To JGM—TLK
To Stacy Morgan—RDM
BRIEF CONTENTS

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Are you wondering what to do with your psychology degree? Many students enter our offices asking the same question: “What can I do with a degree in psychology?” A baccalaureate in psychology is a highly flexible, marketable, and useful liberal arts degree. Psychology offers students insight into human behavior, which is useful to all careers and is perhaps why psychology is one of the most popular undergraduate majors, with over 88,000 baccalaureate degrees awarded annually. Graduate degrees in psychology offer additional career opportunities; approximately 19,000 masters and about 5,000 doctoral degrees are awarded in psychology each year (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007).

Our goal in writing *Careers in Psychology: Opportunities in a Changing World* is to discuss the broad range of careers that psychology students might choose. Many students are unaware of the breadth of psychology and its many subdisciplines, and this book will introduce them to the wide range of possible undergraduate and graduate level careers in psychology. A guiding principle of *Careers in Psychology* is that education in psychology prepares students for careers in many fields; however, students have the onus of determining their career interests and tailoring their psychology degree with additional courses and experiences to round out their preparation and enhance their marketability for their chosen career. This principle holds true for undergraduate as well as graduate degree holders in psychology.

*Careers in Psychology* is appropriate for a range of students, including prospective and declared psychology majors. It complements a variety of psychology courses, including introductory psychology, careers in psychology, methodology courses, capstone courses, and seminars for psychology majors. We view this book as a resource for psychology students and their advisors, and we encourage students to discuss the career opportunities they find within these pages with their advisors and career counselors.
Careers in Psychology begins by discussing the nature of psychology and the diverse careers available to psychology graduates. In Chapter 1, students are guided through considerations in choosing a major and the benefits of majoring in psychology. Chapter 1 closes with a discussion of tips for succeeding as a psychology student. Chapter 2 discusses getting a job after graduation and includes advice on locating positions, writing a résumé and cover letter, and interviewing.

Each of Chapters 3 through 13 covers a psychology subdiscipline and presents related careers for baccalaureate and graduate degree holders. Chapters 3 and 4 explore the applied fields of clinical, counseling, and school psychology. In Chapters 5, 6, and 7 readers are introduced to baccalaureate and graduate-level careers in three popular subspecialties: psychology and law, health psychology, and sport psychology. Chapter 8 covers careers related to biopsychology, cognitive neuroscience, and clinical neuropsychology. Chapter 9 discusses careers in industrial/organizational psychology and human factors, and Chapter 10 examines careers for students who are interested in experimental, cognitive, and quantitative psychology, and psychometrics. Chapters 11 and 12 present career options for students of social, consumer, and developmental psychology. Each discipline-specific chapter (Chapters 3 through 12) closes with a checklist to help readers evaluate their interest and aptitude for the field discussed within the chapter, as well as a list of courses and experiences that students interested in that particular area should obtain. Chapter 13 examines careers relevant to graduate degree holders in all areas of psychology in academic, research, and applied settings. Finally, Chapter 14 discusses how to apply to graduate school in psychology and provides an overview of the process, including the various graduate degrees that students may obtain, getting information about programs, the application, and interviewing.

The Third Edition of Careers in Psychology provides updated salary and career information for each subdiscipline of psychology as well as new undergraduate career paths. Sport psychology and health psychology are presented in two chapters rather than one as in prior editions. In addition, the book has been reorganized to emphasize the interests of undergraduate students of psychology. Specifically, several chapters have been rewritten with the questions and needs of undergraduates in mind. Information about job seeking is placed at the beginning of the book, in Chapter 2, so as to encourage students to consider the pragmatics of job seeking as they choose a career and plan a course of study. Each chapter closes with a table listing recommended courses, applied experiences, and research experiences for a given subfield of psychology.

It is our hope that Careers in Psychology will help prospective and current students develop and evaluate their interest in psychology, appreciate the myriad of career opportunities available with a degree in psychology, and take the steps needed to round out their education and experiences in order to obtain the careers they seek. We believe that psychology students are well-prepared for many careers. When students think outside of the box, seek out innovative opportunities, and acquire related skills they will be surprised at the opportunities that await them within our changing world.
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Much of what appears in these pages is the result of conversations with students; I (Tara) thank them for asking the questions that prompted us to write this book. I thank my parents, Philip and Irene Kuther—especially my father, who was the first to ask me, “What can you do with a degree in psychology?” and trusted that I would discover the answer. Finally, I thank John Mongelluzzo for his support and companionship.

I (Robert) thank them (the students) for challenging me to explore the boundaries of psychology. I offer a special thanks to Robert Ax and Steven Mandracchia for teaching me to think outside of the box. Finally, I thank my family, Stacy, Taylor, Ryan, and Riley, for their unyielding support.
Choosing a Major and Career

CHAPTER GUIDE

What Is Psychology?
Why Major in Psychology?
Choosing a Major and Career
Three Rules for Choosing a Major and Career
Your Interests, Skills, and Values
Your Personality
Explore Options
Tips for Success
Get to Know Professors
Get Involved in Research
Seek Internships and Practica
Take Additional Classes and Get a Minor
Get Work Experience
Engage in Extracurricular Activities
Suggested Readings
Web Resources
Checklist: Is Psychology for You?
Each semester that she teaches introductory psychology, one of the authors of this book begins the first class by asking three questions. First, “What is psychology?” Here are some typical student responses:

“Psychology is the study of the mind.”
“Psychology helps people solve problems.”
“Psychology looks at the things inside us that make us do what we do.”

Then she asks: “What does someone trained in psychology do?”

“Studies the mind and thought processes of an individual to find the roots of a problem that cannot be explained by physiology.”
“Works as a doctor who does not use medication or drugs to delve into issues that are causing a person to experience disharmony in life. That disharmony can range from difficulty in personal relations to sleep disruption to behavioral problems.”
“Gets training in scientific and social analysis to help patients suffering from mental disorders and/or problems by listening.”

Are these student responses accurate? Yes and no. Psychology is the study of mind and behavior and it permits us to help people who are experiencing problems; however, the discipline of psychology encompasses much more than therapy, as we will discuss in this chapter and throughout this book. Each of the roles described above are held by psychologists, professionals with doctoral training in psychology.

The final question she asks is: “What does someone with a bachelor’s degree in psychology do?” This question is often met with silence. A student might cautiously respond, “Teach?” Another student might call out, “Get an MBA,” or “Go to graduate school!” and the class usually laughs nervously. Sure, these are humorous responses, and are true in some cases, but are they accurate depictions of the average bachelor’s degree recipient in psychology? No. Most students who major in psychology do not go on to graduate school. Yet students often are unaware of their career options. Nearly all psychology students are asked repeatedly, “What can you do with a psychology degree?” The authors of this book faced that very question a seemingly endless number of times. We found our answer to that question, and this book is intended to help you find yours. In this chapter we discuss the diverse field of psychology, how to figure out if psychology is the major for you, and how to succeed in your major and enhance your marketability for jobs after graduation.

WHAT IS PSYCHOLOGY?

Most of us first become acquainted with the field of psychology informally through our everyday experiences. Turn on the television to see a psychologist on Oprah explaining how parents can help their troubled teens. Change the channel and Frasier Crane, the lead character of the sitcom Frasier, is depicted as a psychiatrist dispensing advice on his radio show. Open a magazine and you may find an article written by a psychologist about how to love your body. Psychology has ingrained itself into American pop culture. But how much do you really know about psychology and the work of those trained in psychology? You may be surprised to learn
that the field of psychology extends beyond therapy, self-help books, and parenting advice.

What is psychology, then? Psychology is the scientific study of behavior—anything an animal or a person does, feels, or thinks. Topics of psychological study include social relationships, the brain and the chemicals that influence it, vision, human development, the causes of normative and atypical behavior, and much more. Many students are surprised when they discover the broad range of activities that represent the field of psychology. Advanced training in psychology can lead to a research career studying animal behavior, the brain, personality, and more. At various levels of training, people with psychology degrees may work in business settings, developing training programs for employees, creating informational surveys, conducting interviews, and devising strategies to improve worker productivity. Psychologists, individuals with doctoral degrees in psychology, work as administrators, managing hospitals, mental health clinics, nonprofit organizations, government agencies, businesses, schools, and more. Some psychologists are employed as professors at universities, community colleges, and high schools. Others work as researchers in university, hospital, corporate, and government settings.

Of course, we can’t forget the service-provider roles of psychologists. Psychologists work with people, providing intellectual and personality assessments, conducting therapy, and developing programs to prevent problems or to help people deal with and overcome problems. Although the average person is most familiar with this type of psychologist, the practicing clinical or counseling psychologist, only about one-half of psychologists work in these service provider roles (Wicherski & Kohout, 2007). Many different careers fall under the umbrella of psychology. Table 1.1 provides a list of all of the discipline subdivisions within the American Psychological Association, the most prominent professional organization for psychologists. As you examine the table, one thing becomes apparent: Psychology is diverse.

Table 1.1  Disciplines within Psychology: American Psychological Association Divisions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Addictions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Development and Aging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Psychology-Law Society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Experimental and Engineering Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Society for the Advancement of Pharmacotherapy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral Neuroscience and Comparative Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Child, Youth, and Family Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Neuropsychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Psychology</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

continued
Table 1.1 Continued

Evaluation, Measurement, and Statistics
Experimental Psychology
Exercise and Sport Psychology
Family Psychology
Health Psychology
History of Psychology
Humanistic Psychology
International Psychology
Group Psychology and Group Psychotherapy
Media Psychology
Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities
Military Psychology
Psychologists in Public Service
Psychologists in Independent Practice
Psychology of Religion
Psychopharmacology and Substance Abuse
Psychotherapy
Population and Environmental Psychology
Psychoanalysis
Rehabilitation Psychology
School Psychology
Society for General Psychology
Society for Community Research and Action
Society for Consumer Psychology
Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology
Society for Personality and Social Psychology
Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI)
Society for the Psychological Study of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Issues
Society for the Study of Peace, Conflict, and Violence
Society for the Psychological Study of Ethnic Minority Issues
Society for the Psychological Study of Men and Masculinity
Society for the Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts
Society for the Psychology of Women
Society for the Teaching of Psychology
Society of Clinical Psychology

continued
Each chapter within this book examines one or more subdisciplines within psychology to provide a taste of the many fields in which people like you may find employment. Remember that most students who earn bachelor’s degrees in psychology do not attend graduate school. Because of this, each chapter presents career options for students with bachelor’s degrees as well as options for students with graduate degrees. Many of the career options that we will discuss reflect the content of two or more psychology subdisciplines; for example, a given job might be appropriate for students with interests in counseling psychology and developmental psychology. Whenever possible we will point out career options that overlap subdisciplines.

WHY MAJOR IN PSYCHOLOGY?

With over 88,000 baccalaureate degrees awarded each year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008), psychology is consistently one of the most popular college majors. Why? The knowledge and skills that you’ll develop as a psychology major apply to a variety of careers. The psychology major is a solid liberal arts degree, which means that it will teach you how to think and problem solve and will prepare you for lifelong learning (McGovern, Furumoto, Halpern, Kimble, & McKeachie, 1991). Psychology majors develop critical thinking and analytical skills, learn how to learn, and become independent thinkers. The skills and knowledge that you develop as a psychology major are generalizable outside the classroom and are desired by employers. Consider the range of skills and abilities that undergraduate programs in psychology seek to promote (American Psychological Association, 2002; Hayes, 1996; McGovern et al., 1991):

- **Knowledge of Psychology.** Students of psychology gain knowledge of psychological theories, facts, and modes of inquiry. Because psychology is a broad discipline encompassing biology, development, perception, thinking, emotion, and more, students of psychology develop a comprehensive understanding of the human condition that serves as a foundation for lifelong learning about human behavior. In other words, students learn about “how people work.”
- **Critical Thinking and Analytical Skills.** Psychology students are exposed to multiple perspectives on behavior. They quickly learn that any phenomenon is addressed by many, often conflicting, theories. Psychology students learn to think flexibly and accept ambiguity. Often we don’t know the “right” answer to questions about a given phenomenon but have research that supports several...
theoretical perspectives or explanations. Exposure to diverse perspectives helps psychology students hone their critical thinking and analytical skills. Students learn how to weigh multiple points of view, compare and contrast evidence, and make reasoned decisions—valuable skills in today’s complex world.

- **Communication and Presentation Skills.** Psychology students learn how to communicate: how to speak and how to write. Over the college years, psychology students write a great many papers and enroll in courses that require discussion and debate. They learn how to substantiate arguments with evidence and communicate arguments from a psychological standpoint. Certainly, other college majors require that students write papers and participate in class discussions, but the content of psychology papers often differs from that of other liberal arts disciplines because it draws not only from theory, but also empirical research. The ability to write about empirical research, whether from a journal article or from a study that the student has conducted, and to integrate theory and research, requires a different skill set than does the writing entailed in other liberal-arts majors.

- **Information Gathering, Evaluation, and Synthesis Skills.** Psychology students learn how to gather information through a variety of means, such as the library, computerized databases, the Internet, and data collection. More important, psychology students learn how to critically evaluate information to determine its credibility and relevance to the problem at hand. They learn how to extract information from multiple courses, summarize it, and synthesize it into a coherent and persuasive argument. Psychology students present the results of empirical research and analyses that integrate the findings of multiple research studies, which requires that they develop unique skills that set them apart from other liberal arts majors, as we will discuss. In this information age, the ability to selectively gather, sort, and manipulate information is valuable.

- **Research Methodology and Statistical Skills.** Psychology students learn how to pose questions and devise procedures to gather new information about human behavior. Undergraduate students in psychology gain a basic understanding of research methodology and statistics, and learn how to interpret data summaries. These skills in question asking and answering—problem solving—make psychology graduates unique among liberal arts graduates.

- **Computer Literacy.** Computers are an unavoidable part of daily life and, especially, work-life. College students learn a variety of computer skills, such as word processing, Internet browsing, and e-mail. Psychology students learn how to use statistical, spreadsheet, and presentation software. Moreover, psychology students know enough about thinking—their own thinking—to understand how to learn about new technology.

- **Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Skills.** Interpersonal skills—how to work with people—enable success in career and personal life. Psychology students develop skills to work with people and groups. They are aware of and sensitive to issues of culture, class, race, and ethnicity. Psychology students also develop intrapersonal awareness, or self-knowledge. They learn how to monitor and manage their emotions and behavior.

- **Adaptability.** Upon taking courses in research methodology, many students express dismay at all of the flaws they find in published research. Soon they
learn that perfection in a research study is unattainable. Instead, researchers attempt to conduct the best research possible given limited resources. The ability to be flexible, adapting approaches and research techniques to fit current circumstances and opportunities, is valuable to the success of students in college and afterwards.

Undergraduate psychology programs emphasize all of these skills that will help you grow into a well-rounded and educated person who is marketable in a variety of fields. In that regard, psychology is a solid liberal-arts major that provides you with the thinking tools and skills to excel in life (Gehlhaus, 2007; Kierniesky, 1992). Other liberal-arts degrees, like those in English and history, also provide training in critical thinking and communication. However, psychology is unique among liberal-arts fields because it provides a blend of education in statistics, analytical skills, research, writing, and interpersonal skills. Knowledge of psychology—how people and groups function—as well as research methodology and statistics is a large part of what makes study in psychology different from that in other liberal-arts disciplines.

CHOOSING A MAJOR AND CAREER

Now that you’ve had a brief introduction to the broad field of psychology, let’s talk about you. How do you decide what you want to do with your life? How do you determine your college major? How do you know if psychology is the right major for you? Lots of students find career planning stressful and confusing. Sometimes it seems like everyone else knows what they want to do with their lives—what about you? Finding the right major and determining your career goals doesn’t require magic, innate abilities, or luck. What does it take? The willingness to do the hard work of looking deep within and disentangling what you think you should do, what others want you to do, what you truly want to do, and what you realistically have the ability to do.

THREE RULES FOR CHOOSING A MAJOR AND CAREER

Before we talk about how to select a major, understand that there are three general principles that should guide you through this process. The first guiding principle is to take an active role in choosing a major. “Of course I’m taking an active role. I’ve declared a major, haven’t I?” Yes, declaring your major certainly is your decision, but taking an active role in choosing a major happens well before you formally declare your major and must extend well past. The process of considering and then narrowing down possible majors must be your own. You are the only one who will know what is right for you. Frequently students feel subtle pressure to select particular majors from family members or friends. Maybe your parent majored in finance and everyone’s always told you that you’re just like him or her. Or maybe several of your friends have decided to major in communications or theatre arts and share a number of courses in common. Expectations often are subtle. Regardless, the process of choosing and your choice of major are your own. No one cares as much about what major you choose as you do, because the only person truly affected by your choice is you.
Second, your college major does not determine your career. In that sense, your choice of major doesn’t matter much. Liberal-arts majors provide solid foundations for all students. However, as we have discussed, a bachelor’s degree in psychology provides students with specialized training that makes them stand out from other liberal-arts majors. That said, your college major is simply a starting point. It will not limit you to one career choice. Most people end up working in careers that are not closely tied to their majors; rather, they work in careers that are closely tied to their skills. Therefore, the current emphasis in career planning is skill-based: What skills do you have to entice an employer? Employers care about communication, computer, writing, speaking, and problem-solving skills. You have the opportunity to develop these skills in a variety of majors because these are general competencies that are encompassed within the goals of a college education. Don’t worry that your choice of major will pigeonhole you or determine your lifelong career. It can, but it doesn’t have to if you acquire a broad base of skills similar to those that you can obtain as a psychology major.

Finally, career planning is a process. It is not something that is done all at once and finished quickly, say in your first semester or first year in college. Instead, career planning is a lengthy process that may begin in college but persists throughout life. You likely will not decide what you want to do for the rest of your life suddenly and definitively—and your decision will likely change throughout your life. Most people have many careers over their lifetimes. To determine your life path, you must be willing to engage in the process and do the work of looking within and evaluating your aspirations, expectations, and opportunities.

One step in career planning is choosing a major; however, recall that your major will not dictate your career. The following sections of this chapter discuss the process of learning about yourself, determining your interests and abilities. Sometimes students engage in the career-planning process, choose a major, and later decide that the major is not right for them. If so, recognize that changing majors is common. If you choose a major that ultimately is not a good fit for you, it’s perfectly acceptable to change your major to something that is more suitable. Recognize that a change of major will entail taking a new set of courses and occasionally may delay graduation. Speak with a faculty member or advisor in your new major to learn more and determine if it is right for you.

**Your Interests, Skills, and Values**

Your first step in developing career goals and choosing a major involves understanding yourself. What are your interests? What are you good at? Understand yourself and you’ll be more likely to choose a major that fits you and makes it easier to succeed in your classes. Sometimes students choose a major without considering their interests. For example, they might choose a major because they think it looks good and is marketable, then take a few classes and realize that they are bored or that they simply don’t like it. Don’t complete this task backwards. Changing majors is common, but avoid it if possible. Consider your interests before you choose a major and you’ll select one that fits you. It’s easier to do well when you like what you’re doing.

How do you determine your interests and skills? Try this exercise: Write about all of your accomplishments—any times you can think of when you encountered a
problem and took action to solve it. Write freely, letting all of your achievements flow onto the page. The problems that you’ve solved don’t have to be huge. Even learning to play a song on your guitar or managing your annoying roommate are accomplishments. In other words, the accomplishments that you list can be small, and they don’t have to be acknowledged by anyone else. List as many as you can, and don’t stop when it becomes challenging. Instead, probe further. When it becomes very difficult to add to your list, write whatever comes to mind, without censoring or editing. Even writing about the difficulty of thinking about additional accomplishments might jog your memory.

Once you have completed your list, take a close look at it and analyze it with regard to skills. What skills does each of your accomplishments entail? For example, sorting out problems with your roommate taps interpersonal skills. List your skills on a separate page. As you consider your accomplishments and their associated skills, your list will grow. After you have considered all of your accomplishments and noted the related skills and abilities, look at your list. Which skills do you prefer using? Which of these skills are most interesting to you? Which are you best at? Do any of your skills need more development? Are there any that you would like to develop further? Which are most important to you?

Now go back to your list of accomplishments. Which are most personally relevant to you? Why? Which have brought you the most satisfaction? Which do you value most highly and why? This exercise is important because by understanding which achievements you cherish you’ll get a better idea about your interests and values, which is helpful in determining a major that will hold your interest. Understanding your skills, identifying strengths and areas in need of improvement, and identifying the skills you most enjoy using will also shed light onto possible careers.

Finally, as you evaluate potential careers, consider how they fit with your values—your principles regarding your life and experience. What do you believe is important in life? Consider your values regarding prestige, work hours, life-balance, job security, knowledge, autonomy, financial security, and more. This process of examining interest, abilities, and values is one that you should periodically revisit, because career planning and self-awareness are lifelong tasks.

YOUR PERSONALITY

Consider your own personality when choosing a major and career. One simple way to gain insight into your personality is to brainstorm traits that describe you. What are you like? Write down adjectives that describe at least part of you. List as many as you can think of without stopping to evaluate them. Once you’ve completed a long list and gathered all of the descriptors that you can, evaluate your list and choose the 10 traits that most accurately portray you. This list illustrates some of your personality traits.

Understanding your unique personality will help you to choose a major that’s right for you. In one of the most widely used models of career development, Holland (1959) identifies six personality types and relates them to specific career choices. The six categories are presented in Table 1.2. Most people find that they are a combination of several personality types. How do you determine your type? Read the descriptions. Most people find that one or two descriptions seem to fit them well. Try Checklist 1.1 to help you determine which descriptors and personality style
fit you. Another quiz based on the Holland personality types is available at Career Key (http://www.careerkey.org). Or consider taking the Self-Directed Search® (Holland, 1994), a formal assessment based on the categories listed in Table 1.2. The career development office at your university can provide you with more information about this tool, or consider taking the online version, which you can complete for a fee at http://www.self-directed-search.com.

Understanding your personality type can help you in choosing a major because some majors are better suited to particular personality types. Table 1.3 lists college majors organized by personality type. Note that not all possible majors are listed, and that the categories are flexible; some majors appear in more than one category because they reflect a variety of skills.

### Table 1.2: Holland’s (1959) Personality Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personality Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Realistic</td>
<td>Someone with a realistic personality type is athletically or mechanically inclined. He or she would probably prefer to work outdoors with tools, plants, or animals. Some of the traits that describe the realistic personality type include practical, candid, a nature lover, calm, reserved, restrained, independent, systematic, and persistent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigative</td>
<td>The investigative type enjoys learning, observing, problem solving, and analyzing information. Traits that describe the investigative type include curious, logical, observant, precise, intellectual, cautious, introspective, reserved, unbiased, and independent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artistic</td>
<td>Imaginative and creative, the artistic personality type likes to work in unstructured situations that allow for creativity and innovation. Personality characteristics of the artistic type include intuitive, unconventional, moody, nonconforming, expressive, unique, pensive, spontaneous, compassionate, bold, direct, and idealistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>The social personality type enjoys helping and training others. Characteristics that describe the social type include friendly, cooperative, idealistic, perceptive, outgoing, understanding, supportive, generous, dependable, forgiving, patient, compassionate, and eloquent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enterprising</td>
<td>The enterprising personality type likes to work with people in persuasive, performance, or managerial situations to achieve goals that are organizational or economic in nature. Characteristics that describe the enterprising type include confident, assertive, determined, talkative, extroverted, energetic, animated, social, persuasive, fashionable, spontaneous, daring, accommodating, and optimistic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conventional</td>
<td>The conventional personality type is well-organized, has clerical or numerical ability, and likes to work with data and carry out tasks in detail. Characteristics that describe the conventional type include meticulous, numerically inclined, conscientious, precise, adept, conforming, orderly, practical, frugal, structured, courteous, acquiescent, and persistent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kuther, 2006, pp. 20–21.
Self assessment is a process, so it may take time to understand yourself well enough to choose a major. What do you do in the meantime? Don’t pressure yourself. Allow yourself opportunities to explore:

- Take a range of classes. You’ll fulfill your college’s general education requirements and learn about areas in which you might want to major. If you find a class interesting, take another in that discipline.
- Seek diverse research opportunities: If you are uncertain of your career track, don’t get locked into one research lab. Research experiences afford you an opportunity to delve into a specific content area, but when exploring your options, it can be beneficial to learn about a variety of areas of study.

### checklist 1.1 Which Holland Personality Type Do You Match?

Check off each trait that describes you

- 1. Assertive
- 2. Bold
- 3. Candid
- 4. Compassionate
- 5. Confident
- 6. Conscientious
- 7. Cooperative
- 8. Curious
- 9. Dependable
- 10. Determined
- 11. Energetic
- 12. Expressive
- 13. Friendly
- 14. Frugal
- 15. Idealistic
- 16. Independent
- 17. Introspective
- 18. Intuitive
- 19. Likes numbers
- 20. Logical
- 21. Meticulous
- 22. Nature lover
- 23. Observant
- 24. Optimistic
- 25. Orderly
- 26. Outdoorsy
- 27. Outgoing
- 28. Patient
- 29. Pensive
- 30. Perceptive
- 31. Persistent
- 32. Persuasive
- 33. Practical
- 34. Precise
- 35. Reserved
- 36. Spontaneous
- 37. Structured
- 38. Supportive
- 39. Talkative
- 40. Unconventional

**Scoring:** Add up your check marks for items measuring each personality type:

- **Realistic Personality Type:** 3, 16, 22, 26, 31, 33, 35
- **Investigative Personality Type:** 8, 16, 17, 20, 23, 34, 35
- **Artistic Personality Type:** 2, 4, 12, 15, 17, 18, 29, 36, 40
- **Social Personality Type:** 4, 7, 9, 12, 13, 15, 27, 28, 30, 36, 38
- **Enterprising Personality Type:** 1, 2, 5, 10, 11, 13, 24, 27, 32, 36, 39
- **Conventional Personality Type:** 6, 7, 9, 14, 19, 21, 25, 31, 34, 37

Did you score high in more than one personality type? That’s common as many traits and qualities are useful in a broad range of careers.

### Explore Options

Self assessment is a process, so it may take time to understand yourself well enough to choose a major. What do you do in the meantime? Don’t pressure yourself. Allow yourself opportunities to explore:

- Take a range of classes. You’ll fulfill your college’s general education requirements and learn about areas in which you might want to major. If you find a class interesting, take another in that discipline.
- Seek diverse research opportunities: If you are uncertain of your career track, don’t get locked into one research lab. Research experiences afford you an opportunity to delve into a specific content area, but when exploring your options, it can be beneficial to learn about a variety of areas of study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holland Personality Types and College Majors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Realistic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture/Forestry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criminal Justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biosystems Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plant and Soil Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreation and Tourism Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Technology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aerospace Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electrical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanical Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nuclear Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Radiological Technology</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Furthermore, all researchers do not think alike, so you will also be exposed to some of the diverse methods with which to tackle a research question.

- Talk to others about potential majors and get feedback. Talk with students and ask why they chose their majors. Talk with graduates, parents, and professors to learn about how they chose their careers. Ask professors and advisors questions to learn what you can do with various majors, what each entails, and what skills you need to develop.
- Visit your college’s career center to speak with a career counselor who can recommend assessment instruments to help you learn about careers that are suited to you as well as provide individualized attention and advice. The career development center may also offer alumni contacts who can tell you about their experiences and offer advice.

Remember that although you will seek input and advice from parents, friends, and professors, ultimately the decision of which major to select is your own. Choose a major that interests you, because passion will make difficult classes and endless term papers seem more manageable. Also, remember that you can change your major—it isn’t set in stone.

**TIPS FOR SUCCESS**

We’ve seen that the psychology major offers students the opportunity to develop well-rounded skills. How do you take advantage of the opportunity? How do you ensure that you’re prepared for your future after graduation, whether you will be entering the career world or graduate school? As we’ve seen, this is a difficult but essential task. Think about your career goals and where you would like to be in a few years. Then determine exactly what you need to do to get there. Throughout this book we discuss tips for students who are interested in careers related to specific areas of psychology and provide suggestions on helpful experiences to obtain for various jobs. Check out the chapters in this book that relate to your goals for more specific training advice and use this information as a guide, but also seek advice from faculty, advisors, and the career center to devise a strategy for getting the experiences that you need to be marketable for the jobs you desire. The following tips are intended to help students regardless of where their interests lay.

**GET TO KNOW PROFESSORS**

Most students see their professors only in the classroom. If this is true for you, then you’re not taking advantage of your college’s most valuable resource—the faculty. There’s much more to learn from professors than content knowledge. Get to know your professors and you might get involved in their research, learn about professional development, learn about special opportunities like internships, and see what it’s really like to work in the field. How do you get to know professors? Talk to them after class. Stop by during office hours. What do you talk about? Psychology. Ask questions about material—theories, research, cases—discussed in class. Ask about their experiences as students, how they decided to go to graduate school, what led them to their research interests. Share an interesting Web site on the brain, for
example, or tell the professor about a relevant program that you viewed on the Discovery channel. The goal is to learn from these conversations and also to show your interest in their subject. Remember, professors are people too: smile and be friendly and you’ll be surprised how easy it is to get to know faculty.

**GET INVOLVED IN RESEARCH**

Seek research experience by assisting professors with their research or by developing an independent research project. Research experience demonstrates your ability to work independently and sharpens your analytical and critical thinking skills. You will develop important skills, learn what it’s like to generate new knowledge, and have an experience that looks great from the perspectives of employers and graduate school admissions committees. Research experience provides employers with evidence of your motivation, initiative, and willingness to go beyond basic requirements.

How do you seek research opportunities? Perform well in class and be motivated and visible in your department. Approach faculty during their office hours and ask who might be looking for research assistants. If you’re interested in a particular faculty member’s work, approach him or her and ask if you can help.

**SEEK INTERNSHIPS AND PRACTICA**

Secure an internship or practicum for hands-on experience. Internships provide wonderful opportunities to apply what you’ve learned in the classroom to the real world, have learning experiences that you’d never obtain in a classroom setting, and explore potential careers. Another advantage of an internship is that it lets you sample a potential career. Do you really want to work with people? Your internship experiences may surprise you. In addition, internships can provide contacts in the field, a possible offer for paid employment after graduation, and someone who can provide a reference or recommendation based on your ability to apply your knowledge of psychology in a real-world setting. Learn about internship opportunities by asking faculty in your department. Also visit the career development center at your college and you might learn about additional opportunities for hands-on experience.

**TAKE ADDITIONAL CLASSES AND GET A MINOR**

Regardless of your career plans, classes and experiences that enhance your communications skills (for example, courses in writing, speech, and communications; writing for the campus newspaper) are a good investment because employers view communication skills favorably (MSU Career Placement and Services, 2008; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2008). After you have considered what types of careers interest you, take a few elective courses outside of psychology that are specific to your goals. For example, if you plan to enter the business world, a course in management or accounting would be useful. If you would like a job in human services, take courses in social work, communication,
criminal justice, sociology, or anthropology. Throughout this book we will mention courses that students with particular interests may take to enhance their marketability. Many students find that declaring a minor permits them to obtain—and demonstrate—skills that can enhance the value of their bachelor’s degree. For example, a psychology major with a minor in marketing or economics might be particularly attractive to employers in business settings. Once you know what you’d like to do, consider adding a minor to your curriculum to enhance your experience and skill set.

GET WORK EXPERIENCE

Work experience is invaluable because it helps you figure out what you’re good at and what you like while gaining the experience that employers seek. There are plenty of part-time and summer jobs that allow you to hone your interpersonal skills and explore potential careers. Try a job as a camp counselor, residence-hall advisor, childcare worker, or human-services worker. According to the Collegiate Employment Research Institute, over four-fifths of employers rate career-related employment as extremely important for prospective hires (MSU Career Placement and Services, 2008), so your time will be well spent.

ENGAGE IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Extracurricular activities can help you develop useful skills and enhance your market-ability. Like internships and work experience, extracurricular activities can provide you with opportunities to test career paths, develop contacts, and work on your communication skills. In addition, employers value volunteer work for campus and community organizations because it shows that you are a good citizen. Extracurricular participation provides employers with evidence about your leadership skills, ability to work effectively in a group, and your initiative and motivation.

As a final piece of advice, be open to new possibilities. Flexibility is an important life skill critical to coping and optimal development throughout adulthood. Employers rate adaptability as highly desired in new employees (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2008). Adaptability and tolerance for ambiguity are important characteristics for graduate students because science, like life, isn’t always clear-cut and obvious. As you read through the chapters in this book and explore various career opportunities, practice being open to new possibilities. Actively consider each subdiscipline and career opportunity to determine if it’s a good fit for your interests and aspirations. Above all, keep an open mind and explore multiple possibilities. You will be more likely to find a job and career that you will love.

SUGGESTED READINGS


**Web Resources**

**Psychology: Scientific Problem Solvers—Careers for the 21st Century**  
http://www.apa.org/students/brochure/index.html

**Eye on Psi Chi**  
http://www.psichi.org/pubs/search.asp

**Careers in Psychology**  
http://www.psywww.com/careers/index.htm

**Pursuing Psychology Career Page**  
http://www.uni.edu/walsh/linda1.html

**Career Key**  
http://www.careerkey.org

**American Psychological Association**  
http://www.apa.org

**American Psychological Society**  
http://www.psychologicalscience.org

**State Psychological Associations**  
http://www.apa.org/practice/refer.html

**Psi Chi**  
http://www.psichi.org

**Psi Beta**  
http://www.psibeta.org/

**Eastern Psychological Association**  
http://www.easternpsychological.org/

**Midwestern Psychological Association**  
http://www.midwesternpsych.org/

**Rocky Mountain Psychological Association**  
http://www.rockymountainpsych.org/

**Southeastern Psychological Association**  
http://www.sepaonline.com/

**Southwestern Psychological Association**  
http://www.swpsych.org/

**Western Psychological Association**  
http://www.westernpsych.org/
Checklist: Is Psychology for You?

Do you:

☐ Have an interest in how the mind works?
☐ Want to learn how to think critically?
☐ Have an interest in research?
☐ Feel comfortable with computers?
☐ Want to learn how the brain works and its effect on behavior?
☐ Have an interest in mental illness?
☐ Like mathematics?
☐ Have an interest in how we grow and change over the lifespan?
☐ Have an interest in personality and what makes people unique?
☐ Wonder how we perceive stimuli in our environment?
☐ Have an interest in learning how research findings can be applied to solve real-world problems?
☐ Want to learn how to work well with others?
☐ Want a well-rounded education?
☐ Have an interest in biology and how physiology influences behavior?
☐ Have the ability to be flexible and deal with ambiguity?
☐ Want to help people?

Scoring: The more boxes you checked, the more likely it is that you’re a good match for the psychology major.
Psychology is one of the most common bachelor’s degrees awarded annually. Where do all of those graduates go? The majority do not go to graduate school. Instead, they enter the world of work and find jobs. In this chapter we discuss the job-search process, from locating positions to constructing résumés, preparing for interviews, and accepting a job offer.
WHAT DO EMPLOYERS SEEK?

What exactly do employers seek in new hires? Several research studies have examined this question (Appleby, 2000; Edwards & Smith, 1988; Grocer & Kohout, 1997; Lloyd & Kennedy, 1997; National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2000; Sheetz, 1995). Table 2.1 presents the results. In Chapter 1 we discussed the competencies that are typical of bachelor’s degree holders in psychology. Do you notice any similarity between the skills employers seek and those that a major in psychology develops? You may be better prepared for the career world than you think, employers covet the skills that psychology majors develop. The interpersonal skills, research knowledge, and competence typical of psychology majors, honed through course work, practica, and extracurricular activities, provide an upper hand in the job market. Your major has helped you to develop a host of skills that employers want. To enhance your marketability and improve your employment options, review the tips for success discussed in Chapter 1.

Table 2.1 Skills Employers Value in New Hires

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reading and Writing Skills:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The ability to extract important ideas through reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing skills to document ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to write reports, proposals, and summaries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem Solving Skills:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good judgment and decision-making skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The ability to apply information to solve problems and analyze problems on the basis of personal experience and psychological principles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Career-Related Work Experience:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Hands-on practical experience through cooperative education, internships, practica, part-time jobs, or summer work experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A real-world work orientation and the ability to apply school-based knowledge in practical settings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Analysis Skills:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Computational skills, the ability to reason numerically, and to identify problems in data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The ability to collect, record, and report statistical information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Computer Skills:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Knowledge of software applications including word-processing, spreadsheet, and database software</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Familiarity with the Internet and e-mail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication and Interpersonal Skills:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Good listening skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The ability to communicate orally in a clear, concise, accurate, and logical fashion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sensitivity to social signals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Group skills including discussion, team building, and conflict management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tolerance for, and an understanding of, individual differences</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

continued
Your skills are valued, but how do you find an employment setting in which to apply them? How do you get a job? In the following sections we provide an overview of the job-seeking process. Remember that this is simply an overview. There are many books and Internet sites devoted to job seeking, and we encourage you to explore the resources listed at the end of this chapter for additional, more detailed, job-seeking information.

LOCATE POSITIONS
Perhaps the most important thing to remember about looking for a job is that it is very unlikely that you will encounter a job ad seeking a psychology major. Generally speaking, most job ads do not mention specific majors. Although now and then an ad might list a preference for psychology majors, don’t hold your breath waiting. Throughout the job-search process it is helpful to remember that most employers and the public at large have mistaken beliefs about psychology and psychology majors, such as those we discussed in Chapter 1 (psychology students become psychologists, psychology graduates do therapy, and so on). When looking for job openings, think in terms of skills rather than job titles. Job titles can be misleading—what skills are required? Your task throughout the job-search process is to educate potential employers by discussing the competencies that you have developed and how the psychology curriculum has improved your knowledge and skill base.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psychological Knowledge:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Specific psychological knowledge, such as how attitudes are formed and changed, or how people think, problem solve, and process information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• An understanding of group dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Knowledge about how people perceive and sense their environment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self Management:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Personal qualities and traits such as self-esteem, confidence, and social skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tolerance for stress and ambiguity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ability to set and pursue goals, control one’s emotions, and engage in appropriate behavior</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Acquisition and Use:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• An understanding of how to absorb and retain information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding how to learn, where to find information, and how to evaluate and use it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptability:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The ability to be adaptable, be flexible, and handle multiple tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A broad knowledge base outside of the field of psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The ability to utilize resources in order to effectively complete tasks (e.g., creating a schedule, writing a budget, assigning space, and managing others)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your first stop in the job-hunting process should be the career services office at your college or university, where you’ll find skilled professionals who can help you with all aspects of the job search, including locating positions. Employers often contact colleges seeking to hire new graduates. Read the job ads in your local newspaper; many newspapers maintain searchable online databases of job ads. Contact the human resources departments of major businesses, corporations, and agencies in your area to inquire about job openings. Note that many business and organizations advertise jobs on their Web pages, typically linked from the Human Resources Web page or on a page called “Employment Opportunities.” The Internet has many sites devoted to job seekers. The internet resources at the end of this chapter offer a few examples of comprehensive job sites. Finally, remember that most jobs aren’t advertised, so it’s important that you use your personal networks to locate “hidden” positions. Through school, friends (and their parents), part-time jobs, and internships, you’ve already made many connections. Tap into these professional connections when scouting for positions and you may get leads on jobs that aren’t advertised to the general public.

PREPARE A RÉSUMÉ

A well-written résumé is the ticket to getting an interview—and possibly a job offer. A résumé is a summary of your educational history, skills, and work experience. Employers always expect prospective employees to include résumés in their applications—even if they don’t explicitly say so in their advertisement. Your résumé is your first, and sometimes only, contact with an employer. The sole purpose of a résumé is to convince an employer to interview you. It’s a chance to present yourself: your strengths and unique fit to the position to which you’re applying. Therefore, your task is to showcase your skills and competencies: What can you do for the employer and contribute to the organization?

As you prepare your résumé, carefully consider your experience and the corresponding skills. Employers study résumés with the awareness that prior behavior predicts future behavior. Think about your successful experiences and what characteristics and abilities influenced your success. What contributions have you made and what skills underlie those competencies? What transferrable skills (skills that are useful in many jobs) have you learned? The work that you describe need not be paid. Volunteer experiences that demonstrate your competencies are valuable. Employers care about whether you can do the job—it doesn’t matter whether the evidence you give is from paid or unpaid experiences. There are many types of résumés, but chronological and functional résumés are the two most common.

Chronological Résumé

The chronological résumé presents your education and career in a chronological framework and is easy for employers to understand and read. A brief description of the content of each section of the chronological résumé follows; a sample chronological résumé appears in Table 2.2.
**Contact information.** Include your name, permanent address, phone number, fax number, and e-mail. Be sure to use a professional e-mail address, not a nickname. An e-mail address such as “HotTamale101” will be perceived poorly. Also, if you use a free e-mail account (for example, Hotmail, Yahoo), you should know that some employers’ mail services may mark mail from free e-mail services as spam. Only include your Web site if it looks professional and is relevant to your career goals. Generally, it’s a good idea not to list your MySpace or Facebook accounts.

### Table 2.2  |  Sample Chronological Résumé

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CHRISTINE JONES</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Dorms #321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase, NY 11234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(914) 555-1414</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**OBJECTIVE:** Entry-level position in human resources using interpersonal and organizational skills.

**EDUCATION:**
- Your University, Purchase, NY
  - Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, May 2001
  - Minor: Communications

**EXPERIENCE:**
- Resident Assistant, Your University, Purchase, NY, May, 1999–present
  - Assisted the director of a 360-resident living unit on campus.
  - Assisted in creating and implementing policies and procedures for managing the residence.
  - Developed and presented programs on a variety of subjects including alcohol awareness, career development, leadership, and safety.
  - Researched and wrote weekly articles on breaking news.
  - Interviewed and researched local residents for weekly “Local Profile” articles.
- Cashier, Purchase Delicatessen, Purchase, NY June, 1997–August, 1999
  - Assisted customers in locating products, operated computerized cash register, handled large sums of cash, stocked shelves, and monitored store inventory.

**ACTIVITIES:**
- Theater Society, active member, two years, chorus member in three plays
- Psychology Club, active member, three years, organized fund-raisers, participated in tutoring groups, and invited local speakers to club meetings.

**REFERENCES:** Available upon request.

Source: From Kuther, 2006.
• **Education.** Include the name of the degree you will receive, institution, and date, major and GPA (only if it’s higher than 3.0). Also include any academic honors that you’ve received.

• **Experience.** Present all relevant employment experiences: part-time and full-time, internships, cooperative education, self-employment, or volunteer, listing your most recent position first and working backwards. Include the title, company, address, and dates of employment. Briefly describe your duties and responsibilities as they relate to the position you are seeking, and emphasize specific skills and achievements. Use active words to describe your duties and the results that you produced.

• **Activities and affiliations.** List professional affiliations and activities that illustrate your skills. List leadership activities and extracurricular activities on campus if they demonstrate useful competencies (for example, team work, leadership, problem solving). Only include those things to which you can draw a connection with your employment goals.

The main disadvantage of a chronological résumé is that applicants who are just starting out usually do not have many professional experiences to list, resulting in a résumé that may appear skimpy. Employers may not easily recognize your skills when you have limited work-related experiences. In these cases, a functional résumé is often recommended.

**Functional Résumé**

The functional résumé organizes your experiences and work history by highlighting skills and accomplishments that might not be obvious in a chronological résumé. Table 2.3 illustrates the functional résumé.

The functional résumé begins with a listing of contact information, similar to the chronological résumé. The next section, *Specific Accomplishments*, is what makes a functional résumé radically different from a chronological résumé. Rearrange your employment, volunteer, and internship experiences into subsections that highlight areas of skills and accomplishments. Each skill or accomplishment subsection must contain statements supporting your experience in that category. You might list bullet points noting specific experiences that illustrate the skill (for example, worked as a team with four colleagues to prepare a presentation of the weanis; sold 600 widgets in two days), and then list employers and work dates towards the end of the résumé along with education. Or you might list the employer and work dates under each skill section, as is shown in Table 2.3. The drawback to this is that each employer may be associated with only one skill. Organize accomplishments in their order of importance with regard to the position that you seek. The *Experience* and *Education* sections follow and are identical to those in the chronological résumé. The caveat of the functional résumé is that employers tend to be less familiar with them. Some employers dislike functional résumés because they prefer to see a direct link between employment position and specific skills and duties.

Take great care in crafting your résumé; most employers glance at a résumé for 20 to 30 seconds (Krannich, 2002). If the first few lines of your résumé don’t catch the employer’s attention, your opportunity is lost. Make it past the 20-second test.
by considering the main question that employers ask themselves as they read résumés: Why should I read this or contact this person for an interview? Keep this in mind as you prepare your résumé; make sure that you answer it, and you’ll have a unique résumé. Employers look for applicants who stand out and often simply skim résumés looking for something of interest. If you have special experience or skills, list them towards the top of your résumé—put them up front to increase visibility. All of this hard work is essential; a good résumé gets you to the next stage, whereas a poor résumé stops you from going anywhere.

Professionalism, or rather a lack of it, is one thing that can stop you from getting an interview, regardless of your experience. Make your résumé look professional by using a laser printer and remembering that errors are the kiss of death for your application. Because employers are often inundated with résumés, they look for reasons to remove a résumé from the pile. Typos will get you the boot. See Table 2.4 for more résumé tips. Also, there are many books and Internet resources that provide advice for writing résumés. See the recommended readings and Web sites at the end of this chapter for more information.

Table 2.3 | SAMPLE FUNCTIONAL RÉSUMÉ

CHRISTINE JONES

Student Dorms #321 77 Pleasant Street
Your University Pleasantville, NY 11245
Purchase, NY 11234 (914) 555 -6677
(914) 555-1414; Jones@yourstateu.edu Fax (914) 555-9999

Interpersonal Experience
Resident Assistant, Your University, Purchase, NY, May, 1999—Present
Assisted the director of a 360-resident living unit on campus. Assisted in creating and implementing policies and procedures for managing the residence. Developed and presented programs on a variety of subjects including alcohol awareness, career development, leadership, and safety.
Cashier, Purchase Delicatessen, Purchase, NY June, 1997—August, 1999
Assisted customers in locating products, operated computerized cash register, handled large sums of cash, stocked shelves, and monitored store inventory.

Leadership and Organizational Experience
Psychology Club, active member, three years, organized fund raisers, participated in tutoring groups, and invited local speakers to club meetings.

Writing Experience
Researched and wrote weekly articles on breaking news. Interviewed and researched local residents for weekly “Local Profile” articles.

Public Speaking
Theater Society, active member, two years, chorus member in three plays

Education
Your University, Purchase, NY
Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, Minor: Communications, May 2001

Source: Adapted from Kuther, 2006.
SOLICIT REFERENCES

Nearly all positions to which you apply will require you to provide several references—people who can verify your qualifications and abilities. Who should you use as a reference? Employers are interested in your potential as an employee, so your references should be able to comment on your professional abilities and personal characteristics that directly relate to job performance, like dependability, resourcefulness, and attitude. Professors, supervisors for your practica or other applied experiences, and former employers are good choices for references. As you choose your references, remember that you must ask before listing them on your résumé or application. Specifically, ask if they are willing to serve as references. Before giving their names to a potential employer, ask your references if they are willing to give you a good recommendation (you don’t want just any recommendation). Provide them with a copy of your résumé and ask them what other materials they may need. Whenever you go on the job market (especially after graduation), contact your references to fill them in on your experiences as well as to request their assistance and simply remind them of who you are. When a prospective employer contacts one of your references, you don’t want that person to ask, “Who?” Don’t surprise your references; ask their permission first so that you make a good impression and ensure that they feel comfortable recommending you for a job.

Table 2.4 | Résumé Checklist

- Clearly communicate your purpose and value.
- Communicate your strongest points first.
- Don’t make statements that you can’t document.
- Be direct, succinct, and expressive with language.
- Don’t use lengthy sentences and descriptions; this is the only time that sentence fragments are acceptable, but use them judiciously.
- Don’t use the passive voice.
- Don’t change the tense of verbs throughout the résumé.
- Confine your information to one page.
- Use space to organize your résumé; it should not appear cramped.
- Aim for overall visual balance on the page.
- Use a font size of 10 to 14 points.
- Choose a simple typeface and stick to it (don’t change fonts).
- Use ample spacing and bold for emphasis (but don’t overdo it).
- Don’t fold or staple your résumé.
- Check spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- Proofread.
- Ask someone else to proofread.
- Get outside help. Get feedback from two or three people, including someone who regularly evaluates résumés and hires employees.
- Do not include your reference information on your résumé (see sample).
- Before giving their names to a potential employer, ask your references if they are willing to serve as references.

Source: From Kuther, 2006.
WRITE A COVER LETTER

Your résumé highlights your skills, but you must also explain why you are well-suited to a particular job. The cover letter is an introduction to your résumé that enables you to tailor your application to the prospective employer. Your cover letter must be concise, and explain who you are and what you can offer an employer and organization. Usually three paragraphs will suffice. First, explain your reason for writing (for example, "to apply to the research assistant position advertised in the Daily News"). Demonstrate interest in the employer and position—why do you want to work there? Then, discuss what you can offer an employer. Highlight the most important aspects of your background that are relevant to the position and/or organization. Show that you have done some homework and learned about the employer. Finally, summarize your main points, provide contact information, thank the reader, and reiterate your interest in the position.

Your cover letter should motivate the reader to examine your résumé. Keep your audience in mind and address their needs. Continually ask yourself, “What is the purpose of this letter? What are the needs of the reader? What benefits will an employer gain from me? How can I maintain the reader’s interest? How can I end the letter persuasively, so that the reader will want to examine my résumé and contact me?” Communicate what you can do for the employer, not what the job will do for you. Table 2.5 presents a cover letter checklist.

ACE THE INTERVIEW

If your résumé shows a good fit to the position, you may be invited for an interview. The interview is the most important criterion for hiring; it beats out grades, related work experience, and recommendations (Krannich, 2002). The interview helps companies to identify which applicants they’d like to take a closer look at. Often second, and sometimes even third, interviews occur. This is your chance to impress the prospective employer. How do you do it? Present a professional image, good communication skills, clearly defined professional goals, honesty, and cheerfulness. Be sure to

**Table 2.5 | Cover Letter Checklist**

- Address the letter to an individual, using the person’s name and title. If answering a blind newspaper advertisement, use the following address: “To Whom It May Concern.”
- Indicate the position for which you are applying and explain why you are qualified to fill it.
- Include a phone number where you can be reached.
- Ask someone to proofread your letter for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors.
- Indicate how your education and work skills are transferable and relevant to the position for which you are applying.
- Keep a copy of each cover letter for your records; write notes from any phone conversations that might occur on your copy of the cover letter.
- Make a connection to the company through a person you know, some information you’ve researched, or a specific interest.

Source: From Kuther, 2006.
prepare beforehand because your interviewer is interested in understanding why you want to work for them, what you’re suited for, and your qualifications. Interviews are stressful, but you can increase your confidence by being thoroughly prepared.

**PREPARATION**

Keep the purpose of the interview and the interviewer’s objectives in mind. From your perspective, the purpose of the job interview is to get a second interview or job offer; for employers, the purpose is to whittle down the list of applicants to one or two finalists. The interviewer seeks to learn the following:

- Why does this person want to work for us?
- What position is this person suited for?
- What are his or her qualifications?
- Why should I hire him or her?
- Does this person meet my employment needs?
- Is he or her trustworthy?

He or she looks for reasons why you should not be hired. Interviewers are interested in identifying your weaknesses. Your job is to communicate your strengths. To do so, you need to understand yourself and the company or organization to which you are applying.

Conduct research in order to understand the needs of the organization and to demonstrate that you are interested and knowledgeable. What is the relative size and growth of the industry? What product lines or services are offered? Where is the headquarters? Identify the competition. Be familiar with any recent items in the news. Try to predict what will be asked during the interview, and prepare answers. Table 2.6 presents common questions asked during interviews. Essentially, employers want to know if you are able to do the work, want to do the work, and are able to work with others. Be prepared to talk about your experiences, interests, and fit to the position and organization. You also will be judged on the questions that you ask. Naïve applicants underestimate the significance of asking good questions—you should ask thoughtful and intelligent questions about the company and position. Table 2.7 provides sample questions that an applicant might ask on an interview.

**DRESS APPROPRIATELY**

Dress appropriately for your interview; your appearance communicates messages about your level of seriousness and professionalism. During the first five minutes of an interview, interviewers make initial judgments or create expectations about your professionalism and “fit” for a position based on your appearance and demeanor. Do you look like you belong here? Use this to your advantage by dressing appropriately. Even if you are applying to a company with a casual dress code, dress up a bit for the interview to communicate your enthusiasm for the position.

One rule of thumb is to dress one step above the expected dress code. If, for example, the setting is business casual (slacks, shirts, no ties), you might wear dark slacks and a tie.
Whether you’re a man or a woman, you can’t go wrong with an understated classic navy or gray suit. Men should wear a white or blue oxford shirt with an understated tie. Women should wear a modest blouse, with understated hair.
and makeup. Keep jewelry to a minimum: a watch, simple earrings (for women only), and a ring. Remember that these are merely general rules. Look to how others in your field dress for cues about appropriate attire. Dress codes vary by employment setting and employer; some settings permit more creativity and self-expression. However, during an interview it is best to err on the side of conservatism.

**During the Interview**

Greet the interviewer with a firm handshake and say their name after they introduce themselves (for example, “Pleased to meet you, Sally.”). Be enthusiastic. Remember that your interviewer is committed to his or her position and the company, and wants to hire someone who is similarly committed. Discuss what you’ve learned from your research and preparation. Ask questions to fill in any gaps in your understanding. Convey a sense of long-term interest by asking about opportunities for further professional education and advancement, but make it clear that you are interested in the job in question, likely an entry-level position.

Throughout the interview, be aware of your body language and keep fidgeting to a minimum. Lean very slightly toward the interviewer to communicate your interest in what he or she is saying (Krannich, 2002). Maintain eye contact to convey interest and trustworthiness. Smile to convey your positive attitude. Don’t forget that your tone of voice can indicate how interested you are in the interview and the organization. Here are some other helpful tips for acing interviews:

- Bring a copy of your résumé. It comes in handy if you have to fill in applications and provides initial information for your interviewer.
- Allow the interviewer to direct the conversation.

**Table 2.7 Questions to Ask during an Interview**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell me about the duties and responsibilities of this job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How long has this position been in the company?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What would be the ideal type of person for this position?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What kinds of skills or personality characteristics are ideal for this position?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With whom would I be working?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What am I expected to accomplish during the first year?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will I be evaluated?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are promotions and raises tied to performance criteria?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is unique about working for this company?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does the future look like for this company?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: From Kuther, 2006.
• Answer questions in a clear and positive manner.
• Never speak negatively about former employers or colleagues, no matter what.
• Let the interviewer lead the conversation toward salary and benefits. Try not to focus your interest on these issues (at least not during the initial interview).
• When discussing salary, be flexible.
• If the employer doesn’t say when you’ll hear about their decision, ask about when you can call to follow up.
• Thank the employer for the interview and follow up with a thank-you letter.

THE JOB OFFER

Usually job offers are made over the phone or in person (for example, toward the end of an interview). No matter how the offer is delivered, you’re likely to be surprised. The most appropriate response to an offer in person or by phone is to ask any questions that come to mind, and then request time (a day or two) to think about the offer.

Before accepting an offer, be sure that you understand the conditions and elements of the job. In many cases, salaries for entry-level positions leave little room for negotiation. Take your lead from the employer as to whether the salary is negotiable. If it isn’t, you must decide whether you’re still willing to accept the position, and what, if anything, would make it more attractive. As you think about whether to accept the job offer, consider the scope of the position, how it fits your career goals, opportunities for professional growth, and pragmatics (geographic location, benefits, salary, work hours, and so on).

If you decide to accept the offer, be sure to inform any employers still actively considering you. Do not continue to interview and apply for other jobs. It is dishonest and unethical to continue a job search once you have committed to an employer. Contact your references to inform them of your new job as well as to thank them for their assistance.

If you decide not to accept the job, notify the employer as soon as possible, by telephone. Timeliness is important because other applicants also are waiting for a response. Be polite, thank the employer for the offer, and wish him or her success. Remember that the career world is often quite small. Someday you again may find yourself in contact with someone who has interviewed you. Don’t burn bridges. The contact you make now may influence your career later. Reject job offers with gratitude and grace.

Suggested Readings

Sher, B. (1995). *I could do anything if only I knew what it was: How to discover what you really want and how to get it*. Dell.

**WEB RESOURCES**

Quintessential Careers  
http://www.quintcareers.com

College Grad Job Hunter  
http://www.collegegrad.com/

JobWeb  
http://www.jobweb.com

MonsterTrak.com  
http://monstertrak.com/

Headhunter/Job Seeker  
http://www.headhunter.net

JobTrak  
http://www.jobtrak.com

CareerBuilder  
http://www.careerbuilder.com

Psi Chi: Eye on Psi Chi  
http://www.psichi.org/pubs/eye/home.asp
Did you know that about 61 percent of psychology doctoral graduates are from the subfields of clinical, counseling, or school psychology (American Psychological Association Center for Workforce Studies, 2008)? Clearly, mental health service providers comprise the largest subfields in psychology. Why are these subfields so popular? Many students explain their career choices by stating simply,
“I want to help people.” The mental health service provider subfields afford students opportunities to gain specialized skills and knowledge that can assist people suffering from mental illness, emotional or behavioral problems, or other psychological distress. Because the mental health service field is so large, we’ll discuss it within the next two chapters; in this chapter we examine clinical and counseling psychology, and in Chapter 4 we’ll explore the subfield of school psychology. Do clinical and counseling psychologists do the same thing? Do they have the same jobs? If not, how are they different? These are important questions for students at the baccalaureate, masters, and doctoral levels considering careers as mental health service providers.

Before reviewing the two subdisciplines of clinical and counseling psychology, it is worth exploring the question of how are they different. Results of empirical research suggested that there are few quantitative differences between clinical psychology Ph.D., Psy.D., and counseling psychology Ph.D. programs (Morgan & Cohen, in press). In fact, there appear to be greater discrepancies within each specialty than between the two specialties of clinical and counseling psychology (Cobb et al., 2004; Morgan & Cohen, in press). Nevertheless, subtle differences exist in training requirements (see Morgan & Cohen, in press, for a detailed description of these differences) as well as historical and philosophical differences (see Roger & Stone, n.d.).

**CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY**

Clinical psychology is the integration of science, theory, and practice to explain and understand, predict, and alleviate psychological problems and distress, as well as promote healthy human development (American Psychological Association Society of Clinical Psychology, n.d.). Assessment and diagnosis, intervention or treatment, consultation, research, and application of ethical and professional principles are the necessary skills developed by training in clinical psychology (Resnick, 1991). In other words, clinical psychologists work to help people alleviate distress or to improve their functioning via (1) psychological practice, or the provision of services such as assessment, diagnosis, and treatment (for example, psychotherapy); (2) consultation; or (3) by conducting research aimed at understanding human phenomena with the goal of helping people. But where are clinical psychologists found and how do they spend their time?

Primary employment settings of clinical psychologists include: private practice (40%), university settings (19%), hospital settings (9%), outpatient clinics and community mental health centers (8%), medical schools (9%), Veteran’s Administrative (VA) Medical Centers (3%), and “other” settings such as correctional facilities, child and family services, rehabilitation centers, and so on (11%) (Norcross, Karg, & Prochaska; 1997). Clinical psychologists spend approximately 37% of their time involved in direct client intervention (for example, psychotherapy) and approximately 15% of their time in assessment- and diagnostic-related activities (Norcross et al., 1997). Somewhat less frequent activities of clinical psychologists include administrative responsibilities (11%), research/writing activities (10%), teaching (9%), supervision of other mental health service providers (7%), and professional consultation (7%) (Norcross et al., 1997).
COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Counseling psychologists, like their clinical psychology colleagues, work to alleviate distress and emotional or behavioral difficulties associated with psychological problems; however, counseling psychology maintains an equal focus on helping people improve their well-being across the lifespan, including emotional, social, vocational, health-related, developmental, and organizational concerns (Society of Counseling Psychology, Division 17: American Psychological Association, n.d.). Additionally, counseling psychologists have been instrumental in sensitizing psychologists to an understanding and appreciation of human diversity, particularly as multicultural issues relate to human functioning. Defined more simply, counseling psychology is a field of study that works to improve human functioning, either by enhancing current functioning or by alleviating distress.

The roots of counseling psychology can be found in five unifying themes: (1) focus on intact or normative functioning rather than profoundly disturbed functioning; (2) focus on client’s assets and strengths, and positive mental health; (3) emphasis on brief interventions (for example, counseling sessions of fewer than 15 sessions); (4) emphasis on person-environment interactions, rather than focus on person or environment as separate entities; and (5) emphasis on educational and career development and vocational environments (Gelso & Fretz, 2001). It is not surprising then, that based on these unifying themes, counseling psychologists are more likely to identify themselves primarily as clinical practitioners (48%) than other professional roles such as academicians (28%), administrators (11%), consultants (6%), and researchers (3%) (Watkins, Lopez, Campbell, & Himmel, 1986); however, like their clinical psychology colleagues, counseling psychologists are employed in a variety of settings: colleges and universities, including university counseling centers; private practice; community mental health centers; psychiatric hospitals; medical facilities; correctional facilities; VA medical centers; health maintenance organizations; family services; business and consulting firms; and rehabilitation agencies.

OTHER MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONS

It is also worth noting that there are mental health professions that are not based in the discipline of psychology. That is, some mental health training does not have psychology as the disciplinary root. Many students may find marriage and family therapy (MFT) programs, rehabilitation or rehabilitation counseling programs, social work programs, or addictions counseling programs a better fit for their career interests (for more information see: American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy, 2002; American Counseling Association, 2008; National Association of Social Workers, 2008; and National Rehabilitation Counseling Association, n.d.). A student in one of these programs may earn a doctoral-level degree (for example, Ph.D., Ed.D.), but a terminal masters degree (M.S. or M.A.) is more common. Licensure as a mental health professional (for example, Licensed Professional Counselor, LPC; Licensed Master Social Worker, LMSW) is then typically required to provide counseling or related clinical services.

Overlap exists between marriage and family therapy, rehabilitation counseling, social work, and clinical and counseling psychology, in the form of professional
services provided and employment settings. The primary distinction with regard to clinical services is that psychologists are trained to administer and interpret psychological tests. Additionally, psychology-based programs at the masters and doctoral levels typically place greater emphasis on conducting research. This is not to say that students in other mental health programs are not trained in research—they are, particularly at the doctoral level; however, research appears to be more heavily emphasized in clinical and counseling psychology training programs than in social work programs. Regarding employment settings, these mental health professionals overlap with clinical and counseling psychologists and will be found in: community mental health centers, psychiatric hospitals, private practice, medical facilities, correctional facilities, family services, and rehabilitation agencies.

OPPORTUNITIES WITH A BACHELOR’S DEGREE

Although a graduate degree is the entry-level degree to practice professional psychology, several opportunities to help people exist for undergraduate psychology majors who choose not to pursue graduate education. Let’s take a look at service opportunities for bachelor’s degree holders in psychology.

HUMAN SERVICES WORKER

Human services workers occupy a range of positions, including social service worker, case management aide, social work assistant, community support worker, mental health aide, community outreach worker, life skills counselor, and gerontology aide (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). These positions are paraprofessional positions with “a support role that overlaps with job duties and responsibilities of a psychologist; however, the paraprofessional does not have the education, responsibility, nor salary of the psychologist” (Landrum, Davis, & Landrum, 2000, p. 17). Human services workers provide services, both direct and indirect, to clients that typically include: assessing clients’ needs and eligibility for services, helping clients obtain services (for example, food stamps, Medicaid, transportation, and other human services programs), and providing emotional support (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). In community settings (such as group homes or government-supported housing programs), human services workers assist clients in need of counseling, assist with daily living skills, and organize group activities. In clinical settings (for example, psychiatric hospitals, outpatient clinics), human services workers support clients participation in treatment plans, assist with daily living skills, help clients communicate more effectively, and promote social functioning (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

Advantages to a position in human services are the opportunity to help others in need, as well as a steady job market. In fact, human services positions are expected to increase much faster than the average for all occupations through 2016, with an expected growth rate of 36 percent (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Unfortunately, long hours, difficult cases, and low income often lead to burnout. In 2006, the median salary of human services workers was $25,580, with a range of $20,350 to $32,440 for the middle 50 percent, and a peak salary of approximately $40,780 for human services workers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).
Notably, positions with local and state governments tend to offer better salaries than individual or family service agencies, vocational rehabilitation agencies, or residential mental health, substance abuse and mental retardation facilities (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

**Social Worker**

Although a degree in social work is sometimes a prerequisite, entry-level social worker positions often can be obtained with a bachelor’s degree in psychology. Social workers aim to help people improve their lives through counseling and identifying needed resources (such as housing or food stamps). Frequent duties include individual and group counseling sessions, identifying federal and state program assistance as needed (for example, housing assistance, disability benefits, food stamps, and so on) (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Social workers are employed in a variety of settings: hospitals, schools, community mental health centers, social service agencies, and courts and correctional institutions; thus, social workers can seek settings that best suit their needs and abilities.

Salaries for social workers tend to be moderate, with a median yearly salary in the mid-thirties (approximately $35,000); however, salaries are quite variable depending on education, location and agency with a median salary range of $32,490 to $48,420 (note that higher salaries are likely for positions at the masters degree level; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Other benefits of this career choice include an increasing job market (expected to increase by 22 percent by 2016; Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008) and the satisfaction of helping people at the grassroots level. A primary limitation of this career is the stress or feelings of helplessness resulting from difficulty identifying or securing appropriate resources for clients.

Although it is possible to obtain many social work positions with a bachelor’s degree, continuing education in the form of a part-time masters program will increase your job security, opportunities for advancement, and ability to start a private practice. Salary will also increase with increased education. All states have licensing or certification requirements for private practice and the use of the title “social worker.” Standards for licensing vary by state, so it’s a good idea to check with your school’s career development office and the Association of Social Work Boards (http://www.aswb.org/), to ensure that you are not disappointed.

**Substance Abuse Counselor**

Although most counseling professions require graduate degrees (at least a masters degree) for employment, substance abuse counselors are a common exception. Substance abuse counselors provide counseling or rehabilitation services in residential treatment programs or as part of comprehensive outpatient substance abuse programs. The substance abuse counselor often is the primary therapist working with clients on their alcohol or drug dependence or abuse. Substance abuse counselors may spend their days facilitating therapy groups (particularly focused on educating clients about addiction and its related problems), as well as meeting individually with clients. Individual sessions allow therapists one-on-one time to focus on a client’s specific problems.
The demand for drug and alcohol abuse counselors is strong, with an expected growth of 34 percent by 2016 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Salaries for substance abuse counselors are consistent with other undergraduate positions listed in this chapter, with a median 2006 income of $34,040 per year, with the middle 50 percent earning between $27,330 and $42,650 (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). It should be noted, however, that similar to social worker positions, higher salaries for substance abuse counselors are likely for positions that require a masters degree. Job availability and salary varies across the country, so examine the range of opportunities in your desired location as you plan for a career as a substance abuse counselor.

As with other mental health positions, one of the primary benefits of this career lies in the opportunity to help disturbed people who are in desperate need of help. In addition, the opportunity to enter the helping field at the baccalaureate level is attractive for students who want to enter the mental health profession but don’t want to go to graduate school. Limitations of this career choice include the

### Table 3.1 Preparation for B.A.–Level Careers Related to Clinical and Counseling Psychology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coursework</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abnormal Psychology or Psychopathology</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Mental Health</td>
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<tr>
<td>Developmental Psychology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Family Systems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewing, Counseling, or Helping Skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional Issues</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychological Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Psychopharmacology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applied Experiences:** Volunteer, intern/practica, or paid part-time positions in any of the following settings:
- Any Mental Health Setting
  - Big Brother/Big Sister Programs
  - Boys and Girls Club
  - Inpatient Psychiatric Unit
  - Mental Retardation Facility
  - Residential Treatment Facilities
  - Substance Abuse Center

**Research Experiences:** Experiences studying and participating in research in any of the following areas*
- Abnormal Behavior
- Psychopathology
- Substance Abuse
- Specific Disorders (for example, Schizophrenia, Bipolar Disorder, Depression, Anxiety)
- Any treatment-, assessment-, or diagnostic-oriented research

*Note that the content area of the research is less important than the experience itself, which enhances reasoning, quantitative, writing, and organizational skills.
difficulty of professional advancement at the bachelor’s degree level and the challenges of working with substance abusers, who often are resistant clients and can be difficult to work with.

Substance abuse counselors often are employed at the associate or bachelor’s level, with certification. The requirements for certification as a drug and alcohol abuse counselor vary by state. Most states require the completion of four courses in drug and alcohol abuse counseling and 300 to 600 hours of supervised training. For more information about certification as a drug and alcohol abuse counselor, contact the National Association of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC) at http://www.naadac.org.

Although applied career opportunities exist for students who earn a bachelor’s degree in psychology, many more opportunities exist for those earning a graduate degree. For example, students completing their masters (MA, MS), Ph.D., or Psy.D. may pursue applied careers as practitioners, program developers or evaluators, or consultants.

OPPORTUNITIES WITH A GRADUATE DEGREE

Your career options and financial prospects in clinical- and counseling-related careers expand dramatically with a graduate degree in psychology. Before we discuss graduate-level careers for students with interests in clinical and counseling psychology, let’s take a look at graduate training and related issues. Students interested in these fields have several choices with regard to training. Following our discussion of graduate education in clinical and counseling psychology, we discuss three career trajectories for applied psychologists: practice, program development and evaluation, and administration.

GRADUATE EDUCATION AND TRAINING CONSIDERATIONS

Do your homework before entering graduate programs in counseling or clinical psychology. The most successful students are those who enter programs that are right for them (meaning, there is a good fit between the type of graduate program and their professional interests). As you read this book, you will realize there are many different types of programs available to you—clinical and counseling, but also non-service fields such as experimental or cognitive psychology. In this chapter, we examine the issue of choosing a graduate program in clinical and counseling psychology, but recognize that the decision-making process is similar in other fields (see Chapter 14 for more about applying to graduate school). Critically evaluate programs in light of your interests and career goals. Ask yourself:

• Do I understand the differences between the various programs? (How are clinical and counseling psychology different? What is a combined program?)
• What type of degree program is right for me (for example, Ph.D. or Psy.D.)?
• How do I get licensed after graduation?
• Are there other practice-related issues of which I should be aware?

DIFFERENTIATING CLINICAL AND COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY. Although the fields of counseling and clinical psychology overlap significantly (Cobb et al., 2004), subtle differences may be gleaned from the definitions provided earlier in this chapter.
It has commonly been suggested that one difference between the two disciplines is that clinical psychology is based on the medical model (meaning, assess, diagnose, and treat an ailment) whereas counseling psychology is less pathology-focused, favoring a holistic perspective emphasizing all aspects of a client’s life. Not surprisingly, counseling psychologists, compared to their clinical psychology counterparts, tend to work with healthier individuals who are experiencing less psychopathology or distress (Norcross, Sayette, Mayne, Karg, & Turkson, 1998).

Consistent with a holistic perspective across the lifespan, counseling psychologists are more likely to conduct career and vocational assessments, whereas clinical psychologists, who focus on assessment and diagnosing pathology for treatment purposes (meaning, the medical model), are more likely to receive training in projective personality assessment (for example, the Rorschach or Thematic Apperception Test [TAT]) (Norcross, et al., 1998). Counseling psychologists tend to be employed in university counseling centers more often than clinical psychologists, whereas clinical psychologists are more likely to be employed in hospital settings (Gaddy, Charlot-Swilley, Nelson, & Reich, 1995; Watkins, et al., 1986). Another difference between the disciplines of clinical and counseling psychology is found in therapists’ theoretical orientations. Clinical psychologists are more likely to endorse a behavioral or psychodynamic theoretical orientation, whereas their counseling psychology colleagues are more likely to endorse a person-centered (or Rogerian) theoretical orientation (Norcross, Prochaska, & Gallagher, 1989a; 1989b; Watkins et al., 1986).

With regard to training, results of empirical research suggest that there are few differences in clinical psychology Ph.D., Psy.D., and counseling psychology Ph.D. programs (Morgan & Cohen, in press). Two important differences are, first, that counseling psychologists are more likely to receive training in group psychotherapy than are clinical psychologists (Weinstein & Rossini, 1999) and, second, that counseling psychology programs tend to rely on external practicum sites for their graduate students, whereas clinical psychology programs are more likely to have in-house training clinics (meaning, psychology clinics operated by the department, which offers graduate student therapists opportunities to provide psychological services under close supervision of the faculty) (Morgan & Cohen, in press; Romans, Boswell, Carlozzi, & Ferguson, 1995). Given the few differences between training in clinical and counseling psychology, there appears to be more variation within each specialty than between the two specialties (Cobb et al., 2004; Morgan & Cohen, in press). Despite this, there are subtle differences in training requirements (see Morgan & Cohen, in press, for a detailed description of these differences) as well as historical and philosophical differences (see Roger & Stone, n.d.). Carefully evaluate each subdiscipline and each program to determine how each fit your interests and needs.

Opportunities for Graduate Education. If you’re planning to seek graduate training in clinical or counseling psychology, understand that there is a large discrepancy in the number of graduate programs for each discipline. There are 232 American Psychological Association (APA)–accredited doctoral programs in clinical psychology compared to 72 APA–accredited doctoral programs in counseling psychology (American Psychological Association, 2007). It is not surprising that clinical psychology students accounted for 47 percent of all psychology doctorate degrees granted in 2003 (Center for Psychology Workforce Analysis and Research, 2008).
Both clinical and counseling psychology programs remain very competitive for admission, with an average admission rate of 6 percent for clinical psychology programs and 8 percent for counseling psychology programs (Norcross et al., 1998).

Admission criteria for clinical and counseling psychology programs are very similar, with some differences. Clinical psychology programs tend to require slightly higher verbal and quantitative Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores than do counseling programs (Norcross et al., 1998). Another significant difference is in the percentage of students admitted with a masters degree versus a bachelor’s degree. Counseling psychology programs are much more likely to admit a student who has already obtained a masters degree than are clinical psychology Ph.D. programs, which tend to admit students who have a bachelor’s degree (Norcross et al., 1998). Counseling psychology programs also appear to be more ethnically diverse than their clinical counterparts (Morgan & Cohen, in press).

Somewhat less common than clinical and counseling programs are combined programs that integrate training from two or three of the subfields (counseling, school, and clinical psychology programs) without distinguishing among the disciplines. In other words, students in combined programs are trained in the principles of each of the specified subfields (for example, both clinical and school subfields). It should be noted that all combined programs are not alike; some integrate all three of the applied psychology disciplines (clinical, school, and counseling), whereas other programs incorporate either clinical or counseling psychology with school psychology. Although fewer combined programs (N = 11; American Psychological Association, 2007) exist compared to traditional counseling and clinical psychology programs, combined programs may offer increased diversity and a broader-based training experience for students; however, this has not been empirically examined.

**Ph.D. versus Psy.D. Degrees.** There are two types of doctoral degrees that a student interested in clinical psychology may obtain: the Ph.D. and Psy.D. How can we distinguish between these degrees? The first level of distinction can be found in their history. Generally speaking, the history of the Psy.D. is in training practitioners; thus, graduate training focuses more heavily on service provision than research. The history of the Ph.D., on the other hand, is based equally on science and practice (that is, the Boulder model), and so Ph.D. programs provide a greater focus on research skills than do Psy.D. programs. Students earning a Ph.D. complete a doctoral dissertation based in empirical research, whereas only a written project is often sufficient to complete requirements for the Psy.D. Alternatively, students in Psy.D. programs often accrue many more hours of clinical experience than do students in Ph.D. programs. So how do you know which degree is for you?

Consider two key issues. First, what do you hope to be doing in ten years? Although programs offering both the Ph.D. and Psy.D. train students to be clinicians, Ph.D. programs are more likely to train students to be scientists. If you’re interested in becoming a practitioner and seek a program that emphasizes practice, the Psy.D. may fit your needs. However, if you’re interested in developing your skills as a scientific researcher as well as your clinical skills, then the Ph.D. is in order. Which degree you choose is your decision, but recognize that there are very few noticeable differences in applicant quality between students in Psy.D. versus Ph.D. programs (Norcross et al., 1998). In other words, both options are highly competitive.
The second issue to consider is whether you prefer to attend a professional school or a more traditional university. The majority, albeit not all, of Psy.D. programs are housed in professional schools, whereas programs offering the Ph.D. are primarily housed in major state or private universities. What’s the difference? We’ve already discussed the educational differences between the Ph.D. and Psy.D., but there’s one more difference to consider: finances. Universities and private school based Ph.D. programs generally are less expensive and offer more funding to students (Norcross, Castle, Sayette, & Mayne, 2004). Professional schools, on the other hand, are not only more expensive but also tend to offer less financial assistance in the form of research and teaching assistantships (Norcross et al., 1998; 2004). While you should not base your decision solely on finances, it’s important that you understand the economic realities of graduate education. For more information about graduate education, see Chapter 14.

Licensure. The title of “psychologist” is protected; in order to provide psychological services (meaning, therapy, assessment, consultation) as a psychologist, you must be licensed in the state in which you wish to practice. Each state has a slightly different path to licensure; however, the basic process is roughly equivalent for all states.

First, a potential licensee must complete a doctoral program in clinical or counseling psychology (in a small minority of states, masters-level psychologists can seek licensure). Most states require that the doctoral degree is obtained in a program accredited by the APA, thereby certifying its rigor and training emphases, but it is possible in some states to seek licensure with a degree from a program that is not APA-accredited.

In addition to a doctoral degree, at least two years of supervised practice are required. Most students complete the first year as part of their degree requirements, the one-year full-time internship (or a two-year part-time internship) in which they receive supervision for providing psychological services (for example, therapy, assessment, crisis intervention). After completion of the doctoral degree (including completion of the internship), the licensee must acquire an additional year of supervised experience. This experience can be in the form of a formal postdoctoral program, but it can also be less structured (for example, in a private practice setting) as long as it includes providing psychological services under the supervision of a doctoral-level licensed psychologist.

After all degree and supervision requirements are met, the next step is to apply for licensure, which entails a national written examination and a jurisprudence examination. The national examination is multiple-choice, covering a broad range of issues and topics relevant to the practice of psychology. Because this is a national examination, the test is written for licensure applicants in all states and is thus of a generalist nature. A 70 percent accuracy rate is necessary to pass in most states, although states vary slightly in score requirements. The jurisprudence examination is also a written test; however, it is specific to the ethical code and licensure laws of each state. Thus, if you’re applying for licensure in California, you will be asked questions regarding California law and its ethical code, but if you’re applying for licensure in New York, you’ll answer questions about New York statutes and ethics code.

After completion of the written examinations, many states require an additional oral examination in which licensees are presented with a case vignette and asked
questions regarding diagnosis, treatment planning, and ethical concerns, as well as what multicultural issues might impact the case. As you can see, the process of obtaining licensure is time-consuming; it’s also costly. For example, for one of the authors, the expense of pursuing licensure from start to finish cost approximately $1,300 (in 2000; adjusted for inflation, about $1,600 in 2007) after the examination and application fees. Furthermore, the expense and time commitment increases if a licensee doesn’t pass a particular examination and therefore must repeat it (people fail the exams for various reasons). Despite the challenge of seeking licensure, it enables you to earn your stripes, so to speak. With licensure you are eligible to practice psychology without supervision.

INNOVATIVE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES. Technological advances (for example, telemedicine), marketplace demands (such as managed care or prescription privileges for psychologists), and informational gains (for example, empirically-supported practice, formerly referred to as empirically based practice) continue to alter the face of psychology with the potential to profoundly impact the future of psychological practice. Two current issues that are gaining increased attention in psychology are prescription privileges and telehealth.

Prescriptive authority for mental health professionals has historically been limited to physicians and psychiatric nurses; however, psychologists in the United States military and several states recently gained prescription privileges, the ability to prescribe psychotropic medications to clients independent of psychiatrists or physicians. This opportunity not only meets a mental health service need in these agencies, states, or territories (for example, legislation was initiated in New Mexico because of a drought of psychiatrists in rural areas), but also creates many new practice and research opportunities for psychologists.

Similarly, the delivery of psychological services via computer networks is referred to as behavioral medicine, telehealth, or telemental health and is significantly expanding professional practice opportunities. In telehealth, a psychologist remains in one location and provides a psychological service (for example, therapy) to a client in a hospital, prison, or community agency in another location. This practice significantly alters the service delivery area of psychologists and may afford clients care from a specialist whom they would otherwise be unable to visit.

As relatively new and innovative practice strategies, many issues (including ethical and legal issues) must be navigated regarding training and competency in prescription authority as well as telehealth; however, for the innovative student the doors are wide open. If you have interests in these or other innovative opportunities, seek specialized experiences during graduate school that will best facilitate your future opportunities. For example, you may elect to complete coursework in psychopharmacology and seek practicum placements that require collaboration with psychiatrists. You might seek practicum opportunities in hospitals that rely on telehealth, or complete elective coursework in computer science to become as familiar as possible with computer technology. These are just a couple of examples of the myriad professional opportunities currently evolving in psychology, and students planning on pursuing a graduate degree in psychology are strongly encouraged to maintain an open mind and to seek innovative opportunities that may enhance future career possibilities.
Practice

Undoubtedly, the greatest number of applied psychologists use their knowledge and skills as practitioners. Practitioners work in a variety of settings including private practices, hospitals, community mental health centers, schools, university or college counseling centers, criminal justice settings, and specialty clinics, to name just a few examples. In addition to selecting the setting where they will practice, psychologists also have an opportunity to decide if they want to specialize in a particular kind of client or problem. For example, some practitioners prefer to specialize in forensic or sports psychology practices, whereas other psychologists prefer to specialize in a particular type of presenting problem (for example, depression, anxiety, relationships).

One of the primary benefits of a graduate degree in clinical or counseling psychology is the flexibility to pursue career opportunities that match one's own interests and skills or abilities. Advanced degrees also afford practitioners salaries that are competitive with other psychology-related positions. In 2003, the median salary of all clinical psychologists (regardless of experience) was $75,000, and counseling psychologists earned a median salary of $65,000 (Pate, Frincke, & Kohout, 2005), varying by geographic location, setting, and clientele.

Another benefit for those interested in the practice of psychology is the expansion of the field. Psychology continues to break new ground and recent advances include delivering mental health services via telehealth and legislated prescription privileges. Although the days of seeing individual clients in one's private office are not extinct, neither is this type of service delivery necessarily the all-encompassing method of mental health services in the future. This is exciting for current students; innovative opportunities abound for those of you with imagination and foresight.

Program Development and Evaluation

In addition to direct service delivery, clinical and counseling psychologists often pursue career opportunities in program development and evaluation. Psychologists may choose to develop the programs that schools or community placements offer, for example, rather than being the practitioner who provides the service.

Careers in program development and evaluation offer several benefits that practitioners don’t always have. First is the opportunity to identify and develop the types of programs that are warranted for a particular agency or type of client. Working at the grassroots level such as this can be extremely rewarding, especially when a program is successful in helping the intended audience. Second, program developers avoid the stress of daily service provision to clients. On the other hand, psychologists involved in program development may miss the intimate contact and satisfaction from client progress that practitioners experience regularly. Typically, psychologists who take positions in program evaluation work as research associates at nonprofit organizations or as consultants. In 2007, research associates and consultants in private companies and government earned $85,000 and $77,000, respectively, with 2 to 4 years of experience. Those in nonprofit organizations, with 5 to 9 years of experience, earned $76,000 (American Psychological Association 2008).
Administration

Administrative Careers. In addition to careers in practice or as researchers, many clinical and counseling psychologists choose careers in administration. Administrators may be specialists who manage clinical services, or generalists who manage an entire agency or organization (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Administrators are responsible for overseeing the operation of an agency, including staffing and budget issues, healthcare delivery systems and technological advances, as well as daily operations (for example, mental health service delivery). If you’re interested in a career in administration, take additional coursework in business administration, finance, and management.

Psychologists work in administrative roles within hospitals and clinics, community mental health centers and community organizations, correctional and rehabilitation centers, and nursing homes, to name just a few examples. Administrative positions in medical and mental health settings offer an attractive salary, with a median salary of $73,340 in 2006 with a slightly higher salary for those in general medical settings, and slightly less for those in outpatient service centers (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008). Another benefit of an administrative career is the direct influence administrators have on the services an organization delivers and the care clients or patients receive. On the other hand, administrative work typically requires long hours and job-related stress, particularly when dealing with personnel and budgetary issues (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2008).

In this chapter we’ve covered just a few of the myriad possibilities available with a graduate degree in clinical or counseling psychology. Opportunities also exist for careers in writing and publishing (Chapter 13), research and academia (Chapter 13), corrections (Chapter 5), public health (Chapter 6), consulting (Chapter 9), marketing (Chapter 11), and social policy (Chapter 12), to name just a few.

Suggested Readings


WEB RESOURCES

Division 12 of the American Psychological Association (Society of Clinical Psychology)

Society of Counseling Psychology (Division 17) of the American Psychological Association
http://www.div17.org/

So You’re Considering Graduate Study in Clinical Psychology
http://www.wcas.northwestern.edu/psych/undergraduate/clinical.html

Marky Lloyd’s Careers in Psychology Page
http://www.psywww.com/careers/

Choices: Careers in Social Work
http://www.naswdc.org/pubs/choices/choices.htm

Appreciating the PsyD: The Facts
http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_171.asp

Clinical versus Counseling Psychology: What’s the Diff?
http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_73.asp

Counseling Psychology: Making Lives Better
http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_97.asp

CHECKLIST: IS CLINICAL OR COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY FOR YOU?

Do you:

- Like working with people?
- Have an interest in helping people with problems?
- Want to work with healthy people to improve their current functioning?
- Have an interest in why people do the things they do?
- Have an interest in identifying people’s abilities or personality functioning?
- Think you would enjoy working in a hospital, clinic, university counseling center, or other health care setting?
- Find that you are a person others feel comfortable talking to about their problems?
- Find yourself interested in other people’s problems?
- Have good listening skills and avoid tuning out when people talk about their lives?
- Have an interest in mental illness?
- Enjoy reading about abnormal psychology?
- Enjoy reading research about mental illness?
- Think you would enjoy a career providing psychotherapy and assessment?
- Have an interest in applied research that can be used to better people’s lives?
- Keep secrets and protect information that others feel is personal?
- Find that people consider you trustworthy?
- Have compassion and feel for other people when they are suffering?

Scoring: The more boxes you checked, the more likely it is that you’re a good match for clinical or counseling psychology.