

The NIMH Intramural Program of the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) accepts clinical psychology doctoral students to complete a practicum in **Clinical Neuropsychology** or **Neurodevelopmental Assessment** (2 tracks). Students can apply separately to one or both tracks. On occasion, a student who is accepted into both tracks may participate in a combined Clinical Neuropsychology/Neurodevelopmental Assessment practicum.

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 and neurodevelopmental tests.
- Interacting with multidisciplinary teams (genetics, medicine, psychiatry, nursing, infectious disease, neurology).
- Opportunities to attend Neurology and Psychiatry Rounds.
- 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 in the Neuropsychology Track and autism spectrum disorder in the Neurodevelopmental Assessment Track).
- 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

1. Clinical Neuropsychology Track

The NIMH Neuropsychology Consult Service provides in-house assessments of patients for clinical purposes or as part of NIH protocol-driven research. This track 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, 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.

2. Neurodevelopmental Assessment Track

This track is focused on providing developmental and behavioral assessments to individuals with neurodevelopmental disorders. The emphasis of this program is working with clinicians in the Neurodevelopmental and Behavioral Phenotyping Service, who work primarily with young children, although older individuals with intellectual disability and significant other impairments are also evaluated through this service. Students working in this track will be provided with training on cognitive, adaptive, language, memory and motor measures, and other measures for behavioral evaluation with this population, including diagnostic assessment tools and interpretation used in diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder. Students with an interest in neurodevelopment may wish to apply to this track. The Neurodevelopmental Assessment Track is coordinated and supervised by licensed clinical psychologists.

The Neurodevelopmental Assessment Track focuses on genetic disorders associated with Intellectual Disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder, including Williams Syndrome, Phelan-McDermid Syndrome, and Smith-Lemli-Opitz

Syndrome, as well as a variety of metabolic and mitochondrial disorders and undiagnosed patients with complex neurodevelopmental profiles.

Objectives of the Practicum (relevant for both tracks):

- Students will understand the role of neuropsychology and/or neurodevelopmental assessment in medical and psychiatric disease, and gain familiarity with the neuropsychological problems faced by adults, adolescents, and children 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.

Supervision

- Students will receive supervised experience in planning test selection, administering tests, interpreting, writing up, and communicating results of neuropsychological 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 in both tracks participate in a monthly joint neuropsychology/neurodevelopment seminar.

Responsibilities

- Students are expected to be on site 16 hours per week (2 days; 9-5 pm) for 12 months.
- Students should expect to assess 1-2 patients per week.

How to Apply

- Doctoral students who are interested in the Neuropsychology Track and have prior assessment experience, are encouraged to send their CV, a letter of interest, transcripts (can be unofficial), an assessment report, and a letter of recommendation to Joseph Snow, PhD, ABPP-CN at josephsnow@mail.nih.gov.
- Doctoral students who are interested in the Neurodevelopmental Assessment Service and have prior assessment experience are encouraged to send their CV, a letter of interest, transcripts (can be unofficial), an assessment report, and a letter of recommendation to Audrey Thurm, PhD (athurm@mail.nih.gov, 301-496-6768).
- Applications are accepted December through early February (deadline to apply is 2/18). Selected applicants will be invited for interviews January through March.

Questions

- For questions about the Neuropsychology Practicum, please contact Dr. Joseph Snow (josephsnow@mail.nih.gov, 301-496-5197) or Dr. Laura Segala (laurasegala@mail.nih.gov, 301-451-8123).
- For questions about the Neurodevelopmental Assessment Track, please contact Dr. Audrey Thurm (athurm@mail.nih.gov, 301-496-6768) or Dr. Julie O'Reilly (julie.o'reilly@nih.gov, 301-435-7962).