

UPDATED: NOVEMBER 05, 2023



Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship Program

South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS)

Psychology Service (116B) Audie L. Murphy VA Hospital
7400 Merton Minter
San Antonio, TX 78229
<http://www.southtexas.va.gov/psychology/>

Applications due: 3 December 2023



2024-2025 Training Year Recruitment

Couples and Family Psychology

Dual Diagnosis (Substance Use Disorders and Trauma)

Health Disparities (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion)

Health Psychology (Preventative Health and/or Behavioral Medicine; Two Positions)

Geropsychology

Psychosocial Rehabilitation for Serious Mental Illness

Trauma Psychology



Program Director Information

Ashlee Martinez, PsyD

Training Director

Clinical Psychology Fellowship Program Psychology Service (116B)

South Texas Veterans Health Care System

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Accreditation Status

The Clinical Psychology Postdoctoral Fellowship Program at the South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS) is fully accredited by the Commission on Accreditation (CoA) of the American Psychological Association (APA). The next site visit of the program by CoA is due in 2027. Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation:

*Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation American Psychological Association
750 1st Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002*

Phone: (202) 336-5979 / E-mail: apaaccred@apa.org

Web: www.apa.org/ed/accreditation

STVHCS Mission and Vision

The mission of South Texas Veterans Health Care System (STVHCS) and the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) is to improve the health of the veteran population by providing primary care, specialty care, extended care, and related social support services in an integrated health care delivery system. Since 1946, the VA has developed affiliations and training programs with the specific purpose of maintaining and improving the quality of care for veteran patients, to assist in the recruitment and retention of the highest quality staff at VA facilities, and to create a patient care environment characterized by an academic atmosphere of inquiry. The VA is legislatively mandated to assist in the training of physicians and associated health professionals for its own system and for the nation.

Psychology Training Mission and Vision

The psychology training program at STVHCS fully supports the patient care, teaching, and research missions of the Veterans Health Administration (VHA) of the Department of Veterans Affairs by providing highly trained psychologists to care for veterans and other clients using the knowledge and science base of psychology. It is the vision of the psychology training program at STVHCS to be a recognized leader in the nation in the training of psychologists for public service.

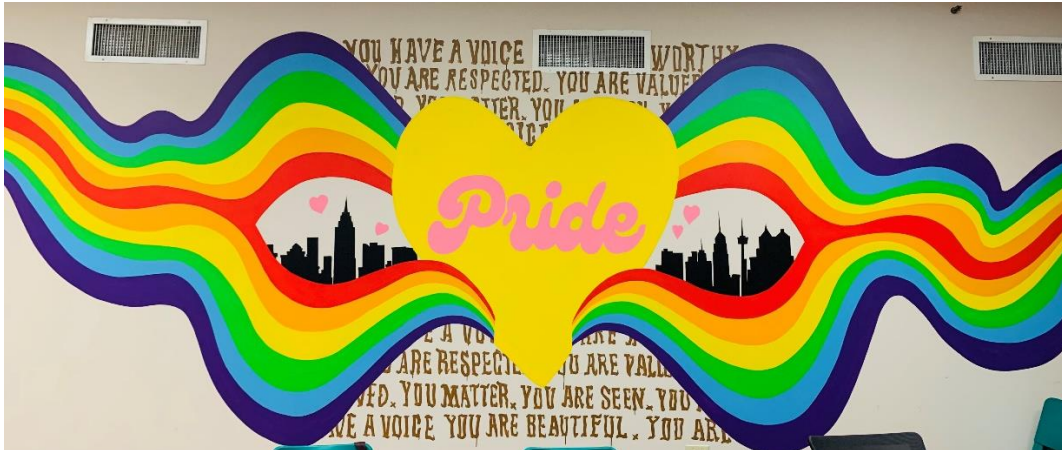
Core Values

The psychology training program at STVHCS is guided by the following core values in support of excellence in patient care and training. We believe that quality psychology training should be:

1. Patient-Focused: The training of psychologists enhances patient care and is best conducted in an environment respectful of training with the leadership and involvement of STVHCS professional psychology community.
2. Interprofessional: The value of interprofessional collaboration is respected, acknowledged, and utilized in all psychology activities. Trainees should work and learn with trainees and practitioners from Medicine, Social Work, Psychiatry, Pharmacy, Nursing, and other health care disciplines within the medical center.
3. Respectful of Diversity: Psychology training should be sensitive and responsive to the diverse cultural, ethnic, and special populations of veterans served -- including women and older adults-- as well as to clinical conditions such as chronic mental or physical illness. Likewise, psychology training is sensitive and responsive to the diverse cultural, ethnic, gender, race, religion, age, ability statuses, gender identities, and sexual orientations among our trainees and faculty.
4. Individualized: The training of psychologists is best supported by the use of a variety of supervised training activities designed to address the fellows' specific training needs, the diversity of clients served, and to integrate the practice and science base of psychology. Specific clinical assignments are primarily guided by the individual educational needs and goals of the fellow.
5. Accountable: The training of psychologists must meet quality of care standards of the profession of psychology to include obtaining and maintaining accreditation, providing evidence of continuous improvement in training processes, and promoting and evaluating training outcomes which incorporate concerns and needs of patients, fellows, affiliated institutions, and the VHA.
6. In Partnership with Other Professionals: Psychology training is enhanced by agreements and collegial partnerships among affiliated institutions, disciplines, and

programs in the community that are sensitive and responsive to the broad goals and mission of the Psychology Service of STVHCS and the VHA.

Focus on Diversity Training: One of the core values of the program is respectfulness of diversity. Fellows are expected to engage in diversity training and experiences throughout the year.



Fellows have a monthly **Multicultural Journal Club**, jointly with the interns, as well as a monthly **Diversity Enrichment Discussion** with the Training Director. These opportunities are describe in the seminar section of this brochure.

Fellows engage in **Diversity Immersion Experiences** three times a year. Immersion Experiences are dedicated to providing trainees with intensive exposure and training to enhance professional competency in areas of culture and diversity in a thoughtful manner. These experiences are meant to broaden providers understanding of cultural and diversity issues and factors which influence case conceptualization, diagnosis, and treatment planning for patients in the South Texas area. The experience serves to assist trainees in asking them to look inward and reflect on their own preconceived notions and/or biases, to work towards greater awareness, understanding, and growth as practitioners. The immersion experience program is now coordinated by the Diversity Training Committee.





Fellows can join the **Diversity Training Committee**. Training experiences with the committee increase trainees' cultural knowledge, promote greater self-awareness of one's background and potential positions of privilege, develop and implement in-classroom and experimental learning opportunities, broaden psychology trainees' understanding of cultural, diversity, and social justice factors which shape our community and the world as a whole, and cultivate comfort with engaging in culturally aware dialogue across all levels of mental health services.

The specific activities of the DTC include:

- Book/Podcast Club
- Consultation Hour for Trainees
- Consultation Hour for Staff
- My Life My Story
- Multicultural Clinical Experience
- Psychiatry Resident Culturally Informed Care Training
- Psychology New Employee Orientation
- Quarterly Engagement Newsletter (Awareness Matters)
- Race-Based Stress/Trauma & Empowerment Group
- Team Presentations



Clinical Training Emphasis Areas

All emphasis areas are listed. See the first page of brochure for those emphasis areas for which we are recruiting for the upcoming training year.

Couples and Family Psychology

The fellow will be located primarily in the Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center, although training experiences will be available in other settings and may include: the Polytrauma Transitional Rehabilitation Center, PTRP/PACER Rehabilitation Center, the Spinal Cord Injury Center, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder Clinical (PCT) team, or specialty clinics including Oncology and Whole Health.

Treatment populations include veterans, active-duty service members, and their families. Fellows will have the opportunity to engage with veterans and their family members in both outpatient and inpatient settings, while working with interdisciplinary treatment teams in a wide range of settings. The interdisciplinary team may include members from psychology, medicine, neuropsychology, social work, occupational therapy, physical therapy, kinesiotherapy, speech therapy, recreation therapy, nursing, psychiatry, chaplaincy, physician assistants, nutrition, and other Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PM&R) providers. Team members for active duty will include military liaison officers from San Antonio Military Medical Center (SAMMC) and associated military treatment facilities.

Clinical training focuses on developing advanced couple and family therapy skills in a setting relevant to marriage and family psychology. The fellow can select from multiple training experiences, including providing couple or family counseling and parenting skills. In addition, the fellow will be able to provide educational classes on rehabilitation from a wide range of topics including brain injury rehabilitation, brain anatomy and brain function, and caregiving strategies. Fellows will be integrated into Interdisciplinary teams to provide consultation on behavioral strategies for the team to implement and offer training for staff on relevant psychological interventions.

Fellow may have an opportunity to train in evidenced based interventions including Cognitive Behavioral Conjoint Therapy for PTSD (CBCT), Integrative Behavioral Conjoint therapy (IBCT) and Veteran Centered Brief Family Consultation Training in Motivational interviewing and other health-focused interventions. There will also be additional opportunities to offer these interventions to patients or to teach staff with implementing these methods.

Dual Diagnosis (Substance Use Disorders and Trauma)

The Dual Diagnosis (SUD/Trauma) training program aims to train the selected fellow in treating Veterans with co-occurring problems in the areas of substance use and trauma. STVHCS provides an array of services to address substance use disorders, trauma, other co-occurring mental health issues, and various psychosocial issues. The SUD/Trauma fellow will have the opportunity to be trained in multiple settings to gain experience treating Veterans at various

stages of treatment, recovery, and psychosocial situations.

Primary settings for this training emphasis are the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Outpatient Clinic and the PTSD Clinical Team (PCT). Both teams are interdisciplinary teams providing a range of outpatient services. The SUD Outpatient clinic provides initial evaluations, individual therapy, and group therapy. The Intensive Outpatient Program is housed within this clinic and provides 9 hours of group therapy per week for 4 weeks. Additionally, the Outpatient Program has groups emphasizing relapse prevention, mood management, harm reduction, and general wellness. PCT provides initial evaluations and primarily individual, trauma-focused therapy. Additionally, PCT has an Accelerated PTSD Treatment Program (APT), which is a Model of Accelerated Service Delivery and functions similarly to an IOP, combining both group and individual PTSD treatment 4 days per week for approximately 4 weeks.

SUD Outpatient and PCT services utilize evidence-based treatments throughout their programs and the dual diagnosis fellow would have the opportunity to be trained in EBPs such as Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MET), Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy for Substance Use Disorders (CBT-SUD), Concurrent Treatment of PTSD and Substance Use Disorders (COPE), Prolonged Exposure (PE), Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), and Contingency Management (CM).

Additional opportunities may include experience in the Domiciliary Residential Rehabilitation Treatment Program (DRRTP), a residential treatment facility that addresses substance use along with co-occurring mental health and psychosocial issues. DRRTP is also an interdisciplinary team setting that includes psychologists, medical providers, social workers, addiction therapists, licensed professional counselors, recreational therapists, nurses, occupational therapists, and chaplains. In this setting, the fellow would be involved in providing individual therapy, group therapy, and psychological assessment.

The portion of time spent in each setting of the fellowship will be determined in collaboration with the fellow, preceptor, and supervisor(s) based on the fellow's interests, previous experience, and program structure. The goal is to provide the fellow with a well-rounded overall training experience. The fellow will also be given the freedom to choose a minor specialization area outside of the SUD and PCT programs. The trainee will complete an administrative and a research project with a special focus on substance use and co-occurring disorders, in line with their emphasis area.

Health Disparities (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion)

This emphasis area aims to train the selected fellow in the specialty area of Health Disparities which will focus on issues related to diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). The fellow is housed at the South Texas Veterans Health Care Center (STVHCS) in San Antonio, Texas. STVHCS is actively engaged in community outreach, research partnerships, and serves as a teaching center for medical students, residents, and fellows.

The Health disparities fellow is trained in a variety of different settings and clinics; experiences will vary by clinic. Clinical training could include individual or group treatment utilizing various evidence-based treatment protocols, intake, and assessment skills with an emphasis on tailoring each intervention to a given Veteran's unique cultural background and identity. The fellow will also have the opportunity to be trained in the Race-Based Stress/Trauma and Empowerment (RBSTE) group protocol. They will have the ability to participate in the national consultation

program, learning how to assess appropriateness of referrals/consults, provide consultation with referring providers, complete intakes and provide psychoeducation as well as co-facilitation of the 8-week 90 minute group, coordination of care, and appropriate disposition upon group completion. Experience in working with older veterans, Transgender Veteran Care Group, administrative experience with LGBTQ+ Veteran Care Coordinator, and additional opportunities looking and social determinants of health (SDOH) will be available.

The Health Disparities fellow would serve as a member of the Psychology Diversity Training Committee and have the opportunity to be involved in a variety of D.E.I. initiatives, administrative tasks and programming conducted by the committee (i.e. Book/Podcast Club, Consultation Hour for Trainees, Immersion Program, My Life My Story, Quarterly Engagement Newsletter). Through engagement in this committee the fellow will have the opportunity to develop a robust understanding of administrative duties required, offer consultation to other healthcare professionals, and provide culturally informed care training for psychiatry residents and mental health staff. The fellow will also have the opportunity to potentially be a member of the Mental Health Service line – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee and/or STVHCS Hospital Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee.

Exploration of diversity and health equity is integral to these training experiences, including understanding how social determinants of health impact veterans from diverse backgrounds in these settings. The fellow will gain further understanding and knowledge of diversity-related issues and strategies for providing culturally-sensitive clinical care. Along with the other fellows, the trainee will complete an administrative and a research project with a special focus in line with the emphasis area.

Health Psychology (Preventative Health or Behavioral Medicine) (Two positions)

This emphasis area aims to train the selected fellow in the specialty area of Health Psychology. The fellow is housed at the South Texas Veterans Health Care Center (STVHCS) in San Antonio, Texas. Through its affiliation with local agencies and the University of Texas Health Science Center, the STVHCS is actively engaged in community outreach, research partnerships, and serves as a teaching center for medical students, residents and fellows. In addition, the fellow is trained in other practice settings involving the application of health psychology.

Health psychology offers a diverse training experience and will vary by clinic. Clinical training experiences could include individual or group treatment utilizing various EBP's (such as CBT-I, CBT-CP, ACT, ERRT, MFN), intake and assessment skills within a given health specialty, as well as the opportunity to offer consultation with other healthcare professionals. Options for health psychology training include primary care mental health integration, neuropsychology outpatient or inpatient settings, psychiatry consultation/liaison team, Outpatient/Inpatient specialty medical clinics (e.g., oncology, anticipated experience in cardiology), behavioral sleep medicine, interventions in health promotion and disease prevention, COVID Convalescence program, Home-Based Primary Care, and rehabilitation settings in Polytrauma (acute inpatient, outpatient, and Polytrauma Transitional Rehabilitation Program), Spinal Cord Injury, or at the Community Living Center. Training in Motivational Interviewing and other health-focused interventions are available. Along with the other fellows, the trainee will complete an administrative and a research project with a special focus on health psychology services, in line with the emphasis area.

Exploration of diversity and health equity is integral to these training experiences, including understanding how social determinants of health impact veterans from diverse backgrounds in these settings. The fellow will gain further understanding and knowledge of diversity-related issues and strategies for providing culturally-sensitive clinical care. Along with the other fellows, the trainee will complete an administrative and a research project with a special focus on health psychology services, in line with the emphasis area.

Geropsychology

This emphasis aims to train the selected fellow in congruence with the Pikes Peak training model for professional Geropsychology. The fellowship year is designed with the goal of preparing fellows for board certification in the specialty area of Geropsychology through the American Board of Professional Psychology, if they so choose. The fellow can expect to develop skills necessary to work with an older adult population in the areas of assessment, behavioral medicine, neuropsychological assessment, rehabilitation, evidence-based treatments, and palliative care.

Fellows working in geropsychology have opportunities to provide services on interprofessional teams in a variety of settings, including the Community Living Center (CLC), inpatient hospice, outpatient geriatrics primary care clinic (GEM), Home Based Primary Care, and through our geriatric and palliative consultation services throughout the hospital. Interdisciplinary teams include nurses, physicians, chaplains, physical therapists, occupational therapists, recreational therapists, speech-language pathologists, social workers, dietitians, and pharmacists. Services provided in geriatrics include, but are not limited to, the following: individual therapy, group therapy, family therapy, caregiver support, bereavement/grief, neuropsychological testing, capacity evaluation, cognitive rehabilitation, relaxation therapy, pain management services, and consultation with other providers. The fellow is given the opportunity to work in areas outside of geriatrics including the neuropsychology clinic, primary care, infectious disease clinic, tele-health, behavioral sleep medicine/sleep clinic, spinal cord injury, as well as any other training experience available to the clinical psychology fellows. The fellow is given the freedom to choose a minor specialization area with geropsychology or outside of geropsychology; fellows have specialized in areas such as rehabilitation, behavioral medicine, neuropsychology, palliative care, or trauma psychology. The trainee will complete an administrative and a research project with a special focus on geropsychology, in line with their emphasis area. Trainees are expected to provide supervision and present/teach during didactics and staff trainings. The Geropsychology Fellow will also have the opportunity to engage in VA National Geropsychology Fellow Seminar didactics in addition to the clinical psychology fellowship specific didactics.

The selected fellow will have the opportunity to train in a variety of evidence-based psychotherapies (EBP) depending on their selected experiences. Geropsychology offers opportunities for learning problem-solving therapy, Later-Adulthood Trauma Reengagement, Life Review, ERRT-M, and Legacy Therapy with room for learning and practicing other common EBP as appropriate. The selected fellow will also be trained in the adaptation of EBP for work with older Veterans with complex presentations. For example, the fellow will have the opportunity to learn how to select and appropriately judge need and scope of adaptation with fidelity maintained, depending on Veteran characteristics.

Health Psychology: Primary Care

This emphasis area aims to train the selected fellow in the unique area of Primary Care Psychology, with an equal focus on the specialty area of Health Psychology. The fellow will have the opportunity to work closely with, and alongside, Primary Care PACT medical teams as part of the co-located, collaborative Primary Care Mental Health Integration (PCMHI) model. In addition to the specific primary care training, the fellow will be trained in several models of service delivery applicable to the behavioral consultation models, community mental health models, brief therapy models, and system theory.

The fellow will be trained in other practice settings involving the application of health psychology. Options for health psychology training include complex pain in primary care, behavioral sleep medicine, transplant team, interventions in health promotion and disease prevention, and rehabilitation settings in Polytrauma, Spinal Cord Injury, or at the Community Living Center. Training in Motivational Interviewing and other health-focused interventions are available, with additional opportunities to coach staff in implementing these methods. Along with the other fellows, the trainee will complete an administrative and a research project with a special focus on primary care services, in line with the emphasis area.

Psychosocial Rehabilitation for Serious Mental Illness

This emphasis area trains the selected Fellow in the area of psychosocial rehabilitation and recovery-oriented services for veterans with severe mental illness (SMI). The psychosocial rehabilitation (PSR) for SMI emphasis area utilizes a comprehensive psychosocial rehabilitation approach to restore a veteran's full potential following the onset of a serious mental illness. Fellows are involved in various clinical training experiences such as veteran and family education, enhancement of residential, social, and work skills, cognitive behavioral therapy, motivational interviewing, pharmacotherapy, and provision of intensive care coordination. Many of these interventions will be done through the STVHCS's Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC), which includes targeted programs for early-onset psychosis, an intensive outpatient program, and longer-term care coordination through the Stepping Stones program. However, Fellows will also have the opportunity to work with veterans with SMI and co-occurring disorders in other programs as well, including the Intensive Community Mental Health Recovery (ICMHR) home-based services program, Supported Employment, Inpatient psychiatry, Prime Psychiatry, and through research. The fellow may augment their PSR training by selecting a minor in another area, including but not limited to: General Mental Health, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder, or Substance Use Disorders.

In addition to the specific curriculum above, the fellow will be trained in several models of service delivery applicable to recovery-oriented services, the recovery model, and patient-centered rehabilitative care. The trainee will complete an administrative project and a research project with a special focus on psychosocial rehabilitation, recovery-oriented services, or the SMI population, in line with their emphasis area. The Fellow will attend lectures in conjunction with the national VA Interprofessional Fellowship in PSR for SMI and the other Fellows/postdocs involved in these programs throughout the country.

Rural Mental Health

This emphasis area aims to train the Rural MH-emphasis fellows in **general clinical psychology** with a specialty area of rural mental health psychology. The fellows have offices at the South Texas Veterans Health Care Center (STVHCS) Kerrville Division in **Kerrville, Texas located 65 miles northwest of San Antonio** in the beautiful Texas hill country. Given its distance from the main hospital in San Antonio, the fellows may utilize VA vehicles or the VA Shuttle between locations to attend didactics and training. Fellows may also work with veterans in Victoria (117 miles from San Antonio) and Beeville (91 miles from San Antonio) through the VA Video Connect (VVC) teleconference equipment. Victoria has a population of approximately 67,000, and veteran population of approximately 6,000. Beeville has a population approximately 13,000.

Since Kerrville, Texas has a population of 23,000 and serves the surrounding rural areas, training at the Kerrville Division affords fellows an opportunity to become skilled in the provision of mental health services within the rural context, as well as the opportunity to develop cultural competency in working with a Hispanic/Latino/Mexican-American population. Didactic training is fulfilled through video-teleconferencing or on-site attendance of presentations at STVHCS with our postdoctoral fellowship program, to provide the fellows with opportunities to interact with colleagues. The fellows have the opportunity for mental health experiences in rural populations with general outpatient mental health, PTSD-specialty care, primary care mental health integration, substance use disorders, and both inpatient and outpatient geropsychology. Given the unique retirement setting of the Texas hill country, postdoctoral fellows will provide treatment to a diverse group of patients spanning from OEF/OIF/OND veterans in their 20s to many of our Vietnam era veterans, as well as retired veterans from the World War II/Korea era living in the Kerrville/Victoria/Beeville area.

Evidence-based psychotherapy training is available in Motivational Interviewing, Cognitive Processing Therapy, Interpersonal Therapy, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy. Diversity training includes an emphasis on various areas of multiculturalism especially with veterans of Hispanic ethnicity (including the provision of Spanish-language therapies if fellows are bilingual). Given the historical influx of German settlers in the local area, the postdoctoral fellows will have an opportunity to work with individuals from this cultural background.

In addition to the specific curriculum training above, the fellows will be trained in several models of service delivery applicable to the rural context and outpatient mental health care (behavioral consultation models, community mental health models and system theory, etc.). The fellows will have opportunities for tiered supervision of the rural mental health intern. Along with the other fellows in the STVHCS training programs, the trainees will complete an administrative and a research project; these projects will have a special focus on rural mental health services, in line with the emphasis area.

Trauma Psychology

This emphasis area aims to train the selected fellow in the area of trauma-related disorders and PTSD. The fellow will gain expertise for work as a psychologist with veterans who have experienced both combat and non-combat related trauma. Training goals focus on the fellow's development of skills in providing time-limited, empirically supported individual and couples treatment interventions delivered in person and virtually, administering and interpreting

psychological tests and psychosocial assessments/intake evaluations, enhancing skills in supervision and teaching, trauma-focused treatment planning, suicide-risk assessments/safety planning, working effectively as part of a multidisciplinary team enhancing patient care, gaining advanced skills in research and scholarly inquiry, expanding on areas of professional development and identity, and developing proficiency in issues related to diversity and ethics. Evidence-Based Therapies available in this emphasis include: Cognitive Processing Therapy (CPT), Prolonged Exposure (PE), Written Exposure Therapy (WET), Cognitive Behavioral Conjoint Therapy for PTSD (CBCT), Concurrent Treatment of PTSD and Substance Use Disorders Using Prolonged Exposure (COPE), and Exposure, Relaxation, and Rescripting Therapy (ERRT). The fellow will be given the freedom to choose a minor specialization area outside of the trauma psychology. The trainee will complete an administrative and a research project with a special focus on trauma, in line with their emphasis area.

Supervision Received

In helping fellows acquire proficiency in the advanced competency areas, learning objectives are accomplished primarily through experiential clinical learning under the supervision and mentoring of licensed psychologists. All work performed by fellows must be under the supervision of a licensed psychologist. Fellows receive a minimum of 2 hours of individual face-to-face supervision each week. Complementing this supervision, through the process of working closely with multiple Psychology Service supervisors, fellows are exposed to role modeling and mentoring on an ongoing basis. In addition, fellows receive didactic seminar presentations on topics related to their clinical training and professional development.

Stipend and Benefits

Stipend and benefits are competitive with other similar training programs nationally and consistent with VA personnel policies. The stipend for all fellows is set at \$52,538 by VA Central Office, Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) (*this was the stipend for the 2023-2024 AY and will increase for the 2024-2025 AY, once the amount is determined this will be updated*). There is no state income tax in Texas. Health insurance is available. The STVHCS is an equal opportunity employer. Fellows earn 4 hours of annual leave and 4 hours of sick leave per pay period (13 days of each per year). Sick leave can be used for personal illness, medical/dental care, or to care for members of immediate family who are ill or injured. In addition, fellows receive leave for 10 Federal holidays. Training or travel leave may be granted for off-site educational workshops, seminars, and other approved training activities. There is no fixed limit on the amount of training leave that can be requested; we encourage fellows to attend at least one conference per year. The Education Service may provide up to \$400 reimbursement for conference registration and/or continuing education fees. Full travel reimbursement may be authorized, as well, especially if the trainee is presenting at the conference. Up to three days of authorized absence may be requested for professional development activities (e.g., VA job interviews, licensure examinations).

Time Commitments

The postdoctoral fellowship program generally is a 40 hour per week fellowship.

Start Date

Fellowship is expected to begin Monday 29 July 2024.

The start date can be flexible depending on when the incoming fellow completes degree requirements. It is VA policy that selected applicants successfully defend their dissertation and

complete all other degree requirements before beginning fellowship. Fellows with extraordinary circumstances may petition for two 30-day extensions, but if granted, they will be required to extend training for 30-60 days to achieve the required number of supervised hours. Fellows who are unable to begin the fellowship more than 60 days after their original start date may be terminated from the program. In this unusual circumstance, alternate candidates are contacted and the open position is filled as quickly as possible.

Eligibility

Eligibility For All Psychology Training Programs

1. U.S. citizenship. VA is unable to consider applications from anyone who is not currently a U.S. citizen. Verification of citizenship is required following selection. All fellows must complete a Certification of Citizenship in the United States prior to beginning VA training.
2. An applicant assigned male at birth, born after 12/31/1959, must have registered for the draft by age 26 to be eligible for any US government employment, including selection as a paid VA trainee. Male applicants must sign a pre-appointment Certification Statement for Selective Service Registration before they can be processed into a training program. Exceptions can be granted only by the US Office of Personnel Management; exceptions are very rarely granted.
3. Fellows are subject to fingerprinting and background checks. Match result and selection decisions are contingent on passing these screens.
4. VA conducts drug screening exams on randomly selected personnel.

Additional Eligibility Criteria for Postdoctoral Fellowship

Postdoctoral fellowship applicants must meet the following criteria to be considered for any VA Psychology Postdoctoral Program:

1. Doctorate from an APA-accredited graduate program in Clinical or Counseling Psychology. Persons with a doctorate in another area of psychology who meet the APA criteria for re-specialization training in Clinical or Counseling Psychology are also eligible.
2. Completion of an APA-accredited internship program or a VA-sponsored internship.

STVHCS Policy on Discrimination

The Federal Government is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We strongly encourage applications from candidates from underrepresented groups. Equal opportunity in employment will be provided for all qualified persons. Consistent with the basic principles and policies governing personnel administration, all personnel actions and employment practices are based solely on merit and fitness without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, physical or mental disability, reprisal, and sexual orientation.

Our fellowship program does not discriminate against, and will provide reasonable accommodation for, qualified individuals with disabilities when such an adjustment or change is requested and needed at work for a reason related to a medical condition. Requests for accommodation do not need to be made during the application process. However, if accommodations are needed, requests should be submitted as soon as possible after selection to

enable the program to make necessary arrangements.

Application & Selection Procedures

All recruitment and notification procedures comply with the rules set forth by the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) and follow APA ethical guidelines.

The following emphasis areas are recruited for nationally every year:

- Couples and Family (funding requested annually)
- Health Psychology (two positions)
- Health Disparities (Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion)
- Substance Use Disorders and Homelessness/Houselessness converted to Dual Diagnosis (SUD/Trauma) Emphasis for the 2024-2025 AY.

Applicants

We seek applicants with a strong academic foundation from their university programs who are well rounded in assessment, treatment, and research experiences. We especially encourage applicants with knowledge and experience with cultural and ethnic diversity issues and Spanish-language fluency.

Application Materials

Qualified applicants should submit the following materials via the APPA CAS:

- A cover letter clearly indicating their interest in the Fellowship program and outlining training, research, and career goals.
- A current CV including anticipated graduation date
- Copy of APPIC Autobiographical essay
- Dissertation abstract (one page, approximately)
- Three letters of recommendation from individuals knowledgeable about the applicant's work; at least one letter must be from an internship supervisor.
- Transcripts of all graduate work (VA requires official transcripts)

Selection

Applicants are rated on (1) academic preparation, including psychological coursework, practicum experiences, internship training, and research, (2) assessment and treatment experience with diverse psychological patient populations, (3) research productivity, (4) writing skills, (5) letters of reference, and (6) fit of goals with program aims. After review of applications, top candidates will be offered interviews (see below).

Competitive applicants typically have had at least one practicum or internship experience in the emphasis area for which they are applying. They have strong letters of reference from supervisors of psychological experiences in graduate school and on internship.

Application Process

- Submit materials through APPA CAS by the deadline published on the site
- Applications will be reviewed as soon as possible, generally about two weeks after the deadline date, and top applicants selected for interviews will be emailed or called shortly thereafter.
- We offer video interviews which will be held January 9th through January 19th.

Telephone interviews are an acceptable alternative to video interviews.

- Applicants not selected for interviews will be notified by email as soon as possible.
- Following interviews, applicants are offered positions in accordance with APPIC guidelines.
- Applicants no longer under consideration after the interview will be notified by email as soon as possible.

Applicants should feel free to email the Training Director at Ashlee.Martinez@va.gov with any questions regarding the application process.

Program Structure/Curriculum Requirements

During the first month of fellowship, the Training Director of the Clinical Psychology Fellowship Program will work with fellows and their preceptors (professional mentors) to select clinical activities, supervision and teaching experiences, and research and administrative projects based on individual training needs and goals.

Clinical Training Experiences

Fellows are expected to spend at least 50% of their time in direct patient care. This includes time spent in direct face-to-face patient care, as well as chart review, writing reports and notes, and the interpretation and scoring of assessment data. Fellows are expected to spend 50% of their time in clinical training experiences in their emphasis area. A minor emphasis option is available, and fellows are encouraged to receive training outside their primary emphasis area to engage in a well-rounded training in clinical psychology.

Training experiences vary slightly each year, depending on staffing.

The training experiences available for the 2023-2024 training year included:

- Behavioral Health Interdisciplinary Program (BHIP) at various locations
- Behavioral Sleep Medicine/Sleep Clinic
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT)
- Diversity Training Committee Administrative Experience
- Dual Diagnosis (PTSD/SUD)
- COVID Convalescence HUB
- Eating Disorders Clinic
- Health Promotion Disease Prevention (HPDP)
- Health Psychology/ Oncology
- Home Based Primary Care (HBPC)
- Inpatient Mental Health
- Intensive Community Mental Health Recovery (ICMHR)
- Intensive Psychotherapy
- Primary Care Mental Health Integration (PCMHI) at various locations
- Multicultural/Diversity Experience
- Neuropsychology Consult Service
- Outpatient Geropsychology
- Polytrauma Couples and Family Therapy Services
- Polytrauma Transition and Rehabilitation Program (PTRP)

- PTSD Clinical Team Training (PCT)
- Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center (PRRC)
- Recovery Practice and Resources (Administrative)
- Rural Mental Health
- South Texas Early Engagement and Recovery Program (STEER)
- Spinal Cord Injury (SCI)
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Intensive Outpatient Program/Outpatient Program (IOP/OP)
- Telemental Health Rural
- Trauma Focused Treatment/Intimate Partner Violence
- Women's Health

Supervision

- Fellows will engage in tiered supervision with an intern or practicum student. The interns training schedule will be provided during orientation to assist in planning these training experiences.

Research

- Fellows are required to complete a research product in their emphasis area; fellows are encouraged to become involved in research on site.

Administrative

- Fellows are required to complete one administrative project in their emphasis area.

Seminars

- Throughout the fellowship, fellows are required to present in various Psychology- specific and general psychology seminars/didactic meetings (see "Seminars and Didactic Training Experiences" below for specific requirements)

SEMINARS AND DIDACTIC EXPERIENCES

Many didactic opportunities are available to fellows through the Psychology Service, VA Hospital, and nearby University of Texas Health (formerly known as the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio - UTHSCSA). Required seminars and meetings are listed below.

Required Psychology Didactics and Meetings

- Professional Development Seminar: This seminar is held on the first Monday of each month. Recurring topics include career development, networking, job interviewing, board certification, and preparing for Licensure and the Examination for Professional Psychology Practice (EPPP).
- Psychology Grand Rounds: These are one-hour formal presentations of general interest

to all psychology staff. Psychology Grand Rounds are held monthly. Psychology fellows are expected to present in this forum once.

- Multicultural Journal Club: This informal journal club meets 10 times each training year on Mondays. Topics and presenters are decided at the beginning of the year and rotated among both fellows/interns. The scheduled presenter chooses an article for discussion and distributes it to the group preceding the journal club meeting.
- Diversity Enrichment Discussion: This monthly diversity discussion includes the training director, assistant training director, and clinical psychology fellows. The topic(s) of discussion will be based on the Psychology Grand Round presentations for the month followed by trainee consultation with the Diversity Training Committee.
- Informal Lunches with the Training Director/Assistant Training Director: The purpose of this monthly lunch gathering is to become more acquainted with the fellows. The time may be used for informal discussions about professional development, training concerns, questions about the VA system, or other areas of interest for fellows. This meeting occurs every first Monday of the month.
- Fellows' Hour: This meeting is structured by the fellows to foster social support and to build community among the class. It can be held on site or off site in a less formal setting, if desired. Currently, the fellows are excused early once a month in order to allow time to gather off-site.

Evaluation & Feedback

Fellows receive both formal and informal feedback about their progression through the program. Evaluation of the fellow is based upon timely completion of required work samples and formal competency-based evaluations that are conducted within the first month and then at the middle and end of each training experience.

Our program adheres to advanced competency requirements described in the APA Standards of Accreditation (SoA) with accompanying program-specific competencies.

Advanced Competency Areas:

1. Assessment
2. Intervention
3. Teaching and Supervision
4. Consultation and Interdisciplinary Skills
5. Research/Integration of Science and Practice
6. Administration
7. Professional Values, Attitudes, and Behaviors
8. Communication and Interpersonal Skills
9. Ethical and Legal Standards
10. Individual and Cultural Diversity

Evaluation of Fellowship Program:

Fellows formally evaluate their training experiences and supervisors at the mid-point and

completion of each training experience. Informal evaluation of the fellowship program is a continuing process in which fellows are encouraged to bring up issues, concerns, and suggestions throughout the year. Also, there is an annual fellowship program evaluation, which includes anonymous feedback and a focus-group meeting with a psychologist from the community familiar with the program, to review results of the survey and make suggestions for improving the fellowship program. Every year changes are made to the program based on feedback from the fellows through these methods. Exit interviews are conducted by the Training Director and Chief of Psychology to gain additional information regarding fellow-staff interactions and suggestions for improvement.

Training Facilities

The Audie L. Murphy Memorial Veterans Hospital opened in 1973. In 1995, the hospital consolidated with the VA Medical Center in Kerrville, Texas and six surrounding VA outpatient clinics creating the South Texas Veterans Health Care System. The San Antonio facilities, where most psychology training takes place, includes the Audie L. Murphy Veterans Hospital, Balcones Heights Outpatient Clinic, North Central Federal Clinic, North West Health Care Clinic, and the Polytrauma Transitional Residential Rehabilitation program. The hospital has a well-equipped and attractive campus located in the northwest section of the city within the South Texas Medical Complex. The hospital has state-of-the-art facilities for teleconferencing with remote sites, and computer support. Our networked computer system supports e-mail, word processing, and patients' electronic medical record, dictated reports, bibliographic searches, the Internet, and psychological testing/results. Many standard psychological tests can be administered and scored on line from terminals located on every unit and in all Psychology offices. All psychology fellows receive government furnished equipment to include a laptop. The hospital is affiliated with the local medical school, and has easy access to the UT Health's professional staff and educational resources (the two facilities are physically connected by a skybridge). All computers give trainees access to extensive VA library resources and search databases.

STVHCS Hospital & Clinic Locations





Audie L. Murphy VA Hospital



Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center at Audie Murphy (PRC)



North West Health Care Clinic



Polytrauma Transitional Rehabilitation Program (PRTP)



Balcones Heights Outpatient Clinic



Villa Serena – Homeless Domiciliary & Substance Abuse Residential Rehabilitation Program



Kerrville Medical Center (Rural Mental Health Rotations)

Postdoctoral Residency Admissions, Support, and Initial Placement Data (as required by APA)

Date Program Tables Updated: 03 October 2023; stipend updated January 2023

(Updated increase for 2024-2025 AY stipend has not been release by Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA) once this is available we will update this brochure with the new stipend amount)

Table 1. Postdoctoral Program Admissions

<i>Briefly describe, in narrative form, important information to assist potential applicants in assessing their likely fit with your program. This description must be consistent with the program’s policies on selection and practicum and academic preparation requirements:</i>
Applicants are most likely to fit well into our program if they are prepared academically, with psychological coursework, practicum experiences, internship training, research experience, assessment and treatment experience with diverse psychological patient populations. Additionally, strong writing skills, adaptability, enthusiasm for learning, and strong time management skills will allow an applicant to get the most out of our training opportunities. Interest in clinical and research work with bilingual populations may increase the applicant’s fit.
Describe any other required minimum criteria used to screen applicants:
Competitive applicants typically have had at least one practicum experience or internship rotation in the emphasis area for which they are applying.

Table 2. Financial and Other Benefit Support for Upcoming Training Year*

Annual Stipends/Salary for Full-time Residents/Fellows – Year One	\$52,538
Annual Stipends/Salary for Half-time Residents/Fellows	n/a
Program provides access to medical insurance for resident/fellow? If access to medical insurance is provided... Trainee contribution to cost required? Coverage of family member(s) available? Coverage of legally married partner available? Coverage of domestic partner available?	Yes, trainee cost depends on choice of insurance. Family members and legal partners are eligible for coverage.
Hours of Annual Paid Personal Time Off (PTO and/or Vacation)	13 days, earned at 4 hours pay period
Hours of Annual Paid Sick Leave	13 days, earned at 4 hours pay period
In the event of medical conditions and/or family needs that require extended leave, does the program allow reasonable unpaid leave to residents/fellows in excess of personal time off and sick leave?	Yes
Other Benefits: 10 Federal Holidays	

*Note. Programs are not required by the Commission on Accreditation to provide all benefits listed in this table.

Table 3. Initial Post-Residency/Fellowship Positions.

	2019-2023
Total # of residents/fellows who were in the three cohorts	30
Total # who remain in training in the residency/fellowship program	0
Initial Position after Fellowship:	
Community mental health center	
Federally qualified health center	
Independent primary care facility/clinic	
University counseling center	
Veterans Affairs medical center	27
Military health center	
Academic health center	1
Other medical center or hospital	
Psychiatric hospital	
Academic university/department	1
Community college or other teaching setting	
Independent research institution	
Correctional facility	
School district/system	
Independent practice setting	1
Not currently employed	
Changed to another field	
Other	
Unknown	

Program History / About San Antonio

The South Texas VA Healthcare System resides on the stolen, traditional land of Indigenous Peoples, specifically, the Jumanos, Tonkawa, Lipan Apache, and Coahuiltecan Peoples (<https://native-land.ca/>). It is through their continued displacement that allows UT and the VA to remain today.

Our internship program was accredited by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 1980. Postdoctoral training began in 1992, when our program successfully competed for funding from VA Headquarters and was named one of six VA medical centers to provide training in geropsychology. The postdoctoral program was accredited by APA in 1999, making it the **first** VA psychology program to achieve this milestone.

San Antonio

San Antonio is a rapidly growing multicultural city, with a population of 1.53 million as of 2020, making it the seventh most populous city in the United States and the second most populous in Texas. The metropolitan area is the 25th largest metro area, with a population of 2.3 million. In 2019, the American Community Survey estimated San Antonio had a racial makeup of 88.4% White, 6.6% Black and African American, 0.2% American Indian and Alaska Native, 2.8% Asian,

0.1% Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander, 0.2% some other race and 1.7% two or more races. Ethnically, 64.5% were Hispanic or Latin American of any race. In 2020, its racial and ethnic makeup was 23.4% non-Hispanic white, 63.9% Hispanic or Latin American of any race, 6.5% Black and African American, 3.2% Asian, and 2.3% multiracial or some other race. The city retains considerable historical and picturesque charm despite its rapid growth. Its economy is driven by tourism, military, light industry, financial services, and strong biomedical research and educational institutions.

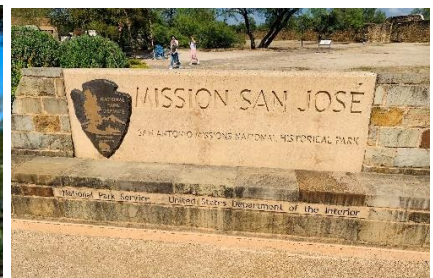
San Antonio's rich history and cultural diversity offer many interesting sights and activities, including the Alamo, historic missions, fine restaurants, museums, zoo, and the romantic downtown River Walk. San Antonio has a lively music and theater scene. You can take your pick of clubs featuring blues, jazz, salsa, country, and Tejano-Conjunto music. Our beautifully renovated historic downtown theaters are home to a first-class symphony, ballet, and many national touring productions.



(San Antonio Museum of Art)



(Witte Museum)



(Mission San Jose)

Sports fans can enjoy watching the five-time NBA Champion Spurs compete in basketball, the Silver Stars professional women's basketball team, the AHL Rampage in Hockey, and the Missions in AA professional baseball. The Alamodome has played host to NFL exhibition games, the Alamo Bowl, NCAA Playoffs, and other Texas-sized events.



SeaWorld has its flagship theme park here where huge pop stars and similarly proportioned sea mammals perform. Six Flags Fiesta Texas, a musical theme park, features the multi-cultural music of Texas, water rides, and the world's largest wooden roller coaster, the Rattler.



The weather in San Antonio is subtropical with short sleeve, sunny days throughout the year. The mild winters encourage year-round festivals and outdoor fun. Often, we feel the winter chill, briefly, for a short time in January or February.



(Pearl Farmers Market)



(Japanese Tea Gardens)



North of San Antonio is the scenic Texas Hill Country, an ideal getaway for swimming, fishing, skiing, canoeing, tubing, and hunting. San Antonio is only a few hours' drive from the Gulf of Mexico, with isolated sandy beaches, warm waters, and excellent fishing.



(San Antonio Hill Country)



(Comal River)

Housing in San Antonio is plentiful and reasonably priced. Trainees can find safe, economical apartments within walking distance of the hospital. Our award-winning public and private schools are among the best in the state.



Enjoy some Tex-Mex food and a margarita on the downtown Riverwalk



... or visit the Alamo – the reason this 300-year-old city is called the “Cradle of Texas Liberty”