Since the Fall of 1991, the Department of Neurology has offered clinical psychology interns and medical psychology graduate students at UAB a minor training rotation or assistantship/practicum in geriatric and adult clinical neuropsychology.

The role of clinical neuropsychology in care and treatment of the elderly has become increasingly important in the last two decades. As the population of the United States ages, it is essential that clinical psychologists receive training in the assessment and treatment of older adults with cognitive impairment. Geriatric neuropsychology, a subspecialty of neuropsychology, focuses on the assessment of the normal and abnormal cognitive and psychological changes which accompany the adult aging process.

In this minor rotation, interns and students receive training in the neuropsychological assessment of older adult patients with a wide variety of neurological and psychological disorders. These disorders include Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, frontal lobe dementia, stroke and vascular dementia, as well as depression, somatization disorder and personality disorder.

This rotation also provides significant training in general adult neuropsychology. Interns and students will have numerous opportunities to evaluate young and middle-aged adults with neurological and psychological conditions such as epilepsy, multiple sclerosis, traumatic brain injury, and psychogenic seizures. The Neuropsychology Service receives outpatient referrals from the Neurology and Memory clinics at Kirklin Clinic, and inpatient referrals from the General Neurology and Comprehensive Stroke services of UAB Hospital.

The rotation is available at either an introductory or advanced level, depending on the intern or student's level of experience. Single or multiple rotations are possible. Training is structured according to the intern or student’s experience level. Trainees with more limited experience first learn to administer and score a wide variety of neuropsychological and psychological test instruments relevant to older and younger adult assessment. Trainees next learn how to interpret and integrate the different test results and arrive at a diagnosis and set of recommendations. During this phase the intern or student will receive supervision in the composition of well-organized and written test reports. Finally, trainees learn to conduct neuropsychological interviews of the patient and his/her family, and as appropriate, are responsible for following up with family members concerning the test results. Trainees with more advanced experience will concentrate on case formulation and report writing skills. Opportunities for involvement in forensic and competency cases are also available to such trainees.

The Neuropsychology Service is part of the Department of Neurology at UAB. Our clinic is housed within the main hospital building, and has a patient waiting room, three testing rooms, several personal computers, and work stations for interns. (The Laboratory also has two satellite clinics housed within the outpatient Neurology Clinic of the Kirklin Clinic, and a research clinic in the Kracke building.) The Laboratory is a busy place with a clinical coordinator, research coordinator, four full time psychometricians, and a post-doctoral fellow (Jaci Phillips, M.A.). Dr. Marson and Dr. Griffith will oversee the rotation and provide supervision.

Interested interns and graduate students should contact Dr. Marson at 934-2334 or dmarson@uab.edu.