Our Program of Study

Our program incorporates two areas of training — research training and clinical training — as well as the coursework needed to lay the foundation for both.

Research Training

Our program is designed to train students who envision research as a primary focus of their graduate education and future career. Expertise in the design and interpretation of research sets clinical psychology apart from related disciplines, including psychiatry, social work and professional (Psy.D.) programs.

Training in research and scholarship occurs primarily through the student’s research apprenticeship with a faculty mentor. The clinical faculty has a wide range of research interests — see the Faculty section below. Students begin their research training through coursework and as research assistants, and over time are expected to demonstrate increasing independence and to move closer to becoming broad-based scientists and scholars in clinical psychology.

Our program has a number of formalized research opportunities:

- The Psychology Department’s Colloquium series invites scientists who are leaders in their field across the sub-fields of Psychology and related disciplines (e.g., neuroscience) to present their work to our department and to interact with our graduate students.
Students in their second year and beyond present their work at an annual Emory University Clinical Psychology Research Day, in which we invite a distinguished speaker to join us for a day of student presentations and symposia.

Students in our program are encouraged to attend Grand Rounds in Psychiatry, where leading scientists from around the country present their research. We have the advantage of proximity to and collaboration with a superb Psychiatry Department.

Students write and defend three scholarly works: a review paper or a research proposal that is part of the Qualifying Exam, a master's thesis and a dissertation. Students are encouraged to publish these works, which begin their contribution to the field as professionals.

Clinical Training
Training in clinical practice begins with the coursework in personality and psychopathology, clinical assessment, and clinical intervention during the first two years of the program. The integration of science and practice begins in these early courses.

During their first year, students take an assessment practicum that gives them direct experience with psychological evaluations.

During the summer after the first year students begin practicum at the Psychological Center, which is part of the Psychology Department and is operated by the clinical faculty. The Center provides low-cost outpatient psychological services to patients referred from other Emory University facilities as well as from the larger Atlanta community. In addition to psychological assessment, individual (adult and child), marital/couples, group, and family therapy are available. Students are signed up for practicum at the center for at least three years.

In addition, students must obtain additional clinical experience at secondary practicum sites in Atlanta, where they can work with particular patient populations. At least one such externship is required before applying for internship. Students must complete an APA-approved clinical internship prior to being awarded the Ph.D.

Coursework
To function as productive clinical researchers in psychology, students need to acquire a basic understanding of the determinants of human behavior and a strong background in research design and quantitative methods. Required coursework consists of five core clinical courses in personality and psychopathology, clinical assessment, and clinical intervention; two elective clinical courses to deepen or broaden a student’s knowledge of a substantive area of clinical psychology; three courses in research methods and statistics; one course in the history and systems of psychology; one course in ethics for psychologists; and one elective course each in Neuroscience and Animal Behavior, Cognitive Psychology, Developmental Psychology, and Social Psychology.

For more information about our program of study, please visit our website at www.psychology.emory.edu/clinical and explore the links to information about admissions, courses, research and more.

New Psychology and Interdisciplinary Sciences Building (PAIS)

In September of 2007, construction began on a new facility for the Department of Psychology, including the graduate program in Clinical Psychology. The department moved into the new building in May of 2009. The five-story building is part of a Science Commons, located adjacent to Atwood Hall (chemistry) and near the Mathematics and Science Center.

The new building integrates most faculty activities under one roof. There is space for teaching and research with technology seamlessly integrated into learning spaces, laboratories designed to fit faculty research needs, a graduate student computer lab with state-of-the-art technology, and informal spaces designed for interaction among faculty and students.

The clinical program has a training clinic (The Psychological Center) so that initial practicum experiences can be provided on-site. The Psychological Center provides services on a sliding fee scale for individuals in the community as well as students. A visitor’s parking lot is nearby, which makes it easier to recruit study participants who have to come to campus.

Future plans include establishing a state-of-the-art imaging facility in this building for basic research and clinical research with normal and patient populations.
Students

Our website has information about all of our graduate students, including research interests and the faculty members they work with, at www.psychology.emory.edu/clinical/students.html.

Faculty

We have 12 faculty who serve as the primary research mentors for graduate students in the program. Below you will find brief sketches of some of their interests; on our website you will find a complete set of individual faculty member pages containing information about research interests, publications and more. In addition, the following faculty are integral to the graduate program: Dr. Cindy Messina (Director of the Psychological Center), Dr. Ann Abramowitz (Director of the Assessment Program), Dr. Steve Snow (clinical supervisor) and Dr. Nancy Bliwise (teacher training). Visit www.psychology.emory.edu/clinical/faculty.html.

Dr. Eugene Emory’s research focuses on the causes, classification, and early brain-behavior relationships. We think this work may help to prevent problems that are found in many children whose mothers have been depressed.

Dr. Klin is working on new models of health care delivery that involve universal screening of babies and tie screening to early intervention.

Dr. Scott Lilienfeld’s research focuses on the detection and causes of psychopathic personality traits (such as dishonesty and lack of guilt), as well as psychological risk factors for criminal behavior. He is especially interested in identifying environmental, gender-related, and personality factors that may influence the expression of psychopathic personality traits and buffer certain at-risk individuals from developing criminal behavior. He is also interested in the application of scientific thinking and skepticism to clinical psychology and allied fields, and to distinguishing science from pseudoscience in mental health.

Dr. Jack McDowell studies mathematical and computational models of adaptive behavior. His current work deals with a computational theory of behavior dynamics that is based on the notion that behavior evolves in response to selection pressure from the environment in the form of resource acquisition, or threat escape or avoidance. When this work is extended to adaptive social behavior it may permit the development and computational evaluation of new treatments for clinical problems.

Dr. Sherryl Goodman’s research brings together the fields of developmental and clinical psychology with a specific focus on depression in women who are pregnant or parenting. She studies the effects on the children and how (and why) some children develop problems and others do well. She is particularly interested in learning how to prevent the problems that are found in many children whose mothers have been depressed.

Dr. Sherryl Goodman’s research focuses on the development and clinical psychology with a specific focus on depression in women who are pregnant or parenting. She studies the effects on the children and how (and why) some children develop problems and others do well. She is particularly interested in learning how to prevent the problems that are found in many children whose mothers have been depressed.
DR. ELAINE WALKER, her collaborators at Emory, and her students are involved in research aimed at identifying risk factors for major mental illnesses, especially schizophrenia, with the eventual goal of preventing these illnesses. Her research group is part of a national consortium of 8 universities that are funded by the NIMH to identify adolescents who are at greatest risk and to better understand and prevent the brain abnormalities that can lead to mental illness during this developmental stage.

DR. DREW WESTEN’S research centers on group studies. One study is looking at personality and resilience among inner city African-Americans in Atlanta, as a way to understand genetic and environmental influences on a group of people exposed to the stresses associated with poverty. A study recently funded by the NIMH is looking at new ways to diagnose personality disorders. Another study, in collaboration with a colleague in the Law School, is examining how the brain functions during jury decision making, to see how jurors actually weigh evidence and the extent to which emotional factors influence their decision making.

Requests for Additional Information:
RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies
209 Administration Building
201 Dowman Drive
Atlanta, GA 30322

404-727-6028
(ask for the Clinical Psychology program)
Fax: 404-727-4990
http://www.graduateschool.emory.edu
http://www.psychology.emory.edu/clinical

Contact Information
Main Office: Psychology Department
404-727-7438
Director of Clinical Psychology and Director of Clinical Training
DR. LINDA CRAIGHEAD
lcraingh@emory.edu
Graduate Program Administrative Assistant
PAULA MITCHELL
paula.mitchell@emory.edu
Visit www.psychology.emory.edu/clinical