

## Clinical Advising Guide @ Union College

... for students considering pursuing graduate school  
 ...esp for those considering a doctorate (PhD/PsyD) in Clinical or Counseling Psychology  
 ...those pursuing a masters (MA/MS/MSW) students may lighten up on research

These are suggestions based on the kinds of things typically needed for successful doctoral applications. This is **not** a script... many variables will affect your path at Union and beyond – including your interests, opportunities pursued, type of career path you choose, etc.

| Year            | Fall  | Winter   | Spring  | Breaks: Dec and/or Summer   |
|-----------------|---|--|---|---|
| 1 <sup>st</sup> | Intro Psych (100) [consider also Intro to Neuroscience, here: Behavioral NS (210)]<br>Clin Psych 1: Disorders (250)<br>Stats (200)<br>visit the <a href="#">Becker Career Center</a><br>volunteer in a Prof's lab (291) | ⇒ ⇒ ⇒ ⇒  |   | intern** or RA**<br>read: " <a href="#">Is Psych the Major for You?</a> "<br>see career info:<br><a href="http://apa.org/action/careers">apa.org/action/careers</a>                 |
| 2 <sup>nd</sup> | Assessment & Testing (352)<br>Clin Psy 2: Interventions (351)<br>Experimental (300)<br>electives*<br>volunteer Prof's lab (pract: 291)  | Clin Psy 2: Interventions (351)<br>Clin Psych 3: Internship (451)<br><br>volunteer Prof's lab (pract: 292)   | Clin Psych 3: Internship (451)<br><br><i>Indep Study</i> (493)<br>volunteer Prof's lab (pract: 291) | intern** or RA**<br>read: " <a href="#">Career Paths in Psych</a> " see internship info in this <a href="#">link</a>  |
| 3 <sup>rd</sup> | courses above continued...<br>electives*<br><i>Indep Study</i> (493)<br><br>approach thesis advisor   | Clin Psy 2: Interventions (351)<br>Clin Psych 3: Internship (451)<br><i>Indep Study</i> (493)<br><br>explore: " <a href="#">Grad Study in Psych</a> "<br>read: " <a href="#">Getting in...</a> " | Clin Psych 3: Internship (451)<br>(some start Thesis 487/498)<br><br>submit thesis proposal         | intern** or RA**<br>see info/free videos on applying:<br><a href="http://apa.org/education/grad/">apa.org/education/grad/</a><br>take GREs, prepare applications;<br>obtain letters |
| 4 <sup>th</sup> | Thesis (487/498)<br>electives*<br>submit research to conference?<br>submit applications (Dec 1)   | Thesis<br>electives*<br>submit research to journal?<br>grad school interviews  | Steinmetz presentation<br><br>present research at conference  | celebrate!<br>rest/prepare/move...<br>or regroup – how strengthen?<br>(RA or "intern"*** 1-2 yrs)   |

\* consider other *Clinical* courses: 100, 200, 213, 250, 300, 351, 352, 451 (+ research practicum/indep study: 291/493 and thesis: 487/498)  
 also consider: Clinical Neuropsych, Health Psych, Addictions, Death & Dying, Eating Disorders, Developmental, Educ Psych, Personality

\*\* intern or RA (Research Assistant) - can be volunteer or paid, PT or FT, main objective is to explore the field and gain experience

\*\*\* gain research or clinical experience, or prepare for thesis (lit review, collect pilot data, explore a clinical/professional world, etc...)

### Updates spring 2018:

- new Clinical Psychology sequence: Clin Psy 1/Disorders (250), Clin Psy 2/Interventions (351), Clin Psy 3/Internship (451):
- fall 2018 -> Clin Psych 2: Interventions with lab (351) is being offered (pre-req is 250/Abn -> now: Clin Psych I: Disorders)
- 351 now covers Clin Psych 2: Interventions (merges former: 350/Psychotherapies and 351/Communication)
- 351 lab will review/practice/analyze communication skills specific to clinical/counseling/medical/helping professions...
- 351 ideally precedes going out in the community for field experience Clin Psych 3: Internship (offered winter and spring)

### Common Qs:

*How can I face 5-8 more years of study and preparation before starting a real job?!*

- ~ first, be sure you have a passion about your pursuit – if not, perhaps best to keep exploring...
- ~ next, keep in mind grad school is much different than undergrad – courses are focused in your area of interest/passion...
- ~ also, grad school is not "book work" only - quickly you are out in the "real world" learning and practicing (practicums in 1<sup>st</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> yrs, internship in 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> yr is FT paid clinical work , 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> yrs of postdoc is FT paid)

*I don't know if I like research – I'm concerned about doing a dissertation...*

- ~ try it out first – volunteer as an undergrad
- ~ research in clinical/counseling aims to answer a variety of questions about human behavior – there are **many** interesting Qs
- ~ what are you curious about? Try to find a program where they are asking questions that you would like to explore too – then research will seem less of a burden and more of an adventure...
- ~ note: BOTH clin/couns PhD programs require research – type may vary but it is NOT optional in either or clin/couns PhD

*How can I afford to go to grad school – don't I have to work first?*

- ~ not necessarily, many university-based doctoral programs are prepared to partially or fully support their students financially with RA (research asst), TA (teach asst), stipends, fellowships and tuition remission (faculty research grants fund their doctoral students)
- ~ what you might be offered depends on the caliber/competitiveness of the school and your strengths (GPA, research, fit with prof...)
- ~ note: this is typically true for PhD programs only (admit/fund 6-10 students), most PsyD students typically incur substantial loans as such programs are often run by a "professional school" (admit 20-40 tuition paying students).
- ~ also, keep in mind undergrad loans can typically be deferred while in grad school

*What is the best way to choose a grad program?*

- ~ first, know thyself – really explore who you are, what you like to spend your time doing, get to know career paths
- ~ interview professionals and current graduate students; get internship experience sooner rather than later!...
- ~ keep notes on what really captures your interest as you study – look at the authors' names and university– it would be ideal if you could learn alongside someone doing work that you are curious about – contact them ahead of application time...