

Clinical Graduate School Handout

If you choose a clinical program (i.e., wanting to be a psychotherapist) you need to be prepared to address these questions at some point. Clinical programs not only teach you about how to help others, but also the need for understanding yourself and your family. Many clinical programs request that students be in psychotherapy themselves. Some practicum sites require their trainees/interns to be in therapy while in clinical training. It is important to address the kinds of questions below.

1. What types of volunteer activities had you found most rewarding? What is it about these that you liked?
The agency staff, the target population, the tasks?
2. To which age group do you feel most connected? Why?
3. With which age group do you feel most uncomfortable? Why?
4. What about psychotherapy appeals to you the most? Why?
5. What about psychotherapy appeals to you the least? Why?
6. To what kinds of clinical populations do you feel most drawn? Juvenile delinquents, domestic violence, mental health, child abuse, substance abuse, etc.
7. With which of the above do you feel most uncomfortable?
8. What issues in your own family and with yourself are you facing now?
9. What feedback from your friends, family and others have you received that have encouraged you to think about clinical work?

Grad Schools

There are many types of grad school programs. Many psychotherapists have a master's degree only. Here is a brief summary of some.

Marriage and Family Therapy—Many states license Marriage and Family Therapist after 2 years of course work and 2000-4000 hours of direct clinical work, i.e., providing supervised therapy to couples, individuals and families. The license requirements vary from state to state. Do not assume that a program and license in California, for example, will exactly transfer to another state.

Professional organizations: AAMFT, www.aamft.org
except California—CAMFT. www.camft.org

Dominant Perspective: Individual in the family systems; systems as a whole

See also gsep/pepperdine.edu for info about our MFT programs. One is located up at Drescher.

Masters of Social Work—Most states have licensure or certification for clinical social workers, which allows them to provide psychotherapy in a private or public setting. The degree requires 2 years of course work and 2 internships in different settings. This degree is very standardized across the country. Many states do have reciprocity for licensure with other states but do not assume this. Post-masters clinical hours under supervision are about 2000-4000.

Professional organizations: The National Association of Social Workers www.socialworkers.org

Perspective: individual in the family and broader community context.

Masters in Counseling Psychology—Many states have a licensed professional counselor—LPC. Counseling psychology programs are often found in psychology or education colleges or departments. These are usually 2 year degrees with supervised internships and post-masters clinical hours required. California approved an LPCC license. www.bbs.ca.gov

Professional Organization: American Counseling Association www.counseling.org

American School Counselors Association. www.schoolcounselor.org

National Board for Certified Counselors www.nbcc.org

CACREP www.cacrep.org accredits graduate programs.

Perspective: individual however many do take a family approach.

Other closely related professions--There is also pastoral counseling which requires theology and psychological education and training. www.aapc.org Educational therapists work with people with learning disabilities. This requires excellent one-on-one skills but the focus is on learning issues not mental health. www.aetonline.org A Child Life Specialist works in healthcare settings with children and their families. This requires a masters degree and will require certification by 2022. www.childlife.org

A license to practice clinical psychology requires a doctorate. Teaching on the college level requires a doctorate. There are many doctoral programs that study human behavior.

Ph.D. in Clinical or Counseling Psychology. Some require masters before entering, some do not. Read carefully about the therapy hours required. This may not be standardized.

Professional Organization: American Psychological Association www.apa.org

Perspective: Individual predominantly but some offer family tracts

Psy.D. This program is very clinically oriented. Learning and researching therapeutic techniques is the goal. Usually in the first year students are in practicum settings. Most do not require a masters. You earn one along the way.

Professional organization: American Psychology Association. www.apa.org

Pepperdine has an excellent Psy.D. program gsep/pepperdine.edu

Ph.D or Ed.D. in Education. Most colleges of education in large universities have a variety of programs, e.g., counseling and guidance, counseling psychology, early childhood education, special education to name a few. Some are flexible and encourage taking classes in other departments within the university to broaden your degree. These may or may not allow you to get a license to be a psychotherapist. But if you already have a license at the master' level and want to pursue a doctorate to be able to teach then carefully look at these types of programs.

Ph.D in Family Studies/Family Therapy/Human Development—Colleges of Human Sciences often have doctorate programs in family therapy, family studies and human development. These are often broad based degrees viewing the family in a community context. Classes may include maternal and child nutrition, family finances as well as marriage and family therapy and aging, etc. Some programs prepare you to apply for the Certified Family Life Educator or CFLE. A CFLE provides educational programs at the micro and macro level in a variety to settings, religious, community, educational, etc.

Professional Organizations: AAMFT; NAEYC www.naeyc.org; NCFR www.ncfr.org (CLFE program is in this organization.

www.psychi.org is another resource with good information.