

THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Earning a degree from the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program requires mastery of a coherent body of knowledge and skills. Doctoral students must acquire substantial competence in the discipline of clinical psychology as specified in the American Psychological Association (APA) Standards of Accreditation and must be able to relate appropriately to clients/patients, fellow students, faculty and staff members, and other health care professionals. Combinations of cognitive, behavioral, emotional, intellectual, and communication abilities are required to perform these functions satisfactorily. These skills and functions are not only essential to the successful completion of the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program, but they are also necessary to ensure the health and safety of clients/patients, fellow students, faculty and staff members, and other health care providers.

In addition to required academic achievement and proficiency, the Technical Standards described below set forth additional qualifications the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program considers essential for successful completion of its curriculum. Therefore, in order to successfully progress through, to be approved for internship, and to qualify for graduation from the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program, current students in the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program must satisfy these Technical Standards. Students who are unable to meet these standards may be recommended for remediation or may be terminated from the program, consistent with policies articulated in the Clinical Program Handbook.

I. Attitudinal, Behavioral, Interpersonal, and Emotional Attributes

As a human, behavior-centered discipline, we value a strong understanding of and appreciation for the complexity of issues relating to diversity. Doctoral students must be able to relate to clients/patients, fellow students, faculty and staff members, and other health care providers with honesty, integrity, and dedication and in a nondiscriminatory manner. They must be able to understand and use the power, special privileges, and trust inherent in the psychologist-client/patient relationship for the client/patient's benefit and to know and avoid the behaviors that constitute misuse of this power. Doctoral students must demonstrate the capacity to examine and deliberate effectively about the social and ethical questions that define psychologists' roles and to reason critically about these questions. They must be able to identify personal reactions and responses, recognize multiple points of view, and integrate these appropriately into clinical decision-making. In research teams, doctoral students must demonstrate the ability to interact appropriately with research participants, other students, and faculty and staff members. Doctoral students must be able to collaborate well with others on joint projects (e.g., effectively accept and provide input).

A clinical psychology student must be able to use fully their intellectual ability, to exercise good judgment, to complete client/patient care responsibilities promptly, and to relate to clients/patients, families, fellow students, faculty and staff members, and other health care providers with courtesy, compassion, maturity, safety, and respect for dignity. The ability to

participate collaboratively and flexibly as a member of an interprofessional team is essential. Doctoral students must be able to display these traits and demonstrate professional conduct expected of clinical psychologists in spite of multiple and varied academic, teaching, and research responsibilities, in addition to clinical training expectations. Doctoral students must be able to modify behavior in response to constructive criticism. They must be open to examining personal attitudes, perceptions, and stereotypes (especially those that may negatively impact client/patient care and professional relationships). Doctoral students must be able to take responsibility for their behavior, which includes being open to feedback from their supervisors, academic instructors, and research advisors. Doctoral students must be open and empathic with others and show respect for different viewpoints, perspectives, and opinions. They must strive to work collaboratively with others in the classroom, laboratory, clinic, and in all other academic or professional settings. They must convey genuine interest in other people and demonstrate affect tolerance (i.e., appropriately manage emotions in academic and professional settings). As an essential part of conducting research or clinical practice, doctoral students effectively tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity. They must be emotionally mature (e.g., intellectually and emotionally open to receiving feedback and making changes in response to feedback). Doctoral students must be able to advocate for their own needs in the workplace without being inappropriately aggressive. They must also be able to seek appropriate resources and build relationships needed to advance in their academic or professional career.

The study and ongoing practice of clinical psychology often involves taxing workloads and appropriate management of stressful situations. A doctoral student must have the physical and emotional stamina to maintain a high level of functioning in the face of multiple demands on their time and energy.

II. Critical and Evaluative Skills

Doctoral students must possess a range of intellectual skills that allows them to master the broad and complex body of knowledge that comprises clinical psychology education.

Doctoral students must be able to critically evaluate their own and others' research, including the ability to identify limitations in the research literature or design of a specific study, to critique a manuscript as an ad hoc reviewer, and to "make psychological sense" of their own data. They must be able to use theory to inform the conceptualization, design, and interpretation of research. Additionally, doctoral students must be able to effectively understand the theoretical literature in their identified substantive research area and to integrate their understanding of the literature in scientific writing and presentations. They must further demonstrate an ability to generate novel hypotheses and to design a study that follows from those hypotheses.

Doctoral students must be able to analyze and synthesize information from a wide variety of sources and must demonstrate sophisticated critical thinking skills. They must be able to learn effectively through a variety of modalities including, but not limited to: classroom instruction, clinical supervision, small group discussion, individual study of materials, independent literature

review, preparation and presentation of written and oral reports, and use of computer-based technology.

Because the practice of psychology is governed by the ethical principles set forth in the current APA Ethics Code and by current state and federal laws, including the State of Maryland Psychology Board Laws and Regulations, COMAR 10.36.05 Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct, a clinical psychology doctoral student must have the capacity to learn and understand these ethical standards and legal requirements and to perform consistent with those principles and mandates as a student in the Clinical Psychology Doctoral Program.

III. Communication Skills

Doctoral students must be able to ask effective questions, to receive answers perceptively, to record information about client/patients, and to provide effective psychoeducation to clients/patients. They must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with clients/patients, their families, fellow students, faculty and staff members, clinical supervisors in varied practicum settings, and with other members of the health care team in a manner that is assertive but not aggressive or argumentative. This includes verbal and non-verbal communication (e.g., interpretation of facial expressions, affects, and body language). Mastery of both written and spoken English is required; students' written and verbal communication must demonstrate an ability to perform necessary integrative and interpretive functions.

IV. Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

The University is committed to equality of educational opportunity and to cultivating culture of acceptance and inclusion in which diversity is integral, authentic, intrinsically valued, and visible. The University prohibits discrimination on grounds protected under Federal and Maryland law and Board of Regents and University policies. University programs, activities, and facilities are available to all without regard to race, color, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, age, national origin, political affiliation, physical or mental disability, religion, protected veteran status, genetic information, personal appearance, or any other legally protected class.

Students who seek reasonable accommodations for physical, mental or emotional disabilities should contact the University's Office of Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS). The ADS Office will determine a student's eligibility for and recommend appropriate accommodations and services.

In the event of deteriorating function, it is essential that a doctoral student be willing and able to acknowledge the need for and to accept professional help before the condition poses a danger to the student, client/patients, other students, faculty and staff members, or research participants.

V. References

American Psychological Association (2010). Ethical principles of psychologists and code of conduct. Retrieved from <http://apa.org/ethics/code/index.aspx>.

State of Maryland Psychology Board Laws and Regulations, COMAR 10.36.05 Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct
<https://health.maryland.gov/psych/Pages/lawsregs.aspx#regulations>

UMD Department of Psychology Mission Statement
<https://psyc.umd.edu/about-us/diversity>

UMD Clinical Psychology Program Handbook <https://psyc.umd.edu/graduate/graduate-student-handbook>

UMD Accessibility & Disability Service
<https://www.counseling.umd.edu/ads/>

University of Maryland Disability & Accessibility Policy and Procedures
<https://www.counseling.umd.edu/global/docs/ads/policy/disabilityandaccessibilitypolicy.pdf>

University of Maryland Non-Discrimination Policy and Procedures
<https://president.umd.edu/administration/policies/section-vi-general-administration/vi-100b>