In addition, faculty provide role models for the practitioner-scholar model by engaging in applied work in addition to their lines of traditional research.
2. Second, the program seeks to nurture in students the spirit of lifelong learning. In the service of this goal, the faculty strives to create an atmosphere of inquiry in which students are encouraged to utilize a variety of means to answer complex questions related to human nature.
3. Third, the program will promote an appreciation for cultural diversity and a clear understanding of its role in clinical practice and research. Because of the unique location of Marshall University in central Appalachia, students will be encouraged to explore richness of the Appalachian culture and consider the added dimension it brings to clinical service delivery and research in those regions.
4. A fourth goal of the program is to promote an understanding in the general field of clinical psychology regarding the impact of rural culture on clinical practice. A majority of the research that informs the field of clinical practice is based on urban models of service delivery. The field is only beginning to understand the unique contributions that culture makes in the effectiveness of psychotherapy and psychological assessment. Through the development of the Institute for Rural Psychology in Appalachia, the program hopes to become well-known as an applied research community that adds to our understanding of the role of culture in clinical practice.
5. A fifth goal is to make the program accessible to highly qualified students of all levels of experience. In service to this goal, the program admits students at both the bachelors and masters levels. These two levels of admission are discussed in the section on Applying to the Psy.D. Program.
6. A final goal is to increase the number of doctoral-level psychology practitioners working in rural and underserved regions, particularly those regions in West Virginia. As such, a certain number of slots are reserved for residents of West Virginia and the surrounding region and a significant portion of practicum training takes place in rural areas.

Core Program Competencies. The faculty in the Department of Psychology have set forth specific core competencies which must be attained during the course of study in the Psy.D. program. These core competencies reflect the ideas stated by the National Council of Schools in Professional Psychology (NCSPP). The faculty have adopted the core competencies laid out by NCSPP, with some modification to remain in keeping with the major mission of the program. The core competencies are as follows:

1. **Relationship competency:** This competency provides an important foundation for the field of clinical practice. Competency is demonstrated by the ability to form productive partnerships with clients, peers, supervisors, faculty, and community members.
2. **Cultural competency:** The unique challenges in the field of rural mental health underscore the need to understand the significant impact cultural differences have on clinical practice. The competent clinician will not only be able to identify cultural differences in an academic sense, but will be able to demonstrate through program planning and service delivery that the differences are appreciated. The development of this competency will be modeled, taught, nurtured and evaluated throughout all phases of the program.
3. **Assessment competency:** Assessment is a clinical skill that extends well beyond the routinized administration of standardized tests. While tests provide important tools with which to measure certain sample behaviors, they make good clinical sense within the larger context of a multi-trait, multi-method framework of assessment. Competency in this realm will be demonstrated by knowledge of basic psychometric theory and sound test administration skills. In addition, students should be able to demonstrate the use of sound assessment methodologies that allow them to describe their client as a fully functioning person, to plan a course of intervention, and to assess intervention outcomes.
4. **Intervention competency:** All activities related to clinical practice should have the goal to promote positive functioning. It is important for students to be able to 1) demonstrate the ability to develop a coherent theoretically-based intervention plan, 2) follow and carefully refine the process of the plan during therapy, and 3) provide outcome measures of the interventions' impact that are consistent with the case conceptualization.
5. **Research and Evaluation Competency:** It is important for scholar-practitioners to understand the empiricism that underlies the field of psychology. Psychology is a field that is founded on sound scientific methodology. As such, students must demonstrate the ability to conceptualize a logical research question, frame it in terms of an operational definition, and develop a sound method for addressing the question. In addition, students must be able to execute the plan and analyze the quantitative or qualitative data in a systematic manner. Such skills form the basis for lifelong learning.
6. **Consultation Competency:** In order to be a competent practitioner in rural areas, it is crucial to be able to work within the systems present in a community. A rural mental health practitioner may often find that the most important function s/he can serve is as a consultant within existing systems.
7. **Supervision Competency:** The ability to organize psychological services and to assist in the structure of services provided by less experienced practitioners are worthwhile skills. Both supervisory and management skills will allow the practitioner to function in a variety of settings.
8. **Legal and Ethical Competency:** In order to be an effective practitioner, it is imperative that students understand the legal and ethical issues that are pertinent to mental health practice and psychological research. These include major legal decisions pertaining to the practice of psychology as well as the APA Code of Ethics.

These are built developmentally throughout the curriculum. Upon completion of the Psy.D. Program at Marshall University, all students should have competence in the areas described. The evaluation of these competencies is addressed in the section concerning the Comprehensive Evaluation Process.

ADMISSIONS AND PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Given the ongoing demand for doctoral level training in professional psychology, and the limited number of students that we will admit per year, the admission process for students is expected to be quite competitive. The average GPA for those coming into the program with a Masters Degree was 3.8 and for those entering with a Bachelors Degree, 3.4. The average scores on the Verbal and Quantitative sections of the GRE for students were 545 and 558 respectively.

While academic background, intellectual potential and professional experience and skills will be key selection criteria, we intend to recruit students who are committed to providing service to our region. Therefore, students should carefully consider their interests in rural and underserved populations before applying to the program.

Application for Advanced Standing. Students who already have a Masters Degree in psychology from a regionally accredited institution can apply for advanced standing in the Psy.D. program. In order to apply for advanced standing, a student must have completed a Masters Degree in psychology from a regionally accredited institution. Students who are admitted with advanced standing must select to enter in either a full-time track or a part-time track by the end of their first semester of enrollment. These

tracks are described below:

Full-time track: Review of equivalencies is described in the next section. Students in the full-time track must commit to a minimum of 9 hours of coursework and practica per semester during the entire time of their enrollment. They must also commit to taking summer coursework as needed. As such, these students can anticipate completing the program in approximately four years. This would assume 5-6 semesters of coursework and a full year for the pre-doctoral internship. Students admitted to the full-time track can apply to change to the part-time track if their circumstances warrant such a change. Although students with extenuating circumstances may drop below full-time for a given semester without changing tracks, they should recognize that this change may impact the time it will take to complete the program. Students in this track desiring to attend part time for more than one semester may be required to switch formally to the part-time track.

Part-time track: Students who apply for advanced standing and the part-time track must be able to document coursework and practicum equivalencies equal to approximately 36 hours of coursework required in the Psy.D. Program at Marshall University. Students in the part-time track may enroll either full-time or part-time in any given semester with the exception of the Residency Year, described in the next section. During the Residency Year, full-time enrollment is required. Students in this track should anticipate completing the program in no less than 5 years and no more than 7 years from the date of enrollment. Enrollment in the part-time track requires that the student meet with their academic advisor and create a timeline for completion of the program within the 7 year limit.

The specific admissions procedures will be as follows:

1. Applications will be evaluated once per year for Fall admissions. The deadline for applications is January 15.
2. Applicants will submit an application packet which will consist of all material listed in the Application Checklist.
3. An admissions committee, consisting of 5 program faculty elected by the entire program faculty, will review and rank order applications based on the criteria described below.

Admissions decisions will be based upon:

1. Prior academic record as evidenced in official transcripts from all previous enrollments in higher education.
2. Current (last 5 years) scores on Graduate Record Examination (GRE)
3. Psychology related professional and scholarly experience.
4. Letters of recommendation. (please include recommendation forms)
5. Written statement of professional goals and a rationale for how the Psy.D. program will further the students' career objectives. This statement will help the committee evaluate applicants' commitment to providing professional service to the rural areas of this region, as well as their understanding of the time commitments involved in undertaking doctoral study.
6. Based upon the recommendation of the Admissions Committee, interviews with applicants may be scheduled as part of the admissions process.
7. Although a certain number of slots are reserved for residents of West Virginia and the surrounding rural, Appalachian regions, the program seeks to attract and admit qualified applicants from a wide range of ethnic and cultural groups.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The program is designed to be a five year-full time program for those entering with a bachelor's degree. The first four years will include coursework and graded practicum experiences. The fifth year will involve the completion of a full-time full-year approved internship or a two year, part-time approved internship. All students entering at the bachelor's level will be expected to enroll full-time each semester.

Applicants accepted will be required to demonstrate that they have completed all BA level prerequisite coursework. This includes courses in the following: introductory psychology, statistics, experimental psychology, abnormal psychology, personality, and psychometrics or tests and measurements.

As is noted above, careful evaluation of student progress is ongoing. Students are required to demonstrate ongoing development of academic and professional skills, as well as ethical judgement and sensitivity. Documented poor performance in any of these areas will be the basis of efforts by the advisor and program faculty to assist the student in forming and completing a plan for improvement; continued poor performance within specified time frames will be the basis for terminating a student's enrollment in the program.

Specific program curriculum requirements can be placed into the following categories:

Undergraduate prerequisites, Foundational coursework, Foundational clinical training, Advanced professional coursework, Advanced clinical training and Research training

UNDERGRADUATE PREREQUISITS

For entry into the program prerequisites include the following coursework: Introductory or General Psychology, Statistics, Experimental Psychology or Research Methods in Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, Personality, Psychometrics or Tests and Measurements in Psychology.

Additional coursework in psychology and in related disciplines is likely to strengthen a candidate's application.

Curriculum. Provided below is a listing of courses necessary for completion of the Psy.D.

Year 1

Fall

PSY 610 – Adult Assessment (3)
PSY 620 – Adult Assessment Practicum (1)
PSY 733 – Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapy (3)
PSY 608 – Differential Diagnosis and Treatment Planning (3)
PSY 615 – Advanced Developmental Psychology (3)
PSY 701 – New Student Seminar (1)

Spring

PSY 611 – Child Assessment (3)
PSY 621 – Child Assessment Practicum (1)
PSY 732 – Behavior Therapy (3)
PSY 633 – Individual Interviewing and Psychotherapy (3)
PSY 600 – Teaching Seminar (3)

Summer

PSY 605 – Ethics and Legal Issues (3)
PSY 731 – Psychodynamic Psychotherapy (3)

Year 2

Fall

PSY 670 – Clinic Practicum (3)
PSY 672 – Advanced Assessment Practicum (2)
PSY 517 – Intermediate Behavioral Statistics (3)
PSY 752 – Community Psychology (3)

Spring

PSY 671 – Clinic Practicum (3)
PSY 673 – Advanced Assessment Practicum (2)
PSY 750 – Behavioral Health Psychology (3)
PSY 635 – Child and Family Psychotherapy (3)
PSY 753 – Rural Psychology (3)

Summer

PSY 560 – History & Systems (3)
PSY 769 – Clinic Practicum (3)

Administration of MA comprehensive examination

Year 3

Fall

PSY 712 - Gerontology (3)
PSY 770 – Advanced Community Practicum (3)

PSY 723 – Clinical Research Methods (3)
PSY 674 – Biological Bases of Behavior (3)
PSY 791 – Clinical Seminar (1)

Spring

PSY 634 – Group Psychotherapy (3)
Choose one:
 PSY 7__ Advanced Quantitative Methods (3)
 EDF 635 – Qualitative Research Methods (3)
PSY 771 – Advanced Community Practicum (3)
PSY 674 – Human Sexuality and Dysfunction (3)
PSY 792 – Clinical Seminar

Summer

PSY 672 – Cognitive Psychology (3)

Year 4

Fall

PSY 772 – Rural Practicum (3)
PSY 755 - Supervision in Clinical Psychology (3)
PSY 7__ - Cross Cultural (3)
PSY 793 – Clinical seminar (1)
PSY 799 – Doctoral Research Project (3)

PSY 502 – Advanced Social Psychology (3)
PSY 773 – Rural Practicum (3)
PSY 794 – Clinical Seminar (1)
PSY 799 – Doctoral Research Project (3)
PSY 7__ - Advanced Topics in Psychotherapy (3)

Year 5

Pre-doctoral Internship (3-9)

RESEARCH TRAINING : Our professional practitioner-training model includes a strong emphasis on applied research. The research sequence is structured as an integrated series of methodological seminars for practitioners. Building upon prior coursework in experimental psychology, introductory and intermediate statistics and psychometrics, students will learn more advanced strategies for conceptualizing applied research problems, designing appropriate data based approaches to solving the applied problems that psychologists are likely to face in their professional roles, such as evaluating clinical outcomes, conducting needs assessments, validating clinical assessment tools, and developing and evaluating clinical programs. The sequence culminates with each student conducting a Doctoral Research Project supervised by a doctoral committee and research chair.

PRACTICUM: Beginning in the first year, all students will participate in Vertical Supervision teams. These teams will consist of students and all phases of training, with the exception of internship, and will be lead by a faculty clinical supervisor. Students in the second year of training will complete two semesters of practica in the university training clinic. Third year students will complete two semesters of practica in approved community settings. Fourth year students will complete two semesters of practica at an approved rural site. Students should note that rural training sites require a substantial time commitment. These sites are often quite a distance from campus and may, in some cases, involve overnight stays. All practicum placements will be at training sites with which the psychology department has prior written agreements concerning training and supervision criteria. Additional information regarding practica can be obtained by consulting the website or contacting the Program Coordinator.

Students who enter with advanced standing will have their clinical therapy and assessment skills evaluated during an initial semester placement in the training clinic. If they are able to meet the specific competency benchmarks set by the clinical faculty, they will be eligible to begin practicum placement with the third year community placements. They will be required to complete two semesters in an approved community setting as well as two semesters in an approved rural setting, in addition to the evaluation time spent in the training clinic.

INTERNSHIP: All students will complete a doctoral internship in professional psychology at an approved site during the final year of the program. Internships in professional psychology are the equivalent of one year of full time training completed in no less than 12 months and no more than 24 months. APA-accredited internships are preferred but exceptions can be made, particularly for sites that are not accredited but are listed in the APPIC national match. A limited number of slots will be available in local internships but these are not sufficient to serve all students. All incoming students are strongly encouraged to apply for internships through the national APPIC match.

RESIDENCY YEAR REQUIREMENT

All students will be required to complete an academic year of “residency”. The purpose of the residency year is to enhance students’ identities as professional psychologists, promote active, cooperative learning beyond the formal classroom environment and foster a sense of cohesion among students and faculty. During this academic year, students will be required to enroll for a minimum of 9 credits per semester (i.e. full time status), and will be required to participate in designated activities beyond specific course requirements. For all students (Route 1 and Route 2 admissions, part- and full- time) the residency will correspond with the year in which they are enrolled for doctoral research credits and 2 semesters of practicum. Required residency activities will include, at a minimum, seminars, coursework and doctoral research activities throughout the academic year.