



\*\*The term “focus” should be used to describe opportunities in areas of training which are not recognized specialties. Training programs should strive to provide explicit explanations of the type of training provided in these non-specialty areas.

The Clinical Psychology E & T Taxonomy was approved by CoS Board of Directors on 5- 02-2022. CoS will request an updated Taxonomy for CoS review and approval one year prior to Clinical Psychology’s next petition for renewal of specialty recognition by the Commission for Recognition of Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology (CRSSPP). The updated Taxonomy will be due at date to be determined after 2022 petition for renewal of recognition is completed.

**Common Definitions and Criteria Across All Recognized Specialties**  
**Clarifications to help recognized specialties use the APA-Taxonomy \* in a consistent manner**

- Broad and general training forms the core of education and training in health service psychology. Programs are accredited by the American Psychological Association or Canadian Psychological Association. Programs integrate the broad and general training with those educational and training activities related to recognized specialties as determined by the specialty and described in a specialty taxonomy. In addition, each specialty will have education and training guidelines consistent with its specialty area. Specialty training may be acquired at the doctoral, doctoral internship, postdoctoral, or post licensure stages as defined by the specialty.
- By definition, postdoctoral education and training is a Major Area of Study in a specialty recognized by the Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology (CRSSPP) and requires that 80% or more of time be spent in the specialty area. At the postdoctoral training stage, as per above, it is recognized that training in the Major Area of Study will be consistent with the education and training guidelines set forth by the specialty.
- A course is typically defined as 3 semester-credit hours (or equivalent) in a health service psychology training program accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) or the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA).
- A practicum is typically defined as the equivalent of one academic year (e.g., 9 months, in semester or quarter systems) consisting of supervised training for at least 8 hours per week, or its equivalent, with at least 50% of time in the provision of clinical services.
- Consistent with what is described in *CoA Standards of Accreditation*, supervision should be provided by persons with competencies in the specialty demonstrated by appropriate training, credentials, and qualifications for training in the specialty as defined by the specialty.
- Additional training experiences can also include, but are not limited to, research experiences, lab meetings, brown bags, lecture/colloquia series, and grand rounds, as defined by the specialty.
- For definitions of continuing education (CE) and continuing professional development (CPD) see the APA [Quality Professional Development and Continuing Education Resolution](#). A continuing education (CE) course is defined as an organized program by the American Psychological Association or Canadian Psychological Association, a State Psychological Association, or other major provider of CE (e.g., Society of Behavioral Medicine).

\* Taxonomy; [www.apa.org/ed/graduate/specialize/taxonomy.pdf](http://www.apa.org/ed/graduate/specialize/taxonomy.pdf)

### **Specialty Specific Definitions and Criteria**

Use superscripts in table entries above to reference footnotes provide in this section which expand upon or clarify table entries as needed.

<sup>1</sup>Clinical psychology is the psychological specialty that provides continuing and comprehensive mental and behavioral health care for individuals and families; consultation to agencies and communities; training, education and supervision; and research-based practice. It is a specialty in breadth — one that is broadly inclusive of severe psychopathology — and marked by comprehensiveness and integration of knowledge and skill from a broad array of disciplines within and outside of psychology proper. The scope of clinical psychology encompasses all ages, multiple diversities and varied systems.

<sup>2</sup>Education and training in APA-accredited programs in Clinical Psychology provide students with a broad and general education that includes research, scholarship, and training as a health service provider. Depending on the local graduate program’s model of education and training, students have learning opportunities that include professional services for the diagnosis, assessment, evaluation, treatment, and prevention of psychological, emotional, psychophysiological, and behavioral disorders across the lifespan. Accredited doctoral programs may provide services directly or support and facilitate the provision of services through supervision, teaching, research, management, administration, advocacy, and similar roles. The recognized specialty of clinical psychology utilizes a competency model to articulate expected student learning outcomes (Rodolfo et al. 2005, 2014). The model defines core foundational and functional competencies in health service psychology across three levels of professional development: readiness for practicum, readiness for internship, and readiness for entry to practice.

<sup>3</sup>A graduate course is defined as a 3-credit hour semester long course (or equivalent quarter credit hours). For the designation at the Major Area of Study at the Doctoral stage of training, two of these courses must be dedicated Clinical Psychology courses in the areas of psychopathology, assessment, treatment, and consultation. The other three courses (or remaining hours) can be a combination of material from other courses that would equate to a course equivalent (e.g., half of a semester of two separate assessment courses focused on Clinical Psychology material that combine to a course equivalent of a full semester). For the designation at the Emphasis level, one of these three courses must be a dedicated Clinical Psychology course in the area of treatment, assessment, and/or psychopathology. The other two courses (or remaining hours) can be a combination of material from other courses that would equate to a course equivalent (e.g., half of a semester of two separate assessment courses focused on material that combine to a course equivalent of a full semester). For all levels (i.e., Major Area of Study, Emphasis, Experience, Exposure), course material from a discipline-specific knowledge course (e.g., developmental requirement for accreditation standards) does not count toward any of the course requirements for the clinical psychology specialty.

<sup>4</sup>A Clinical Psychology Practicum is defined as a practicum experience (approximately 9 months) of supervised training, at least 8 hours per week or its equivalent (e.g., a minimum of 240 total hours) with at least 50% of clinical service delivery with a Clinical Psychology focused presenting concern.

<sup>5</sup>A dissertation project is an original quantitative, qualitative, or case study, program evaluation, theoretical paper, or literature review that makes a substantive contribution to the literature as required by the doctoral program. The dissertation or research project must be clearly within the specialty of Clinical Psychology.

<sup>6</sup>Supervised experience in Clinical Psychology must include at least 50% clinical service delivery within each level of opportunity and the remainder of the supervised experience can include seminar attendance, readings, research, teaching, and program development.

<sup>7</sup>CE coursework must be approved by APA or by another major mental health or medical organization. CE credit may be earned for verified attendance at or participation in any program given by one of the following sponsors: 1. American Psychological Association or its affiliates; 2. The National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology; 3. Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards; 4. American Medical Association or its affiliates; 5. Any regionally accredited school, college or university. 5. State Psychological Associations with this permission. It should be noted that Continuing Education (CE) is intended to build upon a completed doctoral program in psychology. It is not a substitute for the basic academic education and training needed for entry to the field of psychology, nor should it be the primary vehicle for career changes from one APA-recognized specialty to another.

<sup>8</sup>Clinical psychology supervised practice is by a licensed psychologist who attended an APA doctoral program in Clinical or Counseling Psychology, is board certified in Clinical Psychology, or who functions as a Clinical Psychologist per the American Board of Clinical Psychology (ABCP) definition. The Specialty Specific Requirements for identification as a clinical psychologist are as follows:

- Successful completion of an APA- or CPA-accredited or APPIC member postdoctoral residency/fellowship program in clinical psychology, or
- Three years post-doctoral experience as a Clinical Psychologist. One of the three years must have been supervised by a Clinical Psychologist.

In addition, it is expected that individuals whose degree is from an APA or CPA accredited program in Counseling Psychology or a Combined Counseling/School Program demonstrate self-identification as a Clinical Psychologist and an expected continued identification with the specialty.

<https://abpp.org/applicant-information/specialtyboards/clinicalpsychology>

## Examples of Program Descriptors for Each Stage of Training

### **Doctoral**

University X follows the recommendations of the American Psychological Association for broad and general education and training for Health Service Psychologists and aims to educate and train students in the practice of evidence-based clinical psychology to serve diverse populations. The *Major are of Study* of clinical psychology at University X requires students to complete at least eight courses following discipline-specific domains: the history and systems of psychology; affective aspects of behavior; biological aspects of behavior; cognitive aspects of behavior; developmental aspects of behavior; social aspects of behavior; and an advanced integration of these areas. Knowledge of research and quantitative methods is also necessary, including research methods, quantitative methods of data analysis, and psychometric theory. At least four practica are required. To achieve these aims the curriculum focuses on the development of professional skills in the nine profession-wide competencies outlined by APA, including research, ethics and legal standards, individual and cultural diversity, professional values, attitudes and behavior, communication and interpersonal skills, assessment, intervention, supervision, and consultation and interprofessional/interdisciplinary skills. An original quantitative or qualitative dissertation in the specialty is required. University X offers an *Emphasis* in the specialty of Clinical Psychology via enrollment in four required courses and two practica. An *Experience* requirement is met in Clinical Psychology when trainees in this program enroll in one course and one practicum. An *Exposure* requirement is met by enrolling in one course in Clinical psychology.

### **Doctoral internship**

The internship, Program Y, at a VA Medical Center affiliated with a University School of Medicine offers interns a *Major Area of Study* in clinical psychology and provides healthcare services to diverse populations of veterans. Program Y provides primary, secondary, and tertiary care services in multiple areas, and provides specialized services for specific clinical problems. Interns choose one of three tracks: General Mental Health (with choice of an Addiction *Focus*, a PTSD/Comprehensive Outpatient Mental Health *Focus*, or a Serious Mental Illness *Emphasis*) and Clinical Health Psychology *Emphasis*; or Clinical Neuropsychology *Emphasis*. The accredited internship includes a combination of formal didactics, seminars, and informal, one-to-one teaching during regular supervisory meetings. Formal seminars that all interns are required to attend include an advanced CBT seminar, a core seminar, a journal club, and a monthly Psychology Colloquia. In each *Emphasis* area there are opportunities to attend lectures, seminars, and Grand Rounds offered through the affiliated University School of Medicine such as a clinical neuropsychology seminar and a clinical health psychology conference and didactics/seminars in each of the *Focus* or *Emphasis* options of the General Mental Health track. Frequently, students give clinical and research presentations in these seminars. Interns in the affiliated University School of Medicine Program are expected to specify a goal for empirical research or scholarly activity involving collaboration and mentorship with a faculty member. They are provided with four hours each week to work on this goal. By the end of the training year, each intern will be expected to provide a specific product of this collaboration such as a formal presentation as part of one the existing seminars or conferences, a presentation at a regional or national meeting, or a completed draft manuscript for publication (research may include work on the intern's dissertation). Ongoing research opportunities may exist for interns to become involved.

### **Postdoctoral residency**

The postdoctoral training program, Program Z, a first-of-its-kind partnership between the U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense (DoD), integrates all medical care into a Federal Health Care Center with a single combined VA and Navy mission. The combined mission means active-duty military, their family members, military retirees, and veterans are all cared for at the facility. The center cares for nearly 75,000 patients per year, including an estimated 40,000 Navy recruits who prepare for military service at a Recruit Training Command. This APA-accredited Postdoctoral Fellowship provides a ***Major Area of Study*** in clinical psychology. There are three ***Focus*** areas within the major area of study (i.e., Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans, Post Traumatic Stress Disorders, and Substance Abuse), and Geropsychology specialty training at the ***Exposure*** level. The overall goal of the postdoctoral fellowship is to provide fellows with a variety of experiences in an applied setting, using a practitioner-scholar model. Training emphasizes the importance of building an effective professional identity while also developing advanced skills in evidence-based psychotherapy, assessment, and consultation skills with the homeless, rehabilitation, PTSD, substance abuse combined mission military patients, and patient centered medical home care.

### **Post-licensure training**

Division 12, the Society for Clinical Psychology of the American Psychological Association, is an APA- approved sponsor of continuing education. Each of the 2.5-hour CE workshops at this year's APA convention provide training experiences in clinical psychology consistent with an ***Exposure*** level as described for post-licensure stage of training in the Clinical Psychology Specialty Taxonomy Grid.