

Grad School for Clinical Psychology

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Overview

- I. why clinical psychology?
- II. how to make a strong application
- III. what to expect in grad school
- IV. careers with a clinical psychology PhD



WHY CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY?

Other Mental Health Professions

- medicine (e.g., psychiatry)
- nursing (e.g., psychiatric nursing)
- social work (e.g., clinical social work)
- pastoral care (e.g., Salvation Army field worker)
- occupational therapy
- marriage and family therapy
- counselling (e.g., substance use counsellor)
- many others

Clinical Social Worker

- education requirements
 - bachelor's degree in social work (~ 4 years)
 - supervised practical experience
 - successful completion of provincial written and oral examinations
 - use of the titles "Social Worker" and "Registered Social Worker" is regulated
 - registration with a provincial governing body
 - membership in provincial association

Clinical Social Worker

- tasks may involve:
 - planning programs of assistance, including referrals to financial assistance, legal aid, housing, medical treatment and other services
 - investigating cases of child abuse or neglect and taking protective action when necessary
 - assessment, counselling and therapy

Clinical Social Worker

- tasks may involve:
 - working on interdisciplinary teams
 - advocating for client groups
 - working in areas such as child welfare, family services, corrections, gerontology or addictions

Psychiatric Nursing

- education requirements:
 - university or college registered psychiatric nursing program (~ 4 years)
 - registration with a regulatory body

Psychiatric Nursing

- tasks can involve:
 - nursing care
 - supportive counselling
 - life skills and other educational programs
 - working in psychiatric hospitals, mental health clinics, long-term care facilities and community-based settings

Occupational Therapy

- educational requirements:
 - a bachelor's degree in OT including supervised fieldwork (~ 4 years) or master's degree (+ ~ 2 years)
 - national certification examination
 - registration with a regulatory body
 - membership in the Canadian Association of Occupational Therapists

Occupational Therapy

- tasks may include:
 - observational and interview assessments of life activities
 - interventions to improve self-care, work and leisure activities
 - working on an interdisciplinary team
 - working with specific populations
 - dementia, TBI, chronic pain
 - return-to-work programs

Marriage and Family Therapy

- education requirements:
 - master's degree in counselling, mental health or a related social service discipline (~ 4 year undergrad + ~ 2 years grad)
 - a period of supervised clinical work
 - registration with a provincial association required to use the title “Registered Marriage and Family Therapist”

Marriage and Family Therapy

- tasks may involve:
 - assessment, counselling and therapy with specific client groups such as injured workers, or with specific problems, such as drug and alcohol problems, marital difficulties or problems with behaviour

Pastoral Care Worker

- education requirements can range from high school diploma to Master's degree
 - usually MDiv or MTh (~ 4 years undergrad + ~ 2 years grad)
- tasks can involve
 - leading religious services
 - supportive counselling
 - spiritual guidance
 - counselling the dying and bereaved

Addiction Counsellor

- education requirements:
 - usually bachelor's degree in a social science or related discipline (~ 4 years)
 - addiction counselling is currently unregulated in Canada
 - however, accreditation from the Canadian Addiction Counsellors Certification Federation (CACCF), or similar body, often required

Addiction Counsellor

- tasks may involve:
 - screening for alcohol, drug and gambling problems
 - provide counselling and education

Clinical Psychiatry

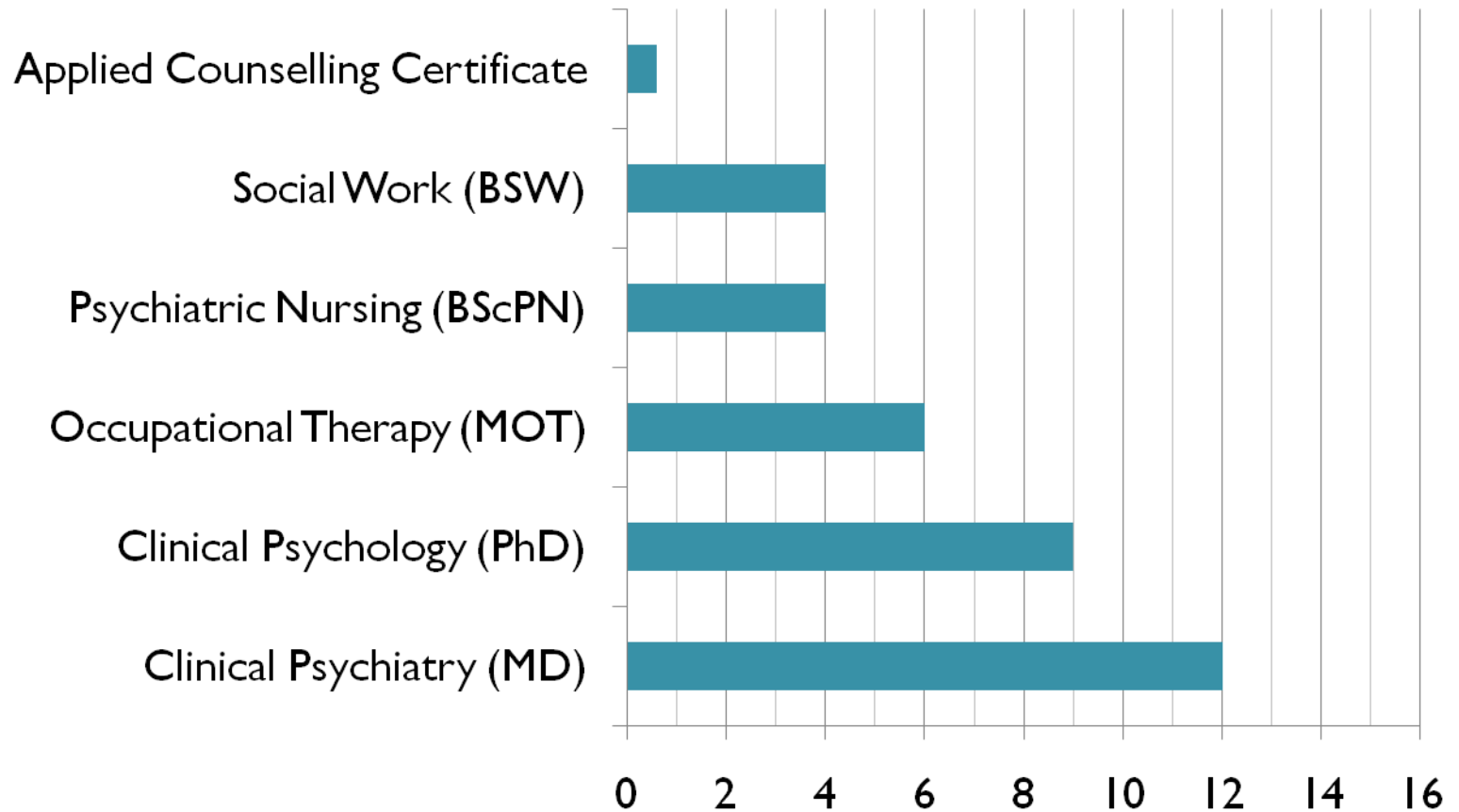
- education requirements:
 - bachelor of science degree (3 to 4 years)
 - graduation from an approved medical school (+ ~ 4 years)
 - completion of the certifying examinations of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada
 - licensing by the provincial or territorial licensing authority, and then
 - residency training (+ ~5 years)

Clinical Psychiatry

- tasks involve assessment, diagnosis and treatment of psychiatric disorders
 - usually pharmacotherapy and medication management
 - sometimes provide psychotherapy

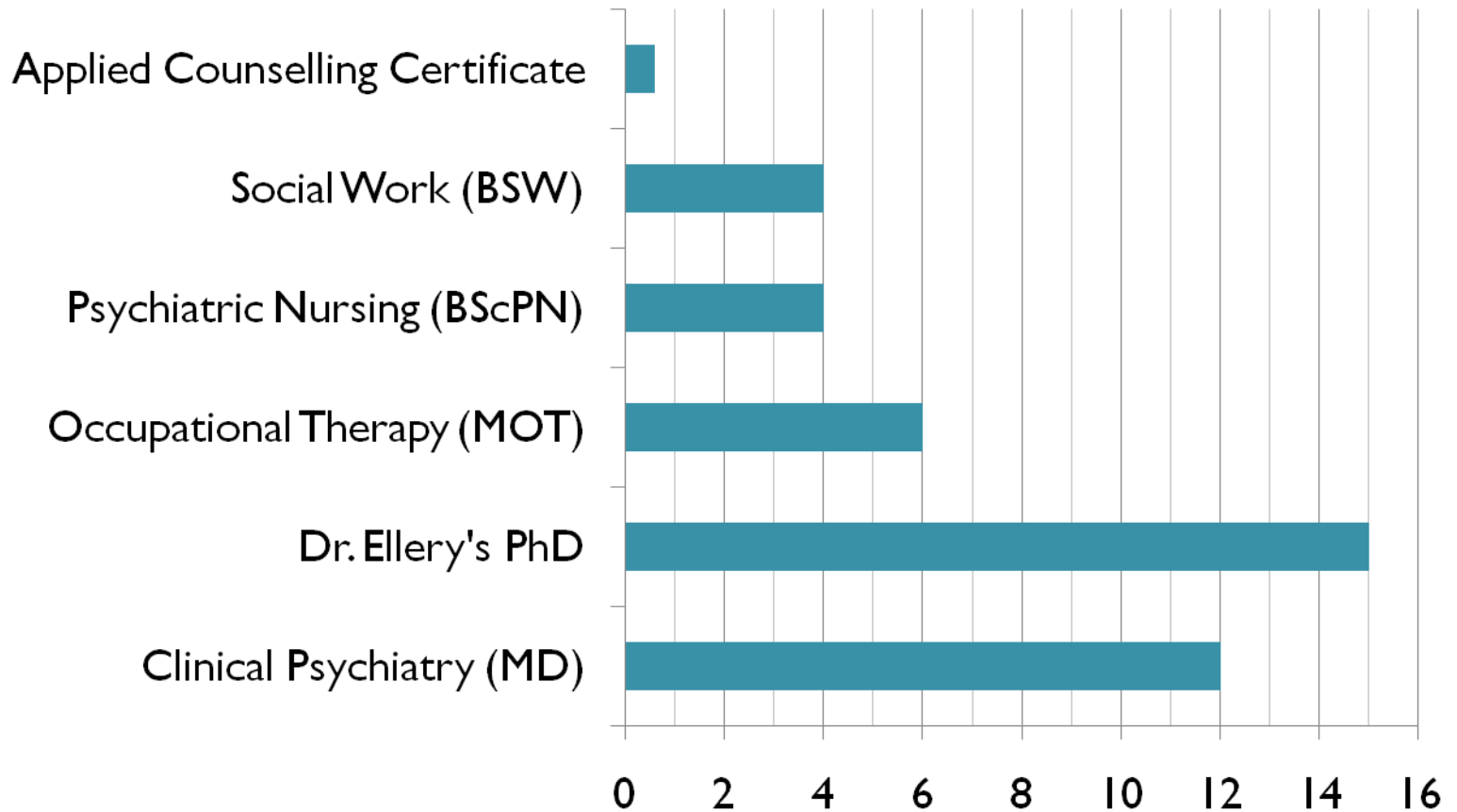
Years Post Secondary Required

Years to Complete Program (on paper)



Years Post Secondary Required

Years to Complete Program (on paper)





WHY SO LONG?

Clinical Psychology

- education requirements:
 - honours bachelor's degree in psychology (~ 4 years)
 - PhD in clinical psychology from an accredited program (+ ~ 5 years)
 - includes coursework, research, practica, and one year clinical internship
 - registration with provincial regulator
 - supervised practice hours, passing the Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP), as well as an oral clinical exam and a written jurisprudence exam

Clinical Psychology

- job activities may include:
 - research
 - teaching
 - assessment
 - therapy
- specific activities will depend on where the psychologist works



**WHAT CAN I DO WITH A
BACHELOR'S DEGREE IN
PSYCHOLOGY?**

US Bachelor's Level Psychology Jobs*

- behaviour analyst
- director of volunteer services
- case worker
- substance use counsellor
- program manager
- child protection worker
- employment counsellor
- rehabilitation advisor
- corrections officer
- family service worker
- residential youth counsellor
- group home coordinator
- social service director
- day care centre supervisor
- mental retardation unit manager
- veterans' advisor

* not all have Canadian equivalents



**DO I NEED TO DO A
PHD TO BECOME A
PSYCHOLOGIST?**

Yes... mostly

- “psychologist” is a regulated title
 - psychologists are registered with regulator
 - regulating bodies are legislated
- laws vary by jurisdiction (e.g., by province)
- some jurisdictions allow psychologists with PsyD, rather than PhD

PhD vs PsyD

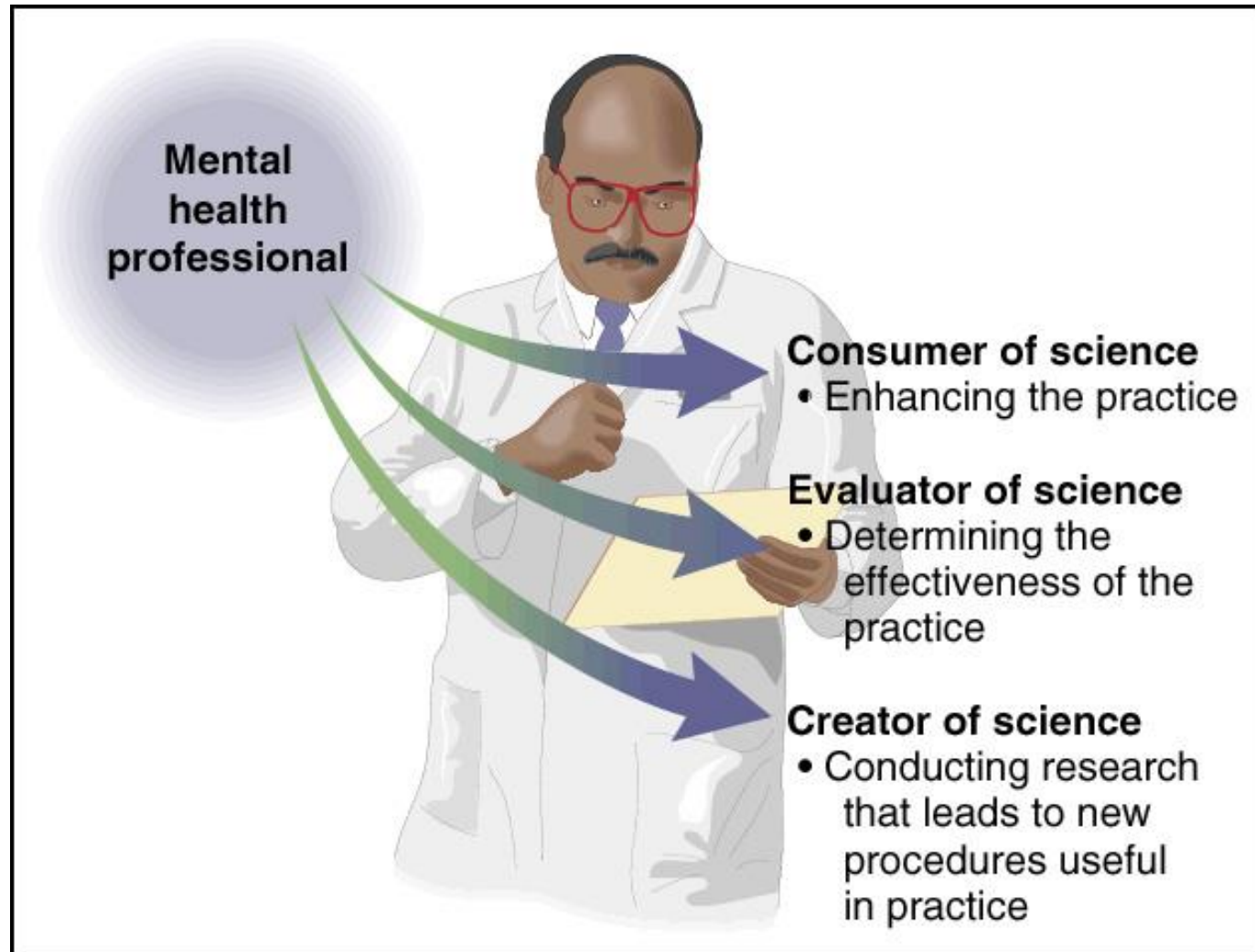
PhD

- 25 CPA accredited programs in Canada
 - <http://www.cpa.ca/accreditation/cpaaccreditedprograms/>
- scientist-practitioner
 - “Boulder model”

PsyD

- 4 programs in Canada
 - U Quebec
 - Laval
 - MUN (not accredited)
 - Adler (not accredited)
- scholar-practitioner

The Scientist-Practitioner Model



PhD vs PsyD

Scientist-practitioners

- develop skills in:
 - knowledge production (scientific research)
 - knowledge consumption
 - effective clinical practice
 - evaluation of practice
- good scientists who provide treatment

Scholar-practitioners

- develop skills in:
 - knowledge consumption
 - effective clinical practice
- good clinicians who are not scientists



**WHY ARE WE TALKING
ABOUT THIS?**



 **YOU NEED TO KNOW
WHAT YOU'RE SIGNING
ON FOR...**

Grad school is tough

- clinical psychology PhD programs are demanding
 - research, coursework, and clinical training
 - if you **don't** like research, a clinical psychology PhD program will almost certainly increase your misery
 - if you **do** like research, a clinical psychology PhD program is still likely to increase your misery (for a while anyway)

Grad school can be long

- clinical psychology PhD programs take from **5 years to infinity**
 - if you don't like research, you will find just about anything to be infinitely more compelling to do than write your dissertation, especially in clinical

Grad school can be expensive

- if you don't like research, **and** still manage to complete your PhD, you will have spent a lot of time and money becoming highly trained to do a job you will not enjoy



STILL WANT TO DO IT?



 **HOW TO GET INTO GRAD
SCHOOL FOR CLINICAL
PSYCHOLOGY**

Way before you apply...

- get to know your profs so they can write *good* letters of reference when needed
 - read their publications
 - make use of office hours
 - have specific goals when you meet
- ****get research experience****
 - volunteer in a lab that interests you
 - complete your honours degree

As you get closer to applying...

- research **programs** you might like
- questions to ask:
 - are they accredited?
 - where are they located?
 - how long does it take most students to finish?
 - what funding is available? internal? are most students in the program successful at getting external funding?
 - do they need GRE scores?

As you get closer to applying...

- research **supervisors** you might like
- questions to ask:
 - what do they study?
 - are they accepting students?
 - what is it like to work with them in their lab?
speak with their grad students?
 - do they have funding for research? for students? lab resources?

Applying...

- write the GRE well in advance
- arrange for transcripts to be sent
- letters of reference
- statement of interest

Letters of Reference

- pick referees that:
 - know your work
 - will write a strong letter
- provide organized materials for your letter writers
 - resume
 - a copy of your transcripts
 - statement of career goals and interests
 - any other relevant information about you

Letters of Reference

- also provide:
 - names and addresses of the programs
 - addressed envelopes
 - any paper or electronic forms required
 - deadlines for each of the applications
- **ask as early as possible**
 - accept "no" graciously
 - some profs may not have time or may not feel like they can write you a good letter

Statement of Interest

Step 1: list the experiences, goals and interests that have prompted you to apply and how their program fits

Step 2: have colleagues and mentors read your statement and provide feedback

Step 3: revise your statement in line with suggestions

Step 4: repeat steps 2 and 3 until you think you are ready for step 5

Step 5: repeat steps 2 and 3 until your colleagues and mentors think you are ready for step 6

Step 6: realize your application is due soon and you don't have time to revise any further

Step 7: stop revising and get ready to send the application

Sending the Application

- check over your work
 - e.g., make sure the right names are in your letters, use spell checker, etc.
- use a checklist to ensure contents are complete
- make sure any payments are included
- finally, let go

Sending the Application

- maybe send a well-crafted follow-up email, orienting your potential supervisor to the fact that you've applied
- prepare for an interview sometime in the weeks after the deadline
 - keep notes re: your research, career goals, etc., close to the phone

Accepting Offers

- Canadian universities have agreed that students will hear about the results no later than **April 1st**, and
- applicants are not required to respond before **April 15th**
- don't let anyone pressure you into making a decision before you're ready



WHAT TO EXPECT IN GRAD SCHOOL

Clinical Psychology PhD

- coursework
 - research methods, statistics, psychopathology, assessment, intervention, ethics, etc.
- practica
 - field placements to gain clinical experience
- research
 - funding applications (SSHRC, NSERC, CIHR, etc.), data collection and analysis, manuscript writing, dissertation and defence

Clinical Psychology PhD

- internship
 - year-long clinical and research experience
 - involves a whole other application process (like grad school)
 - counting practicum hours, reference letters, written statements of interest, etc.
 - uses international matching process (like medical residencies)
 - see www.appic.org for more information

Registration with Regulatory Body

- after getting the PhD, clinical psychologists need to get registered
 - logging supervised practice hours
 - two full time years
 - passing the Examination for Professional Practice of Psychology (EPPP)
 - standard score of 500 (~ 70%)
 - oral clinical exam
 - written jurisprudence exam

Post doc?

- there are research and clinical post-doctoral fellowships
- post docs are good for:
 - developing skill sets
 - research and statistical methods
 - clinical skills and experiences with new populations
 - building a CV
 - establishing a publication record while the tenure clock isn't ticking



CAREERS

Careers

- academia
- research institutions
- hospitals
 - general, psychiatric, forensic
- mental health clinics
- community-based settings
- government
 - e.g., military
- private practice

Helpful Links

1. <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2006/Welcome.aspx>
 - lists National Occupational Classification (NOC) codes for Canadian occupations. Also describes **tasks** and **education requirements** associated with each occupation, including psychologists, professors, counsellors, etc.
2. <http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/guides/careers.aspx>
 - describes a **range of careers** in psychology, not just clinical.
3. http://www.psychology.uwaterloo.ca/gradprog/preparation/grad_school_in_psych.html
 - helpful advice on what to do early in your undergraduate training to maximize your chances of a **successful grad school application**. Also advises on grad school application process.

Helpful Links

4. <http://www.unc.edu/~mjp1970/Mitch%27s%20Grad%20School%20Advice.pdf>

- advice on grad school in psychology, especially **clinical child psychology**.

5. <http://www.psychwww.com/careers/index.htm>

- psychology jobs that do and **do not require** graduate degrees.

6. <http://www.psywww.com/careers/books.htm>

- **bibliography** re: grad school and psychology careers.