

# Program Training Model, Values & Goals

From our website: <https://uwm.edu/psychology/graduate/phd-program/clinical-psychology/training-model-training-goals/>

## Educational and Training Model

The Clinical Psychology Program at UWM strives to train clinical psychologists as scientist-practitioners. Our Program is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association. We are also a member of the Academy of Psychological Clinical Science, reflecting our emphasis on the integration of science and practice. The Program uses the Boulder model to train students as entry-level psychologists who are able to thrive in a wide range of professional activities and settings including psychology departments, academic medical centers, hospitals, and community mental health clinics. It is our belief that regardless of students' chosen professions, they should be culturally conscious, sensitive, affirming, ethical, and competent researchers and practitioners. Furthermore, the Program believes that a psychologist trained as a scientist-practitioner is not a dual entity consisting of separate research and clinical repertoires. Rather, a scientist-practitioner is fully capable of conducting research in the context of practice or independent of practice, can use knowledge of research to guide practice, and uses practice to inform research. Thus, the Program seeks to instill the notion that "scientist-practitioner" does not so much reflect a job title, but a mindset or worldview that permeates all professional activities, be they research or clinical endeavors.

The Program holds the development of culturally conscious, sensitive, and affirming psychologists as a core value, central to all aspects of scientist-practitioner training. The Program strives for all faculty, students, and staff to be educated and trained on, as well as demonstrate, sensitivity to diversity and individual differences in all areas of our work, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, sex assigned at birth, gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, nationality, immigration status, religion, age, socioeconomic status, disability status, and any other minoritized groups. The Program promotes commitment to anti-racist, anti-discrimination, inclusive, and equitable attitudes and actions. Cultural awareness and responsiveness are built into didactic and practical training, both via specific dedicated courses and through ongoing efforts to infuse this training throughout the Program.

The Program seeks to train generalists, and the core training faculty represents a diverse range of concentrations and theoretical perspectives, falling under a biopsychosocial umbrella. To provide this generalist training, we have established a graduated and developmentally sequenced core curriculum that provides our students with broad and comprehensive training. Alongside the broad foundation, individualization of the training experience is emphasized. Throughout training, each student's career goals are considered and practice- or research-related experiences are differentially emphasized in order to support the accomplishment of these goals. Students may have a focus on a particular area in their more advanced training (e.g., Clinical Neuropsychology) but we offer no formal specializations or tracks. All students are expected to achieve foundational competence in research and practice skills as well as skills demonstrating the successful integration of research and practice.

## Program Values

The training goals we detail below are grounded in our core Program values, which are to be upheld by all program faculty, students, and staff. We have defined five sets of Program values as pillars supporting all training activities. All individuals involved in the Program are expected to engage in and model **ethical and professional behavior**. Further, we are committed to **community well-being**, for both those in our program and our larger community beyond the university. In supporting community well-being, we focus on fostering an environment that is respectful of all and supports psychological safety within the Program. In recognition of our core mission of training and dynamic field, we are committed to ongoing **improvement and growth** in all aspects of our work. This includes a fundamental humility that promotes listening, openness to new and alternative ideas, receptiveness to constructive feedback and criticism, and a commitment to lifelong learning. Our Program trains students to be sensitive and affirming to diversity, equity, and inclusivity in their work as scientist-practitioners. This is embodied through a commitment to anti-racist and anti-discriminatory attitudes and actions, and affirmation of diversity and individual differences. Finally, our Program is committed to scientific rigor and embraces empiricism in all aspects of our scientist-practitioner training.

### *Five Pillar Program Values*

#### Ethical and Professional

- Accountability
- Vulnerability/Humility
- Honesty/Integrity
- Responsibility
- Transparency
- Ethical Standards
- Professionalism

#### Community Wellbeing

- Psychological Safety
- Respect for Privacy
- Community
- Student Success
- Outreach and Dissemination
- Social Justice
- Wellbeing

#### Improvement and Growth

- Accountability
- Vulnerability/Humility

- Autonomy
- Openness

#### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion

- Social Justice
- Antiracism
- Equity
- Inclusion
- Diversity

#### Scientific Rigor

- Empiricism
- Scientific Rigor
- Inclusivity
- Dissemination

## **Training Goals and Objectives**

Below, we provide a narrative of these goals and objectives in relation to the Program's (a) philosophy and training model, (b) intent of training clinical psychologists who are competent for entry-level practice, (c) desire to train high-quality psychologists who behave professionally and ethically, and (d) mission to develop psychologists who are culturally responsive and advocates for well-being and social justice. Each of the below goals are rooted in the Program's five pillar values: Ethical and Professional Behavior, Community Well-being, Improvement/Growth, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Scientific Rigor. In keeping with our core value of improvement and growth, we have included some goals that are aspirational at this time to provide a roadmap for future program development.

### ***Goal 1: Prepare students to serve as consumers and producers of psychological research.***

Central to the Program's integrated scientist-practitioner philosophy and training model, we believe that ethical, highly-qualified entry-level practicing psychologists should possess the skills necessary to critically evaluate and produce culturally-conscious psychological research.

A central context in which this training occurs is the mentor model. At the core of the mentor model is the mentor-mentee relationship, which if strong, will (a) provide an effective model for the application of integrated scientist-practitioner behavior, (b) foster a psychologically safe environment for growth and learning, (c) allow the student to become involved in the research work early in their career, giving them additional opportunities to develop their research skills, and (d) aid in their professional development through publishing and presenting research with the mentor. To facilitate the development of effective mentor-mentee relationships, the Program (a) has admissions policies that effectively match potential students with potential mentors, (b) has clear and accessible policies that are in place to repair or replace the mentor-mentee relationship if problems arise, (c) expects that

mentors and mentees meet regularly, (d) actively involves students in research experiences beginning in their first year, and (e) encourages mentors and mentees to publish their work together.

While the mentor-mentee relationship provides the context and continuity for the research training throughout the Program, students also need to establish a knowledge base to be effective consumers and producers of research. To be effective consumers of research, we believe students must understand concepts of research design and analysis and be able to apply this knowledge in the critical evaluation of research. To become an effective producer of research, psychologists must acquire a strong knowledge base and ability to critically evaluate literature, and also need to practice implementing these research skills by developing research ideas, designing studies, collecting and analyzing data, and disseminating the findings. Program members are encouraged to be aware of (a) their own frame of reference and potential biases they bring to their science, (b) potential biases in the evidence base in their field, (c) consider means of advancing inclusivity in research, and (d) work to disseminate findings back to the community(ies) their work is most likely to impact.

The mentor-mentee context is designed to provide an environment in which students can observe the research production process in action, and can also become involved in such activities from an early stage of training. To ensure our students can effectively produce research, we require that students successfully develop, complete, and defend both an empirical master's thesis and an empirical doctoral dissertation. In addition, to socialize students into the dissemination of research, and to facilitate their professional development, the Program strongly encourages students to publish and present their research findings. The mutual relevance of research and practice activities is also emphasized through the more recent inclusion of lab-specific research updates within the Professional Development and Issues in Clinical Psychology (PDP) Program meeting series, where faculty and students describe the research conducted within individual faculty labs.

***Goal 2: Prepare students for entry-level evidence-based psychology practice.***

Consistent with the Program philosophy and scientist-practitioner training model, we believe that high quality, entry-level psychologists are ethically responsible for understanding the empirical bases for their clinical practice and should possess the multidimensional skill set necessary to effectively implement evidence-based practices. Psychologists are also ethically responsible for considering how the evidence base is relevant for individuals for diverse populations, including minoritized groups, to tailor evidence-based practice in a culturally sensitive and affirming way, and to consider potential limitations in the current evidence base with respect to diversity and cultural sensitivity. Through didactics, peer supervision, and supervision with licensed psychologists, students examine their own identities and how this may impact their work with clients from various backgrounds. We provide this training through both a didactic course sequence and through a developmentally sequenced practical training experience. Through both didactic instruction and participation in our practical training experiences, students acquire knowledge of the theory, science, and application of validated interventions and assessment techniques. Acquisition of this knowledge is demonstrated by (a) student's knowledge of the evidence-based foundations for treatment and assessment, and (b) the students' ability to apply theory to clinical cases.

As with the successful training of research skills, clinical skills cannot be developed by acquiring didactic knowledge alone. Hands-on peer and faculty supervised clinical training is required. The Program uses a developmentally sequenced practical training experience that builds on skills learned in previous years and offers a broad exposure to different settings and populations. Our goal is that by the end of this training sequence, all students will demonstrate foundational skills in structured and unstructured interviewing, psychological assessment, and intervention. Students will be able to effectively interact with other professionals in psychology and related disciplines in implementing these skills to optimize clinical outcomes. Consistent with our Program philosophy, the Program provides ample models for the integration of scientific principles into clinical practice.

In the first year of the Program, our practical training seeks to provide students with skills in clinical and structured interviewing and beginning diagnostic assessment techniques as evidenced by the ability to successfully complete multiple structured (e.g., SCID) and unstructured clinical interviews and the ability to administer basic cognitive, personality, and achievement instruments. In the second year, students are trained to become proficient in empirically-supported psychological assessment techniques with both children and adults, including test selection, administration, scoring, interpretation, consideration of testing limitations, and dissemination of written and verbal information to clients and other professionals. This will be evidenced by the ability to successfully select and administer assessment batteries, successfully score, interpret, and write reports on the 4 completed assessment batteries, and provide feedback to assessment clients and to other professionals and family members. In the third year, the focus is primarily on therapy training as students learn to become proficient in the implementation of empirically-supported interventions, as evidenced by their ability to (a) use research findings to develop case formulations, make diagnoses, and recommend appropriate interventions or further assessment; (b) demonstrate non-specific and treatment-specific therapy skills with clients; and (d) work collaboratively with clients, peers, and supervisors. In the fourth year and beyond, students are encouraged to implement and further develop these skills in the community placement settings and 2000-hour predoctoral internship.

In implementing evidenced-based clinical practices into multiple settings, the ethical and professional entry-level psychologist should be able to effectively communicate clinical cases to other professionals. As a result, the Program requires students to demonstrate proficiency in presenting clinical cases to clients and professional audiences with appropriate cultural sensitivity, as evidenced by successfully presenting cases at PDP, to school personnel or parents as part of the assessment practicum, in the structured vertical teams, and at community placements as applicable.

Finally, students need to demonstrate professional values, attitudes, interpersonal competencies and professionalism, as evidenced by their ability to form effective working relationships with peers, clients, and supervisors and demonstrate receptiveness to feedback in all professional domains.

***Goal 3. Prepare students to effectively consider ethical issues in research and practice.***

Students trained in the Program will understand and demonstrate appropriate ethical behavior in the context of research and practice. All students complete CITI Human Subjects training prior to work in their labs and/or in the clinic, take a course in Ethics and Professional Issues (Psy 712), and attend an ongoing required professional development training seminar several times per semester. An Ethics

Round Table within PDP allows students to discuss ethical dilemmas. In addition, students gain exposure to ethical considerations in clinical practice by participating in therapy teams where other students and faculty model sensitivity to professional behavior and ethical decision making. Through the Program, students demonstrate knowledge of ethics and professional conduct in all professional contexts and demonstrate ethical and professional behavior during research and practical experiences. Students are expected to successfully demonstrate ethical behavior throughout, either by seeking consultation when necessary as preventive measures or for resolution of an ethical conflict, and/or successfully completing remediation plans when they have engaged in behavior that the CTC considers to be an opportunity for refinement of competencies.

***Goal 4. Prepare students to understand and demonstrate sensitivity to diversity/multicultural considerations relevant to clinical psychology.***

A key aspect of the Program's training model is to train students to understand and develop an appreciation for how cultural factors and individual differences can impact the behavior of both the psychological professional and of the client or research participant. The foundation for this appreciation is approaching all work from a position of cultural humility, which in turn fosters an openness to listening and learning, cultural sensitivity and affirmation, and ultimately advocacy for supporting the well-being of all, particularly those from minoritized groups. The Program includes didactic instruction and practical training on matters of diversity and multiculturalism, and models and shapes responsiveness and affirmation of diversity in all professional contexts. Students demonstrate their knowledge of diversity/multicultural considerations through: (1) adequate performance in a didactic course about multicultural considerations in practice, (2) adequate performance in core clinical courses that embed discussion of diversity and multicultural considerations. Students demonstrate sensitivity to diversity/multicultural consideration in their professional activities within clinical case discussions and activities in both assessment and therapy practicum within the Psychology Clinic and in the community while on Community Placement.

***Goal 5: Students will develop an understanding and appreciation of psychology, broadly defined.***

To successfully carry out the Program's mission of training ethical, culturally sensitive, and professional scientist-practitioners, we believe students should understand the broad science of psychology and should maintain their behavior as scientist-practitioners after graduation by developing an appreciation for life-long learning. Program students and graduates will demonstrate a life-long learning approach as evidenced by (a) maintaining membership in professional societies and attending professional conferences, (b) continuing to refer to the research literature to inform clinical activities after graduation; (c) actively participating in continuing education after graduation; and (d) producing graduates who actively participate in the training of other psychologists and who continue to disseminate research through presentations or publications.