



**THE FIELD OF  
CLINICAL  
PSYCHOLOGY**



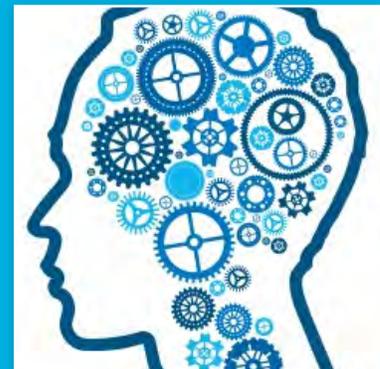
The educational journey of the board and a few of our members inspired this issue of Psi Chi. It was written as a way to bring awareness to the opportunities students can utilize throughout their undergraduate career here and upon graduation.

# Clinical Psychology

According to the APA, Clinical Psychology is a branch of psychology that provides continuing and comprehensive mental and behavioral health care, consultation to agencies and communities, and research based practice. Clinical Psychologists have an advanced understanding of psychopathology and diagnostic/intervention considerations, and mental health issues across the lifespan based on a solid understanding of psychopathology. Clinical psychologists use this knowledge and understanding in assessment, consultation, and research. Clinical psychologists work in academia, medical settings, or private practice. A clinical psychologist must have an advanced degree and must be certified to practice. Some clinical psychologists have their Master's degree, but clinical psychologists generally earn a Ph.D. or PsyD.. A PhD can be either research focused or clinically focused, while a PsyD. is primarily clinically focused with very little emphasis on research. The psychology department website offers a wealth of information regarding degree comparisons, advice, and certification requirements.

By: Madeliene Alger

## *The Field of Clinical Psychology*



# How to Write A Personal Statement

One of the most important elements to bear in mind when writing a personal statement is your research programs of interest. Make an effort to research these programs thoroughly, and identify one or two faculty members within each program that share your own specific interests and research goals. It is difficult to over-emphasize the importance of seeking continual feedback on what you have written. Ask a trusted peer or faculty member to review your personal statement and offer an honest assessment of your initial draft. Writing is an adaptive, fluid process and your revised draft(s) should incorporate and reflect the criticism and advice you have received.

To help you organize your ideas and plan your statement, it can be incredibly helpful to write an outline first. This should include your short and long-term academic goals, relevant achievements, research, and work experience that is relevant to your field. Often students make the mistake of being excessively broad about their respective strengths; your objective is not merely to present yourself as an excellent candidate – *but one in respect to the specific program(s)*.

Your opening paragraph need not be more than five or six sentences, and should consist of some key highlights about yourself that initially capture the admission committee's attention. Mention what areas of psychology are particularly interesting to you, and how this motivates you to pursue the discipline at the graduate level. Your next paragraph should provide an overview of your academic accomplishments, like honors societies, scholarships, or possible graduate-level coursework you've accomplished. While many students like to emphasize their grades in this section, it is advisable to avoid writing about anything that could be gleaned simply by looking at your transcripts.

Use the next paragraph to emphasize your research background, specific laboratory skills and techniques you have learned. This part is important because it provides the admissions committees with a tangible idea of your capabilities when performing graduate-level research. If your research experience has culminated in a publication or a presentation at a scientific conference, make sure that these accomplishments are appropriately emphasized. If you have any relevant work or volunteering experience, discuss this as well. It is important to mention any time you have spent tutoring (especially in your own field), since your graduate school experience will most likely consist partly of teaching-assistantship responsibilities.

Next, provide an overview – at least to the best of your abilities – of your future plans in your respective discipline and how the school of your choosing will help you reach those goals. Remember to tailor your statement to each program; if a personal statement seems excessively homogenized, it will likely carry less weight in respect to individual admissions committees. Demonstrate how you have already begun to work toward your future goals, and illustrate how your strategic acumen has guided your course selection and research choices. Finally, end your personal statement with several lines of concluding remarks that ideally tie back to the introductory overview.

By: Kristen Woods



## Interview with Professor Autumn Nanassy on her summer course Health, Psychology, & Media

Please tell us a little bit about you - your teaching methods, philosophy and goals. I am graduating from Rutgers-Camden this May with my Masters in Psychology. I have a very high-energy level, which is expressed through my lectures and interactive teaching style. I break up lecture by bringing in outside videos, guest lecturers, and leading class discussions based on readings relevant to class topics. Regardless of what my students do with their degree, it is important to me that they develop skills that will make them successful academics and good consumers of research.

**Why should students take a summer course? What are the advantages and disadvantages?** Although it may not be ideal to sit in school on a beautiful day in July, some students actually may *need* to take an additional class to graduate on time.

Instead of cramming six classes into one semester, students should consider taking a summer course to spread out their work load to help them excel in their studies. Summer classes are smaller,

which means students can learn about unique topics with personal attention from the instructor. I recommend students consult with their academic advisor to discuss summer courses!

**Why the topic of health, psychology & media?** Media is such a large part of today's culture. I have always been interested in psychology, but in the last year, I have become increasingly interested in health. In collaboration with Dr. Markey, we came up with the idea of planning a Psychology, Health, and Media course to discuss the psychological and physical ways in which all types of media influence well-being. In this class, we will focus on the ways in which television, radio, video games, advertising, and social media affect both mental and physical health.

**What do you most look forward to discussing?** I am very excited to discuss all topics in Psychology, Health, and Media. I am creating this course from scratch, so there will not be any material that I don't find interesting! If I had to come up with only one topic, I think that I'm most excited to discuss the concept of catfishing. Many students may watch the popular MTV show *Catfish*; we will dive deeper into the psychological aspects associated with this concept.

**Is this course for all students (regardless of major) or will it be most applicable to psychology majors? Why?** This class will have an applied focus and will benefit students interested in psychology, health science, education, marketing, public health, digital studies, and healthcare. Given the popularity of media in our society, understanding the underlying psychological concepts associated with exposure and usage will benefit students from all majors.

**Any advice to students currently enlisted? To those not currently enlisted?** If you're not currently enlisted, you should be! (Kidding, but seriously.) This class is going to be very relevant and



interesting. I am not sure the next time this course will be offered, so if you are interested in learning more about this topic, I suggest enrolling. To those enrolled, I look forward to having you this summer! Please feel free to email me with suggestions about topics you would like to see included or with any questions ([adn34@scarletmail.rutgers.edu](mailto:adn34@scarletmail.rutgers.edu)).

## Interview on Research with Rutgers Graduate Student Michelle Dixon

Please list and briefly describe the conferences you have traveled to. Last May I presented at the APS conference in New York. I was second author on the project titled "Accuracy of Thin Slice Judgments among Lesbian Couples: Correlates with Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Processes". This January I presented at the SPSP conference in San Diego. I was first author on the project titled "The Relationship between the HEXACO-60 Personality Factors and Impression Efficacy and Motivation".

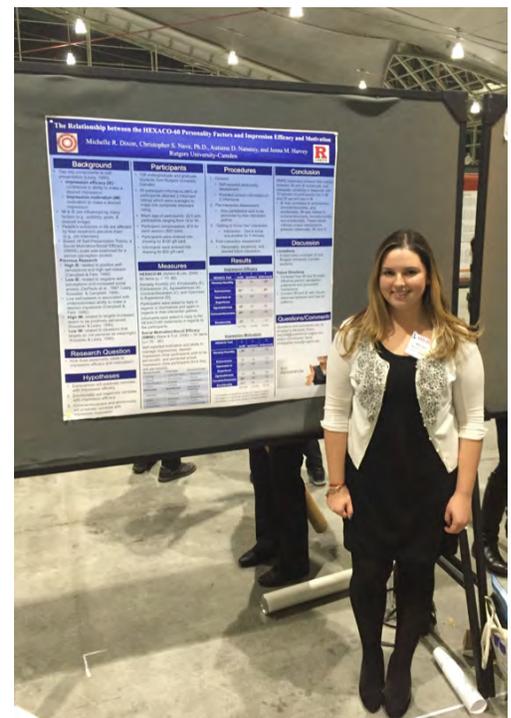
**How long did it take you, on average, to prepare your submissions?** In total it takes me about 4-6 months to complete all the work for a poster project (i.e., literature review, data analysis, etc.) Typically, there is one lead project coordinator and about 3-5 other people who help out so the work is split up.

**What happens during the conference?** There are lots and lots of really interesting talks and workshops that you can go to. All day for about 3 days there is something going on. You get to choose what interests you most and attend as many talks and workshops that you want. There are also a lot of opportunities to network with other researchers and graduate students.

**What do you enjoy most and least about conferences?** My favorite part of the conferences is seeing what other researchers are doing. It's really cool to see what people in your field of research are doing and you can get a lot of advice and ideas on how to improve your own research. The one downside to the conferences is that they can be exhausting towards the end. I feel like I am constantly busy when I am at the conferences and by day 3 I am typically ready to relax.

**What do undergrads need to know in order to begin participating in conferences?** First, you have to talk to a professor about working in their lab. Next, you would want to talk to current senior RA's and graduate students and see if they need any help with their research or you could talk to the professor about maybe starting a project of your own! I suggest being a 2nd or 3rd author on a poster first so that you can get a feel for how the whole thing work.

Rutgers also has some funds set up to support students presenting their research at conferences. If your poster is accepted you can apply for a travel fund for up to \$500!



# Contact Information

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# HOW TO APPLY FOR PSI CHI MEMBERSHIP:

## Requirements for Psi Chi Membership:

### UNDERGRADUATES MUST:

- ▶be enrolled as a major or minor in a psychology program (or a program psychological in nature)
- ▶have completed at least 3 semesters of college courses
- ▶have completed at least 9 semester hours (3 courses) in psychology courses
- ▶have earned an overall GPA that is in the top 35% of their class in general scholarship (minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4- point scale)
- ▶have a minimum 3.5 GPA in psychology courses

### GRADUATE STUDENT APPLICANTS MUST:

- ▶be enrolled in a psychology graduate program
- ▶have completed at least one full semester of graduate coursework
- ▶have an overall GPA of at least 3.5 in all graduate courses, including psychology courses\*

### TRANSFER STUDENT APPLICANTS:

- ▶follow the same requirements as the undergraduate student applicant
- ▶should complete at least 12 semester hours at the new institution in order to establish a GPA

### TRANSFER STUDENT APPLICANTS WHO ARE ALREADY MEMBERS OF PSI CHI:

- contact the Psi Chi faculty advisor at the new institution to complete an online transfer membership form

In order to join, you must qualify for membership and join through the Rutgers-Camden Chapter. The application process is now online at:

<http://memberapp.psichi.org/cfamember/applicationform.aspx>.

The Psi Chi Society one-time membership fee is \$70. Of this fee, \$55 goes to the national office, an \$15 is received by our local chapter. This small fee pays for lifetime Psi Chi membership, a certificate of membership, and a membership card.

\*To find your Overall GPA as well as grades for each course, log in at [my.rutgers.edu](http://my.rutgers.edu), click on the Academics tab, then click on “Your Full Transcript” under the “Get My Grades” button. In the pop-up box, click the radio button for “Full Transcript”.