

# THE ACADEMY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CLINICAL SCIENCE

## Application Information for Graduate Programs

(Last updated March, 2022)

The Academy of Psychological Clinical Science has evolved in response to the challenges and opportunities confronting scientific clinical psychology, both now and in the foreseeable future. Among the biggest challenges are the changes in health care, in graduate and undergraduate education, in patterns of research funding, in the priorities of professional organizations, in licensing and accreditation requirements and procedures, in governmental priorities and policies, in career opportunities and preferences of students, in public demands for accountability and "truth in advertising," and in the scope and knowledge of clinical psychology. While such changes clearly represent significant challenges, they also represent exciting opportunities, especially for those committed to advancing clinical psychology as a science. These challenges force clinical scientists to reexamine, refine, and reaffirm their commitment to their values, mission, responsibilities, and goals. They also encourage clinical science training programs to build alliances based on shared values and to work together to shape the future of the discipline. In the process, such alliances should help member programs improve the quality of their training and the scientific contributions of their faculties and students.

### **Mission**

The broad mission of the Academy is to advance clinical science. Clinical science is a psychological science directed at the promotion of adaptive functioning; at the assessment, understanding, amelioration, and prevention of human problems in behavior, affect, cognition, or health, and at the application of knowledge in ways consistent with scientific evidence. The emphasis on the term "science" underscores a commitment to empirical approaches to evaluating the validity and utility of testable hypotheses and to the advancement of knowledge by this method.

The Academy seeks as members programs that are strongly committed to research training and to the integration of such training with clinical training.

The development and application of clinical science are ongoing and dynamic processes. This evolution of clinical science can be facilitated by the Academy.

### **Goals**

The following are the primary goals of the Academy:

- *Training:* To foster the training of students for careers in clinical science research, who skillfully will produce and apply scientific knowledge.
- *Research and Theory:* To advance the full range of clinical science research and theory and their integration with other relevant sciences.
- *Resources and Opportunities:* To foster the development of and access to resources and

opportunities for training, research, funding, and careers in clinical science.

- *Application*: To foster the broad application of clinical science to human problems in responsible and innovative ways.
- *Dissemination*: To foster the timely dissemination of clinical science to policy-making groups, psychologists and other scientists, practitioners, and consumers.

More specifically, the Academy seeks to:

- Help members develop training innovations, through sharing models of training and providing consultation.
- Develop liaisons with Academy training program and internship members that would foster continuity clinical science training.
- Support an exchange system among faculties and students at different institutions, where this is mutually beneficial.
- Gain general recognition of our students and their special qualities to facilitate licensing, training grant support, career opportunities, and recruitment of new students.
- Work toward a broader definition, understanding, and acceptance of scientific clinical psychology by the academic community and general public. We have already presented a coordinated set of clinical science symposia at the 1995 American Psychological Society meetings and plan to do so again in the future. A program of public education also will be developed.
- Improve the visibility of clinical science and clinical science programs in undergraduate education by: developing a brochure describing the graduate programs of Academy members; informing students and advisors of preferred curriculum and experience as preparation for admission to Academy programs; working to improve presentation of clinical science in Introductory Psychology textbooks and encyclopedias of psychology; developing model teaching materials for undergraduate and graduate clinical science courses; and developing a reading list of articles that illustrate clinical science.
- Develop a pool of site visitors from the ranks of the Academy members and request that the APA's Committee on Accreditation (CoA) use them for evaluating Academy programs. Having site visitors for Academy programs chosen from a pool with a shared model of training would be highly advantageous.
- Encourage the development of texts and other teaching materials with a rigorous scientific emphasis for use in graduate courses in clinical science programs.

## **Applying for Membership in the Academy**

There are many ways to accomplish goals in a clinical science program, and the Academy is committed to supporting diversity in how programs approach these goals. The list of items below is intended to call attention to various aspects of a clinical science program that should be addressed in an application for membership, without implying that all items are necessary for membership or that all programs should weight these items in the same way. It also is recognized that clinical science programs constantly are evolving and that, at any given time, they may have goals that have not been realized yet, problems that have not been solved yet, and weaknesses that are in the process of being strengthened.

Membership in the Academy requires that programs integrate attention to ethical behavior and sensitivity to human diversity into all aspects of training; these issues should be addressed wherever appropriate in the application. Specifically:

- Academy members should require ethical behavior by faculty, staff, and students. Programs must comply with all relevant laws, including all legal provisions and university policies pertaining to affirmative action, prohibiting discrimination, and ensuring the protection of research subjects. Programs are expected to create environments free of harassment and unfair treatment of faculty, staff, and students. Course work, research mentorship, and applied work should include training in ethical principles.
- Academy members should ensure that all students demonstrate in their research and practice that they are sensitive to the role of contextual factors -- cultural, biological, and other sources of human variability -- in the generalizability and applicability of scientific evidence and knowledge.

**The application for membership consists of a narrative statement and specific documentation as described in the next sections.** Throughout the application, it is important to use specific examples and data to illustrate general principles, values, goals, and accomplishments.

### **Narrative Statement (10-15 pages, single spaced)**

Each applicant program should submit a statement addressing the six areas outlined below. Our intent is not to create an undue burden; thus, we encourage applicants to draw on existing documents in preparing this statement. For example, a program might be able to prepare an application that is much briefer than 10 pages by providing an annotated integration of appended documents such as the program brochure; the latest PCSAS or APA accreditation self-study; a collection of faculty vitae; and tables summarizing student publications, job placements, etc.

1. *Principles and philosophy.* Information on the following matters will help articulate the program's principles and philosophy:
  - Description of a mentorship or alternative training model

- Manner in which research supervision is arranged
- Procedures for continuing evaluation of all aspects of the program
- Arrangements for collaboration and integration with other areas within and outside the department
- Degree of diversity vs. specialization embraced by the program
- How the program responds to changing science over time
- Coherence and integration of program
- Mechanism by which complaints of ethical violations are handled (e.g., unfair treatment of students, sexual harassment, insufficient authorship credit for research, etc.)
- Concordance between the program as advertised and as it actually is ("truth in packaging"). Provide examples of how the program philosophy is manifest in written materials describing the program

2. *Faculty*. The quality of the faculty (i.e., core clinical faculty plus those who either supervise the research or practica of students in the program or who teach clinical courses routinely taken by students in the program) may be indicated by the following types of supporting evidence:

- Publication of research and theoretical contributions in recognized scholarly channels
- Research grants
- Honors and accomplishments
- Journal editorships and membership on editorial boards
- Membership on peer review committees
- Procedures for selecting outside supervisors
- Supervisor scholarship in application areas
- Stability

3. *Students*. The quality of students admitted and the efficacy of the program in training students may be indicated by:

- Quality of dissertations

- Success in timely completion of program
- Selection procedures and criteria for admission
- Quality of admitted students in terms of objective criteria such as GREs, GPA, and quality of undergraduate college; undergraduate preparation and research experience; and other noteworthy accomplishments (this information should be presented in a way that preserves the anonymity of individual students)

4. *Curriculum.* In spite of the diverse models of graduate training in clinical science, a quality graduate program should be able to demonstrate the following features:

- A documented emphasis on the empirical basis of assessment, therapy, and other clinical training
- Training in research methodology and statistics
- Students acquire a critical knowledge of major theories--and the empirical bases of these theories--concerning etiology (including underlying processes), assessment, treatment, and prevention of human problems in behavior, affect, cognition, or health, and the ability to apply this knowledge
- Students have sufficient time available for their research
- Procedures for evaluation of courses, supervision, and other components of the curriculum

5. *Resources.* Information on the following will help to determine whether adequate resources are available to the program:

- Student: faculty ratios
- Institutional support and resources for students and faculty research
- Research training grants
- Access to relevant populations
- Start-up resources for new faculty
- Funds to help students attend conferences
- Colloquium series

- Human subjects committee

6. *Future directions.* The preceding categories have emphasized an evaluation of the program as it is. Because the spirit of the Academy emphasizes continued efforts to improve programs, changes that you would like to make in your program should be discussed, along with any actual plans for accomplishing these changes.

### **Required documentation to accompany the Narrative Statement**

- Program brochure
- Curriculum vita for all key program faculty (i.e., core clinical faculty plus others who regularly serve as research advisers of students in the program, who provide a significant amount of practicum supervision to program students, or who teach clinical courses routinely taken by program students)
- List of student publications and presentations at meetings (the list should cover at least the last five years, if available)
- List of program graduates and their first job placements (the list should include first jobs for at least the last five years, if available, as well as subsequent job placements, if available)
- Syllabi for core clinical courses

### **Application Deadline**

*The Academy reviews applications as they are received. The final decision regarding applications is made by the APCS Executive Committee, which meets annually in person and periodically via conference call or web conference.*

In addition to an electronic version of all materials (submittable through a shared Dropbox folder), please send one copy of the application cover letter to:

Timothy J. Strauman, Ph.D.  
APCS Membership Committee  
Department of Psychology and Neuroscience  
Duke University  
Box 90086, 417 Chapel Drive  
Durham, NC 27708

There is an application fee of \$450, to be submitted at the time the application itself is submitted. Please contact Tim Strauman ([tjstraum@duke.edu](mailto:tjstraum@duke.edu)) for details.

## **Terms**

Programs accepted into membership in the Academy will be assessed an annual membership fee of \$450 and will be expected to provide periodic reports on their program operations and results. The Academy will make efforts to structure these reports so that they require minimal cost and effort, and so that the information can be entered into a common data base for feedback to the Academy's members and for documentation of the results of Clinical Science training to the profession, the government, and the public. Member programs will be re-reviewed every seven (7) years, or earlier if significant changes in a program or other factors indicate that an earlier review is appropriate. In the interest of continuous program improvement, the Academy also will provide consultation to programs seeking information concerning scientific training, procedures for application to membership, or possible solutions to specific issues or problems. Finally, the Academy will play an active role in other arenas that provide opportunities for advancing the Academy's values, mission, and goals.