

**DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY (PSY. D.) PROGRAM IN
CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**GEORGIA SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY
912-478-5539**

**Information for Prospective Students
for Fall 2010 Admission**

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INTRODUCTION

The Psy.D. program in clinical psychology at Georgia Southern University (GSU) is a full-time, day-time program offering a course of study leading to the Doctor of Psychology degree. The program offers a curriculum that prepares graduates to practice psychology in rural areas. The curriculum provides coursework necessary for licensure as a psychologist by the [Georgia State Board of Psychologists](#).

The Psy.D. program originated from a longstanding and dire need for licensed psychologists in the rural, underserved areas of the United States, most specifically in the rural south. This mission is consistent with Georgia Southern University's commitment to serve the needs of the region. The first cohort of students began the program in the Fall of 2007.

The program trains students to become generalists who practice psychotherapy and psychological assessment. The program has an integrative orientation, emphasizing behavioral, cognitive, existential, family systems, humanistic, and psychodynamic orientations.

An integral part of student success in the program is personal development. Thus students are encouraged to take initiative and responsibility for personal growth through independent readings, interaction with fellow students and faculty, attendance at colloquia, and additional elective research and practica. Students are required to participate in their own psychotherapy (see Program Requirements).

Accreditation

Most students applying to a doctoral program in psychology look for an accredited program. Newly developed programs in psychology doctoral education cannot be accredited immediately and, for this reason, you are applying to a "non-accredited program." As a new program, the earliest we are able to apply for accreditation is when the first class of doctoral students enters their final year in the program. We estimate that this year will be 2011. This allows the accrediting agency, the American Psychological Association (APA), to review the full curriculum following a full cycle of implementation. This process will also allow the first graduating class of doctoral students the opportunity to graduate from an accredited program.

The Department of Psychology has the full support of Georgia Southern University in this endeavor and is fully engaged in the preparation and evaluation process needed to secure APA accreditation. Georgia Southern Psychology department faculty members are actively engaged in maintaining ongoing memberships in organizations that sponsor cross-collaboration relating to building, modifying, and maintaining program fidelity. Our curriculum has been carefully designed to meet the goals and objectives set forth by accrediting bodies so that appropriate competencies are established. Faculty members are engaged in processes that strengthen our involvement in the accreditation process, including attending workshops and conferences focused on accreditation preparation, serving as an accreditation program reviewer, and studying

and visiting other programs that have been successfully accredited. While there are no guarantees regarding our status, we are vigorously pursuing the types of activities that lead to accreditation-granting status.

Evidence of our progress toward accreditation is found in The Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards / National Register Designation Committee ([ASPPB](#)) listing our program in the [National Register of Doctoral Psychology Programs Meeting Designation Criteria](#).

This program meets the Association of State & Provincial Psychology Boards/National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology "Guidelines for Defining 'Doctoral Degree in Psychology.'" Therefore, graduates of this designated program who decide to apply for licensing as a psychologist typically will meet the educational requirements for licensing. However, in each jurisdiction there are additional requirements that must be satisfied. For exact information, please contact the state or provincial licensing board in the jurisdiction in which you plan to apply.

Once licensed, graduates are eligible to apply for credentialing as a Health Service Provider in Psychology. Graduation from a designated program means that the program you completed typically meets the educational requirements for credentialing by the National Register. However, there are additional requirements that must be satisfied prior to being credentialed by the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology. For further information, consult the National Register's web site: www.nationalregister.org.

The GSU Psychology Department is committed to seeking APA accreditation as soon as possible, and we feel confident that we will be successful. However, students entering the program at this time should understand that there is a risk that accreditation will not happen or will not happen in time for his or her degree to be from an accredited program. Having a degree from a non-accredited program may make securing an internship and/or state licensure problematic. Students should also be aware that the program is constantly changing in response to the on-going assessment of policies, practices, and curriculum. Students will be held to the policies, practices, and curriculum in place at the time they enter the program.

Admissions

Given the ongoing demand for doctoral level training in professional psychology and the limited number of students that we will admit per year, admission to the Psy.D. program is expected to be quite competitive.

Although 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 predominantly rural region. Therefore, students should carefully consider their interest in rural and underserved populations before applying to the program. Applicants will only be

considered for admission to the Psy.D. program (i.e., students will not be admitted for a terminal masters degree in clinical psychology).

Application for Advanced Standing: Students may receive credit for graduate courses taken at a regionally accredited institution during the last five years. A maximum of 18 hours of graduate level coursework is allowed. All decisions on exempted courses lie with the faculty clinical committee, and require any student desiring course exemption to provide documentation (e.g., syllabi, tests, grades) from the previous course. **Credit will not be given for clinical courses, with the exception of Assessment I (PSYC 7231; Topic: Intellectual Assessment).** Students wishing to be exempted from this course must demonstrate proficiency as determined by the clinical committee. Course equivalencies will be determined on a case by case basis and will be determined only after the applicant has been accepted into the program. Any course deficiencies will need to be completed with attention to course sequences and prerequisites before a degree can be awarded.

Admission and Enrollment as a Part-time Student: The PsyD program is designed to be a full-time program that can be completed in five years. However, we realize some students may desire to do a portion of the program part-time. To this end, students may be admitted to the program with part-time status. If they wish to do this, the following criteria must be met:

- Students must apply via the same admission procedures as full-time students
- Students can only begin the program in the Fall semester
- Students must be admitted with a minimum of 18 hours of course credit in non-clinical courses (i.e., they must come into the program with the maximum amount of transfer credit)

Once admitted, part-time students must

- Enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours of coursework each semester
- Enroll in necessary co-requisite courses when they are required
- Enroll in Foundations of Psychotherapy I, II, and Group Psychotherapy (PSYC 7232, 7433, and 7235) in consecutive semesters
- Switch to full-time enrollment (minimum 9 credit hours per semester) for at least one full year to meet the residency requirement (see 'Residency Requirement' section)
- Complete the Psy.D. program within the 8-year time limit allowed for all students

Part-time students may switch to full-time status at any point in their training. We ask that a return to part-time status after being full-time be preceded by a petition to the DCT.

Students enrolled in the Psy.D. program part-time (at any time) should be aware of the following:

- Enrolling part-time in the program will, in all likelihood, put a student out-of-sync with their original cohort group.
- Because all courses are offered once per year, students should carefully plan their course sequence so as to meet requirements for practicum, taking comprehensive examinations and the clinical qualifying examination, and applying for internship.
- Some program requirements, practicum in particular, will require a substantial time commitment on top of required course work.
- Students enrolled part-time are ineligible for a Graduate Assistantship.
- The Pre-doctoral internship will, in all likelihood, require a full-time commitment.

Undergraduate Prerequisites: To be admitted to the Psy.D. program an applicant need not have an undergraduate degree in psychology. However, the student must have earned a minimum grade of B in the following courses: Introductory Psychology, Psychological Statistics, Research Design, Abnormal Psychology. In addition, students must have taken at least two of the following courses: Personality, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Learning and/or Cognition, Health Psychology, Tests and Measurement, Theories of Psychotherapy, Psychology of Substance Abuse. Additional coursework in psychology and in related discipline is likely to strengthen a candidate's application.

The specific admissions procedures are as follows

1. Applications will be evaluated once per year for Fall admissions. The deadline for applications is January 15.

Applicants will submit an application on-line. The application packet is available at the following website:

http://cogs.georgiasouthern.edu/future_students/grad_application.html

2. 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.

Admission decisions will be based upon

1. A successful completion of a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution. Students' academic record will be evaluated based on official transcripts from all previous enrollments in higher education.
 - Grade Point Average (GPA): We have no minimum GPA for admission. However, the average GPA of successful applicants for the Fall 2009 class was 3.65 (on a 4.0 scale).
 - A minimum grade of B in the following undergraduate courses: Introductory Psychology, Psychological Statistics, Research Design, Abnormal Psychology
 - Record of having taken at least two of the following courses: Personality, Social Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Learning and/or Cognition, Health Psychology, Tests and Measurement, Theories of Psychotherapy, Psychology of Substance Abuse.
2. Current (last 5 years) scores from the Graduate Record Exam (GRE).
 - We have no minimum cut-off for scores on the verbal and quantitative sections of GRE. However, the average GRE scores on the verbal and quantitative sections for the Fall 2009 class were 518 and 630, respectively.
 - Applicants to the Psy.D. program who do not have a Bachelor's or Master's degree in Psychology are required to take the GRE subtest in Psychology. Any prospective student who has already earned a degree in psychology is exempt from taking this test.

3. Three letters of recommendation from former professors or appropriate employers/advisors.
4. A 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.
5. Based upon the recommendation of the Admissions Committee, a personal interview with applicants may be scheduled as part of the admissions process.

PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY

The clinical graduate experience is designed to facilitate the academic, clinical and personal development of each student. Keeping in mind the acute need for clinical psychologists in rural areas, students will be selected, in part, for their commitment to rural practice. The program's goals and objectives are based on the core competencies of clinical education and training stated by the American Psychological Association (APA) and the National Council of Schools in Professional Psychology (NCSPP).

Clinical Training

A critical component of the program is to offer high quality graduate education and training in clinical psychology with an emphasis on *psychotherapy* and *assessment* in clinical practice. The training for practice is *sequential, cumulative, and graduated in complexity*. The program follows the practitioner-scholar model.

In the first year, students take didactic courses that are paired with experiential skill-building courses so that the skills associated with the didactic courses are learned concurrently. Also in the first year is an Assessment sequence. In the second year, students will begin their Practicum experience. The third and fourth years include practica focused on rural practice (3rd year) and supervision (4th year). Other clinical courses are interspersed among years 1-4.

Non-Clinical Psychology Training

As per training standards upheld by APA and NCSPP, acquiring knowledge related to the non-clinical areas of psychology is another component of training. Students must be well grounded in the breadth of scientific psychology, and be able to demonstrate how scientific psychology integrates with clinical practice. Scientific psychology courses are interspersed among years 1 through 4.

Additional Goals:

The program is designed to promote in students an understanding of rural culture and its impact on clinical practice. To this end, the program has goals dedicated to developing an appreciation

of rural culture, learning appropriate models of service for rural populations, and (when possible) the selection of a rural site for internship.

Additionally, the faculty wishes to instill in students a desire for life-long academic, professional, and personal development. To meet this, the program has goals including a requirement to seek personal psychotherapy and encouragement to seek out experiential professional workshops.

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The curriculum covers the breadth of scientific psychology; the scientific, methodological, and theoretical foundations of clinical practice; diagnosing or defining problems through psychological assessment; formulating intervention strategies; and understanding diversity and multicultural issues. In addition to coursework, students must complete practicum, a dissertation, and an internship.

To earn a Psy.D. at GSU, students must satisfactorily complete 99 credits of coursework (a minimum of one year (12 continuous months) of full-time coursework must be done in residency at Georgia Southern), three years of practicum, pass the Clinical Qualifying Examination (written and oral components), complete a dissertation, and complete a 12-month (2000 hour) clinical internship. The dissertation must be completed before the student leaves on Internship.

Students are held to the curriculum policies contained in the GSU Catalog for the year they enter the program. Every student is, therefore, strongly encouraged to obtain a Catalog and be familiar with the policies pertaining to the Department of Psychology and the College of Graduate Studies. Catalogs are available online at <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/registrar/catalog.htm>.

Many of the clinical courses include students examining their own personal experiences. This is an essential element of clinical training. While self-disclosure of personal information is welcome, it is in no way required. If students choose to self-disclose, they should bear in mind that faculty may discuss the revealed personal information among themselves. Faculty have the responsibility of trying to assure that students have the emotional stability and maturity necessary for working with others in a helping capacity, and discussing a student's personal information is at times relevant to determining his or her stability and maturity. Any such discussion will be done in a professional and respectful manner, and the student will be apprised of concerns that may limit his or her progress in the program.

There is an eight-year time limit for completing all of the requirements for the degree. Failure to complete the program within this eight-year period is grounds for dismissal from the program. If a student cannot complete the program within this timeframe, he or she may request an extension. The extension request must be submitted in writing to the Director of Clinical Training (DCT), and accompanied by letters of support from all members of the student's Dissertation Committee. Extensions are granted for only one year at a time, and only if the

student has demonstrated steady progress toward the completion of the degree. The eight-year rule does not include approved formal leaves of absence.

Clinical Qualifying Examination:

In the summer of their 3rd year (at the earliest) or the fall of their fourth year (no later than November 1), students must successfully complete a Clinical Qualifying Examination. This examination is designed to assure that students have achieved the level of clinical knowledge, clinical skills, and ethical knowledge expected of a student ready to begin Internship.

Dissertation:

In keeping with the practitioner-scholar model, the program aims to train practitioners who are grounded in scientific psychology. By the beginning of his or her fourth year, it is expected that students will have drafted a doctoral dissertation proposal. The project should then be carried out during the fourth year, and be successfully defended before the student leaves campus for Internship.

The dissertation is expected to involve a topic that informs or can apply to the practice of clinical psychology, ideally with rural populations. To this end, the dissertation can take two forms: an original empirical study or a theoretical review of existing scholarly literature.

The program requires that students have successfully defended the dissertation before going on Internship.

Internship:

Many state licensing boards for doctoral level psychologists require candidates for licensure to have completed a one-year, full-time (2,000 hour) pre-doctoral internship. The GSU Psy.D. program is designed for the Internship to be completed in the fifth year. Internship requirements for specific states and/or jurisdictions can typically be found with the licensing policies of the local state licensing boards of interest. Additional up-to-date information regarding state licensure can be obtained from the website of the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (<http://www.asppb.org>).

Students will follow the application process outlined by the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) www.appic.org. A list of APA accredited Internship sites are published in the December issue of the *American Psychologist* each year. The list is also available on-line at www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/intern. Because one of the overriding goals of the Psy.D. program is to prepare students for rural practice, a rural internship should be selected whenever possible.

Personal Therapy Requirement:

In our clinical training we emphasize the development of the clinician as a person in parity with the acquisition of clinical skills and theoretical knowledge. Therefore, students are encouraged to seek experiences that enhance personal growth and awareness through self-exploration. To this

end, we require all students to complete a minimum of 15 sessions of personal psychotherapy (individual, group, or family) with a licensed therapist during their time in the program. Whatever issues you discuss with your therapist will be completely confidential and not shared with program faculty. Although one may wish to arrange therapy privately, as a student, psychotherapy is available without fee at the university Counseling Center. Additionally, a list of private practitioners willing to provide reduced-cost psychotherapy is available from the DCT.

PRACTICUM

An indispensable component of clinical training is gaining experience doing psychotherapy and assessment. Additionally, expertise as a supervisor is also important to training. To this end, students are required to participate in a graduated series of practicum experiences beginning in the second year. In the second and fourth years, students will participate in *Vertical Supervision Teams*. These teams will consist of second-year students doing therapy and assessment, and fourth-year students doing supervision them under the guidance of faculty. These teams will do their work in sites on campus: the Georgia Southern Community Psychology Clinic (housed within the Department of Psychology), the Georgia Southern University Center for Counseling and Career Development, and the Regents Center for Learning Disorders. In the third year, all students will do their practicum in rural clinics and/or with predominantly rural clientele. The fourth year of practicum can be at any site, but a portion of the experience will involve participation in a vertical supervision team.

ADVISEMENT

Georgia Southern and the Department of Psychology are committed to providing a learning experience that is of high quality, in accordance with APA standards, and serves students' personal and professional needs and goals. To this end, our philosophy of advisement is to be sensitive to students' needs, whatever they may be, to the extent that they are part of the learning experience in the program. Therefore, the faculty endeavor to maintain channels of communication that allow students to obtain advice, voice concerns, and provide feedback about the program. Students are strongly encouraged to use the many options available for effective communication.

EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

Evaluation of student performance and is given in several ways. Each source of evaluation feedback is described below:

1. Grades: Students are expected to pass all courses with a grade of A or B. Should a student earn less than a B in any course, he or she is immediately put on probation and must retake the course (and earn an A or B) the next time the course is offered. Earning a second grade below B will result in dismissal from the program.
2. Written Evaluations: Students will regularly receive written evaluations.
3. Meetings: Twice per year, near the end of each semester, students will have an individual

meeting with a committee of faculty for an evaluation of his or her progress. The purpose of these meetings is to assess the student's academic performance, professional skills, ethical judgment and sensitivity, as well as personal attributes or behaviors that may call into question the student's suitability for a career in professional psychology.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Georgia Southern University is committed to supporting students enrolled in doctoral programs, and realizes that the completion of a doctoral degree is costly in terms of time and money. Therefore, the Department is prepared to offer doctoral-level graduate assistantships (GAs) to the most highly qualified students in each incoming student cohort. The anticipated number of funded GAs is four per student cohort (pending availability of university funds). Each GA position is renewable (based on student performance and availability of funds) until the student has completed all in-residence requirements for the degree. The position provides a stipend (currently, \$12,000 per 12-month year) and a remission of tuition. Students awarded GA positions are expected to devote 20 hours per academic week to service in the Psychology Department. Work schedules will revolve around the student's class schedule, and specific duties will be determined by supervising faculty.

In order to qualify for a GA position, students must be admitted into the Psy.D. program and must complete a GA application (available on the College of Graduate Studies website). Only full-time students (i.e., those enrolled in 9 credit hours per semester) are eligible for a GA position. The Psy.D. Admissions Committee, the DCT, and the Department Chair decide who will be offered GA positions. Decisions are made on the basis of information obtained from the student's application to the program (i.e., GRE scores, pre-program GPA) and the admissions interview.

Information about other forms of financial assistance can be obtained through Georgia Southern's Office of Financial Aid, P.O. Box 8065, Statesboro GA; phone: 912-478-5413. Their website is: <http://students.georgiasouthern.edu/finaid/>

FACULTY

Clinical Faculty

James L. Pugh, Ph.D. (Georgia State University)
Research Interests: Psychotherapy, Stress

Jackson Rainer, Ph.D. (Georgia State University)
Research Interests: Palliative care, Psychotherapy

K. Bryant Smalley, Psy.D. (Nova Southeastern University)
Research Interests: Gender, Multicultural Psychology, Behavioral Health

C. Thresa Yancey, Ph.D. (University of Nebraska)
Research Interests: Trauma, Behavioral Interventions, Child Therapy

Experimental Faculty

Kent Bodily, Ph.D. (Auburn University)
Area: Learning and Cognition
Research Interests: spatial learning in virtual environments, problem-solving

Amy Hackney, Ph.D. (St. Louis University)
Area: Social
Research Interests: Stereotyping and Prejudice, Psychology and the law, Research Methods

Janice Kennedy, Ph.D. (Georgia State University)
Area: Developmental
Research Interests: Parent-child attachment, child social development

Lawrence Locker, Ph.D. (University of Kansas)
Area: Cognitive
Research Interests: Language processing, written word perception

Will McIntosh, Ph.D. (University of Georgia)
Area: Social
Research Interests: Happiness, Film/television, social cognition

John Murray, Ph.D. (University of California, Santa Barbara)
Area: Cognitive
Research Interests: Psychology of Language, text processing, Knowledge-Discovery in data bases

Karen Naufel, Ph.D. (University of Arkansas)
Area: Social
Research Interests: Health psychology, motivation and emotion, emotional adaptation, coping with unpleasant events

Michael Nielsen, Ph.D. (Northern Illinois University)
Area: Social
Research Interests: Psychology of religion, self-complexity

Rebecca Ryan, Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
Area: Developmental

Research Interests: Psychology and the law, forensic interviews

Janice Steirn, Ph.D. (University of Georgia)

Area: Learning/BMod

Research Interests: Fitness and wellness, memory and cognitive processes in non-humans

Daniel Webster, Ph.D. (University of Florida)

Area: Physiological

Research Interests: Biopsychology, brainstem mechanisms of behavior, immobility, psychophysiology of emotions

Janie Wilson, Ph.D. (University of South Carolina)

Area: Physiological

Research Interests: neuropsychology, rat models of stress and relief, professor immediacy

Adjunct Faculty

Jodi Caldwell, Ph.D. (Texas Tech University)

Area: Counseling Psychology

Toi Curry, Psy.D. (Widener University)

Area: Neuropsychology

Merry Gallagher, Ed.D. (University of Massachusetts)

Area: Counseling Psychology

Peggy Hargis, Ph.D. (University of Georgia)

Area: Sociology, Rural South

Steven Jacobson, Ph.D. (Oklahoma State University)

Area: Counseling Psychology

David Matthews, Ph.D. (University of Virginia)

Area: Counseling Psychology

George Shaver, Psy.D. (George Fox University)

Area: Clinical Neuropsychology, Learning Disabilities, Traumatic Head Injury

Leon Spencer, Ed.D. (Ball State University)

Area: Community Counseling, Multicultural Counseling

