

SIU Clinical Program Training Aims & Competencies

Our program, as a whole, satisfies training requirements in the Discipline-Specific Knowledge and Profession-Wide competencies, as defined by the American Psychological Association.

Stated most broadly, our overarching aims are to produce clinical psychologists who will be empirically-grounded, context-sensitive, and conversant with historical perspectives as well as contemporary systems, biological and other evolving orientations so as to draw on these viewpoints in their individual integrations. More specifically, we train our students to be consumers of psychological scholarship and, in so doing, apply their expertise to clinical practice; to be researchers who will expand on current knowledge and practice through their scholarly and scientific investigations, defined in the most pluralistic terms; and to be the teachers and supervisors of future generations of psychologists, researchers, and mental health professionals. Regardless of their ultimate career paths, we train our graduates to be ethical, culturally sensitive and knowledgeable, critical in their thinking, and open to consideration of future developments in the discipline. Across course work, research and clinical experiences, we believe that our training is a balanced scientist-practitioner program which offers flexibility to accommodate students' varied career paths. We assert that student outcomes, as assessed by the job placement and activities in which graduates of our program regularly engage, affirm these goals.

Aim 1: We seek to train competent, empirically grounded, context sensitive scientist –practitioners of psychology who excel in the APA competencies.

- We produce graduates who are fully knowledgeable of biopsychosocial factors that influence complex human behavior and current understanding of causes and correlates of psychopathologies.
- We produce graduates who are excellent diagnosticians, and skillful in conducting and evaluating psychological assessments.
- We produce graduates who are skillful in clinical interventions, well grounded in evidence-based approaches and well prepared to provide individual and group psychotherapy and consultation.
- We produce graduates who are skillful in diverse research strategies, empirical methodology and well trained in research design and analysis.
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Aim 2: We seek to train clinical psychologists who are consumers of psychological scholarship and who contribute to current knowledge and practice through their own scholarly investigations. Our graduates present and publish their own research and scientific investigations.

Aim 3: We seek to prepare clinical psychologists with sufficient depth and breadth of training, sensitivity to multicultural and diversity issues, and competencies for employment in a wide range of workplace settings within the field.

- We produce graduates who are prepared to work with diverse populations.
- We produce graduates who successfully obtain licensure.
- We produce graduates who attain employment across many settings, including universities, medical schools, hospitals, community mental health centers and correctional facilities.

Special Features of our Training Program

Clinical Practicum Training. Our students' primary practicum experiences occur in vertical practicum teams at our Interdisciplinary Clinical Center, located on the SIU campus. The teams are "vertical" in the sense that they are composed of first, second, third and fourth year students. These teams are supervised by our tenured and tenure-track Clinical Psychology faculty. Our students enroll for practicum beginning in their first semester and continue through the fall of the fourth year of the program. Practicum training proceeds in a graduated fashion whereby first semester students participate in weekly team meetings, learning vicariously by observing the clinical activity of advanced students and occasionally sitting-in as co-therapists. After completion of the Clinical Skills course, and with the supervisor's endorsement of readiness, students begin to see their own first clients. This typically occurs during the second semester of the first year or at the beginning of the second year in the program. Cases are reviewed in terms of their apparent severity/difficulty level and matched with the experience level of the student. Our vertical team structure also affords opportunities for peer supervision and supervision training. Over their four years in residence, students are exposed to a range of supervision styles, orientations and didactics.

Field Placements. A field placement experience (PSYC 531) is required of students in our Clinical Program. These occur in mental health and human services agencies across the region, including: the Carbondale Women's Center (providing shelter care for domestic violence and rape crisis intervention services); three community mental health centers (Centerstone in Carbondale and in Marion, IL, and at Union County Services in Anna, IL); a traditional state hospital (Choate Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities); rehabilitation facilities (Center for Comprehensive Services; Evaluation and Developmental Center); the Marion VA Medical Center; Brehm Preparatory School (a private school for youth with severe learning disabilities); the SIU Center for Autism Spectrum Disorder; and a rehabilitation facility for those who have suffered traumatic brain injuries (Neurorestorative). During this placement, students spend about 16 hours per week at one of the agencies providing services under the supervision of staff members. These experiences are highly valued by students who frequently continue to work in the agency for additional elective practicum training.

Elective/Specialty Practica. Our doctoral students frequently enroll in elective, specialty practica. Several of these are located on campus as part of other units, such as the Evaluation and Development Center (EDC), Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders (CASD), and the Counseling and Psychological Services Center (CAPS), the latter of which provides services to SIU college students. Others are off campus at the agencies noted above (e.g. Centerstone, Marion VAMC, Brehm and Neurorestorative). Some students have sought highly specialized training in pediatric psychology and neuropsychology at Cardinal Glennon and St. Louis Children's Hospitals, and Vanderbilt School of Medicine.

Clinical Training Assignments. A significant source of our graduate assistantships are the service contracts which our program maintains with non-university agencies such as Brehm Preparatory School for adolescents with learning disabilities, Centerstone, Neurorestorative, Choate Mental Health Center, and university-affiliated agencies such as the Clinical Center, the Evaluation and Developmental Center, and Women's Services. Many third-year students, nearly all fourth-year and those staying for a fifth-year are selected to fill half-time (20 hour) positions through these contracts. These positions afford varied opportunities for clinical experience that are more extensive than those in vertical team practica. In such agencies, students commonly work with staff from Social Work, Psychiatry, and Nursing as well as Psychology. Thus, they obtain an enhanced understanding of the contributions of various professionals to interdisciplinary mental health teams prior to departing for internship and experience in consultation

All field placements, elective practica and clinical training assignments are supervised by either licensed Clinical Psychologists, or licensed allied mental health professionals (e.g., LCSW, Licensed Clinical Professional Counselors). Students who are supervised by allied mental health professionals have additional supervision from their SIU practicum team supervisors (our Core faculty members), who are licensed Clinical Psychologists.