

## OPPORTUNITIES AT MESSIAH COLLEGE

### Resources

- Career Center for Vocation and Development  
Helping Professions Job and Internship Fair  
Graduate school and career information sheets

### Experiential Opportunities

- Internship Center  
Full- or part-time internships
- Psychology Department  
Practica: 1–3-credit work-learning experience

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DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

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PSYCHOLOGY AND  
*Health-related  
fields*



Health Psychology

Neuropsychology

Rehabilitation Psychology

Occupational Therapy

“Psychologists are in increasing demand in health and medical settings. The single largest area of placement of psychologists in recent years has been in medical centers. Psychologists have become vital members of multidisciplinary clinical and research teams.” (APA, 2005)

#### A health psychologist might:

- Assist clients in finding ways to handle illness and effectively control pain.
- Investigate societal health issues, such as substance abuse, and lack of exercise.
- Educate medical staff about psychological problems arising from the stress of having an illness.

#### A neuropsychologist might:

- Study cognitive and behavioral symptoms that occur in people with brain disorders.
- Examine domains of cognitive functioning such as memory, attention, visual-perceptual abilities, language, and intellectual functions.
- Diagnose and treat the behavioral deficits following brain injury to determine the neurologic and psychiatric factors in a patient's presenting problems.

#### A rehabilitation psychologist might:

- Assist those who are struggling with the effects of a disability to achieve optimal physical and psychological functioning.
- Counsel clients with disabilities such as pervasive developmental disorders, brain injury, cerebral palsy, Parkinson's disease, or Alzheimer's disease.
- Advocate for improvement of life conditions for people with disabilities and chronic illnesses through legislation.

#### An occupational therapist might:

- Assist people with mental, physical, developmental, or emotional disabilities to develop, recover, or maintain daily living and work skills.
- Work with patients to achieve their goal of having independent, productive, and satisfying lives.
- Help clients improve their basic motor functions and reasoning abilities, as well as compensate for permanent loss of function.

#### Education, Training, and Certification

##### Health Psychology:

Most health psychologists hold a doctoral degree in psychology, obtaining instruction in general psychology and specializing in health psychology during their internships or post-doctoral work. Many doctoral programs offer a specialized health psychology track such as research or clinical care. This area of specialty is also known as behavioral medicine or psychoneuroimmunology. Board certification is available through the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP), which requires a doctorate, five years of experience, professional endorsements, and a passing grade on an examination.

##### Neuropsychology:

Again, doctoral degrees hold the most opportunities for psychology students. Many graduate programs focus on clinical neuropsychology. The American Board of Professional Neuropsychology (ABPN) offers certification for candidates with a doctoral degree, a minimum of three years of professional experience in neuropsychology (including an internship), current state licensure to practice psychology, five years of providing neuropsychological services, and continuing formal education in neuropsychology.

##### Rehabilitation Psychology:

This field requires a doctoral degree as well as an internship to acquire experience serving people with a wide range of disabilities. In addition, it involves extensive pre-doctoral and post-doctoral training in healthcare settings. Further, rehabilitation psychologists providing clinical services are usually required to be licensed in order to provide services in their state of practice. The American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP) certifies rehabilitation psychologists as well.

#### Occupational Therapy:

Beginning in 2007, the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE) standards will no longer accredit certificate or bachelor's programs. To become certified, students must graduate from an accredited post-bachelor's degree program. Occupational therapists must then pass a national certification examination from the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT). Six months of supervised fieldwork is also required. Successful completion of these requirements will result in the title of registered occupational therapist (OTR).

#### Places of Employment

- Private practice
- College and university counseling centers
- Rehabilitation centers
- Public and private hospitals
- Nursing homes
- Specialized medical/healthcare units

#### Recommended Programs and Courses

##### Majors

- B.A. in Psychology
- B.S. in Psychology
- B.S. in Biopsychology

##### Minors

- Counseling
- Biology

##### Courses

- Cognition
- Abnormal Psychology
- Counseling Theories
- Genetics
- Neuroscience
- Biological Basis of Behavior
- Sensation and Perception
- Anatomy and Physiology
- Experimental Psychology
- Psychological Testing

#### Additional Resources

##### Websites

- www.apa.org
- www.abpn.net
- www.aota.org
- www.health-psych.org
- abrp.org
- www.nbcot.org
- www.abpp.org

##### Books

(Available through the Department of Psychology or Career Center for Vocation and Development.)

- Baum, A., Revenson, T.A., Singer, J.E. (Eds.). (2001) *Handbook of health and psychology*. Mahwah, NJ.: L. Erlbaum Associates.
- Kuther, T.L., & Morgan, R.D. (2004). *Careers in psychology: Opportunities in a changing world*. Belmont, CA: Thomson/Wadsworth.
- Sternberg, R.J. (1997). *Career paths in psychology: Where your degree can take you*. Washington, D.C.: APA.

##### Journals

- *Psychology, Health, & Medicine*
- *Health Psychology*
- *Neuropsychology*
- *Rehabilitation Psychology*
- *Behavioral Neuroscience*