

**University of Colorado at Colorado Springs
Clinical Psychology Training Program**

Statement of Scope of Training and Standards of Behavior

The training and development of clinical psychologists involves development in many domains. Certainly, important domains associated with graduate training include intellectual curiosity, critical thinking, breadth of knowledge, and depth of analysis in particular areas of expertise. However, clinical training also engages a person in a process of personal development that is challenging in a range of additional domains related to personal maturity, including self-awareness, regulation of anxiety and emotion, interpersonal communication skill, and openness to experiences of others. In order to produce professional psychologists who can meet the ethical standards and guidelines of this profession, this clinical psychology training program strives to engage students in development in both spheres of intellectual and personal maturity.

Students are expected to engage enthusiastically in intellectual pursuits in classes, labs, and on their own. Please do not focus on the “minimum” needed to get by – seek to engage in intellectual development as aggressively as you can. The faculty will provide a variety of possible learning experiences that students may use to further their intellectual development. Obtaining good grades in classes should be considered an inferior goal to gaining the intellectual skills, values, and motivations needed to become a successful scientist.

Similarly, clinical students will be expected to engage in self-examination and interpersonal exploration at every level of training, from initial clinical skill training classes to advanced supervisory experiences of clinical services. Meeting the standards of practice in this field requires a certain openness to growth, a desire to mature, and willingness to engage actively in the process of growing. Consistent defensive reactions, disengagement, hostility, or incapacity to engage in the clinical learning experiences will lead the faculty to design a remediation plan which must be fulfilled in order to remain in the program. Many resources are available to foster intra-personal and inter-personal growth, including psychotherapy (with professionals in the community who are not connected with the program), a facilitated support group (facilitated by a professional in the community), self-help books, journaling, classroom exercises, and simple conversations with peers and faculty about your development. Feel free to talk with any of the clinical faculty or the Director of Clinical Training if you wish to know of therapists in the community who have agreed to offer their services to clinical trainees at a reduced fee. We strongly encourage you to engage in psychotherapy to heal your own wounds as well as to learn the challenges of using a therapeutic relationship for growth.

The clinical faculty make every attempt to create a climate conducive to intellectual as well as personal growth. For example, we prepare a challenging curriculum that introduces skills in a sequence of increasing demands, offer supervisory experiences, teach components of individual and group development in classes, and try to be available to support and enhance individual growth experiences.

We also require you to engage in behaviors that set a climate for professional growth and development of yourself and your peers. By accepting admittance to the clinical psychology program, each student agrees to:

- 1) Respond respectfully to others, by...
 - Listening with curiosity to others' experiences, values, frameworks, and understanding
 - Sharing feedback and responses to others' experiences that are designed to support and challenge
 - Responding to others' comments or behaviors that concern you by talking directly to the other
 - Refraining from gossip or complaint in the presence of observers other than the target of concern

- 2) Be an active learner about your own background, personality, interpersonal challenges, and future dreams.
 - In every situation, examine first your own behavior and reactions prior to interpreting or responding to others
 - Talk to others about your own learning experiences using "I" statements rather than focusing on others' experiences (commonly used with "you" statements)

- 3) Attend to non-verbal behavior as a key source of information about your own inner processes (i.e., feelings, values, anxieties, defenses).
 - Monitor your non-verbal behavior to learn about your own inner self.
 - Observe purposively the impact of your non-verbals on others.
 - Learn to implement professional nonverbal behavior consistently with colleagues and those receiving your services.
 - Refrain from non-verbal behavior that could be interpreted as disrespectful (e.g., turning away, rolling eyes, sighs) when your role is to be one of respectful engagement with others' learning.

- 4) Engage directly in interpersonal processes with the goal of maximizing learning for all members of the group.
 - Develop an earnestness for engaging peers in their professional development
 - Communicate directly your negative as well as your positive feelings.
 - Monitor the level of trust you feel in a group, and comment on behaviors that impede trust that is needed for mutual development.

- 5) Practice humility.
 - Give others the benefit of the doubt – presume their behavior is based on a mixture of motives, with some of which at least you can empathize.
 - Form a habit of looking for what you can learn from others rather than what pathology, errors, ignorance, or inadequacy exists in others.
 - Receive feedback openly, seeking to grow rather than defending your actions.

- Take responsibility for keeping yourself “grounded” in your own identity and self-esteem enough to be able to hear critical feedback without needing to defend with anger or withdrawal.

Managing Interpersonal Conflict or Concerns

Most of us find it very distressing to be in conflict with colleagues, or to observe colleagues engaging in a behavior we consider unprofessional or unethical. Our program and faculty encourage you to follow the following steps if you find yourself in that situation.

- 1) Check your facts
- 2) Examine your own motives, values, and emotional reactions to be clear about which components may be motivated by your personal agendas, biases, or wounds
- 3) Approach the colleague and ask them to clarify the situation
- 4) If you are still concerned talk privately with your advisor or clinical supervisor and seek supervision on how to handle the situation
- 5) Expect that your supervisor will always redirect you back to the colleague to resolve the issue unless, in special circumstances, that would not be appropriate.
- 6) Again, examine your own motives, values, and emotional reactions to be clear about your concerns so you can clarify the components that are guided by genuine concern for the well-being of your colleague, program, profession, and persons who may be hurt by the behavior that concerns you
- 7) Please refrain from talking about the conflict with anyone other than the principal people involved in the conflict. This should be a process that maintains maximum respect and privacy for everyone.
- 8) The Golden Rule applies in these cases: We treat others in a manner that we would like to be treated if the situation was reversed.

As stated throughout our program and program materials, the activities of faculty and students associated with this program are expected to be conducted consistent with the Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code Of Conduct.

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We offer these guidelines to our students out of our genuine concern for, and commitment to, their professional and personal development. We hope to foster a cohesive learning environment where the student can maximize his or her learning experience within our program. We also hope to teach our students exemplary professional conduct so that they can be successful in their professional lives once they leave our department.