

Policies Related to Training Clinical Psychologists to Serve a Diverse Public

In our APA-accredited program, faculty, students, and staff are united in our commitment to uphold the aspirations articulated in the APA Multicultural Guidelines: “to recognize and understand that as cultural beings, psychologists hold attitudes and beliefs that can influence their perceptions of and interactions with others as well as their clinical and empirical conceptualizations. As such, psychologists strive to move beyond conceptualizations rooted in categorical assumptions, biases, and/or formulations based on limited knowledge about individuals and communities” (APA, 2017). We further recognize that psychological science, including clinical psychology, has historically excluded the perspectives of those with less power, privilege, and status, which may create personal and professional “blind spots” for working with individuals from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, our training ensures that graduate students are provided the opportunity to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to work effectively with members of the public who embody intersecting demographics, attitudes, beliefs, and values. We believe the provision of an equitable, supportive, and inclusive environment for all clients, faculty, and students, is foundational to our training mission.

In support of our mission, our program provides opportunities for students to examine how their own attitudes, beliefs, and values may affect their professional competencies in treating members of the public. In recognition of the fact that integrating personal beliefs and values with professional competence is a developmental process, supervisors work together with students to identify instances when it may not be in the client’s and student’s best interest to work together. Ultimately, however, students cannot choose to avoid working with specific client populations or refuse to develop professional competencies *solely* on the basis of the students’ attitudes, beliefs, or values and students may be assigned to treat clients who challenge their perspectives, experiences, or beliefs. In these instances, we support students in finding a belief- or value-congruent path that allows them to work in a professionally competent manner with such clients. As with any other professional core competency, failure to meet levels of competence set forth are first addressed with a remediation plan; unsuccessful remediation could lead to dismissal from the clinical psychology doctoral training program.