Counseling Psychology (Ph.D.)

Research Training

Research experience is an integral part of the Program, and students have the opportunity to be continuously involved in an ongoing research group until they begin internship. Research groups provide experiential training in scholarly work. The purposes of this experience are to assist students in developing an understanding of research, cultivating student interest in scholarly activity, participating meaningfully in ongoing research activity, and preparing students to conduct a dissertation study. In short, the research group experience is designed to provide students with a research apprenticeship during which their interests and skills can be mentored.

In the first week of the first semester in the Program, the faculty members present their research interests to students and discuss their research groups. Following that interaction, students rank order their choices of research group. In most cases, students are able to join their first choice of research group. Students typically express a preference for research groups in line with their developing interests. The faculty member coordinating the group frequently becomes chairperson of the student members’ dissertations. This provides students with the possibility of knowing their dissertation chairperson quite well and with the opportunity to develop mutual interests with that faculty member. Occasionally a student’s interests change during their training. In that case, students can change research groups.

During the first two years of graduate study, most students participate primarily in ongoing, faculty- initiated research projects, though there are sometimes opportunities for initiating new projects in conjunction with the faculty leader of the group. Students have the opportunity to participate in many facets of research, including conceptualizing studies, literature reviews, collecting data, data analyses, assisting in drafting grants, and assisting in writing manuscripts. Each student will have different experiences depending on his or her knowledge, abilities, interests, and on what is needed in the particular research group.

Participation in the research group can lead to becoming a co-author of professional presentations and publications, depending on the student’s degree of involvement. We encourage students to participate fully in research so that they can have the experience of co-authoring papers. Most students co-author at least one presentation and/or publication during their training. We are very proud of the accomplishments of our students. If you have the opportunity to present a paper at a professional conference, the University has some travel funds available through the Graduate Association Fee Allocation Committee and for Student Travel Awards through the Office of Student Affairs.

For a description of faculty research interests, please follow the link to Counseling Psychology Faculty.