

**National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and
National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS)
Practicum in Clinical Neuropsychology**

The National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) and the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke (NINDS), located in Bethesda, Maryland, are the lead federal agencies for research on mental and neurological disorders. NIMH and NINDS fund mental health and neurological research across the country and support thousands of research grants and contracts internationally. NIMH/NINDS staff provide in-house clinical neuropsychological assessments of patients for clinical purposes or as part of NIH protocol-driven research. This practicum is designed to provide training experience in neuropsychological assessment. Students will develop and refine skills in the neuropsychological assessments of inpatients and outpatients with common disorders, as well as have the opportunity to observe and assess many unusual and interesting patients with a broad range of presentations. Populations include individuals with rare genetic disorders, HIV, epilepsy, various dementia (some rare) syndromes, cancers (including primary brain tumors), immunodeficiencies, and psychiatric disorders. This track is coordinated and supervised by licensed clinical neuropsychologists (one of whom is board-certified). Students with prior assessment experience and course work in neuropsychology will be chosen preferentially.

Program Objectives

- Students will understand the role of neuropsychological assessment in medical and psychiatric disease and gain familiarity with the neuropsychological problems faced by individuals with various illnesses.
- Students will gain experience integrating data from tests with a patient's personal history and clinical interview to present a clear clinical picture of a patient's cognitive and psychological functioning noting strengths, weaknesses, and deficits.
- Students will assess a large variety of patients across the age continuum with both common and rare disorders. Evaluations are conducted in both in- and outpatient clinics in a clinical research setting.

Practicum Highlights

- Learning about the role of psychology and neuropsychology in our nation's premier research medical center.
- Gaining many (upwards of 100-150) face to face assessment hours.
- Exposure to many different neuropsychological tests.
- Interacting with multidisciplinary teams (genetics, medicine, psychiatry, nursing, infectious disease, neurology).
- Opportunities to attend Neurology and Psychiatry Rounds.
- If scheduling permits, there are opportunities to attend multidisciplinary case conferences including but not limited to discussing candidacy for surgical intervention (e.g., resection of brain tumor or seizure focus, implantation of Deep Brain Stimulation in movement disorders).
- Opportunity to develop multi-cultural awareness in assessing patients with varied demographic and cultural backgrounds.
- Becoming familiar with rare diseases (an NIH specialty) as well as common diseases (e.g., HIV associated neurocognitive disorder, epilepsy, and Parkinson's disease).

- Learning how to integrate test results with other medical information (e.g., medications, medical diagnoses, brain imaging, labs, etc.).
- Opportunities to write many (upwards of approximately 20) integrated assessment reports.
- Didactics within and across tracks that provide both depth and breadth of training on relevant topics across the age span.

Extern Expectations

- Students are expected to be on site 16 hours per week (2 days: 9am-5pm) for 12 months (this may be flexible).
- Students should expect to assess 1-2 patients per week.
- Eligible candidates must be U.S. citizens or have a permanent residence card (green card).
- Eligible candidates must provide proof of malpractice insurance.

Supervision

- Students will receive supervised experience in planning test selection, administering tests, interpreting, writing up, and communicating results of neurodevelopmental evaluations using a broad range of tests and procedures.
- Supervision will be offered in individual and/or group format. The latter can provide the practicum student with the opportunity to examine data and discuss cases seen in clinic.
- Opportunities to attend rounds, seminars, and lectures are also available.
- Students participate in a monthly joint neuropsychology/neurodevelopment seminar.

Application Process/Timeline

- Doctoral students who are interested in this track and have prior assessment experience are encouraged to apply.
- Applications are accepted beginning in December through early-February
 - Application Deadline is 2/9
- Students should provide the following in their applications:
 - Curriculum Vitae (CV)
 - Letter of interest
 - Transcripts (can be unofficial)
 - One deidentified assessment report
 - One letter of recommendation
- Students should send their application materials to Joseph Snow, PhD (josephsnow@mail.nih.gov)
- Please contact Dr. Snow via email if students have any questions.