

GERIATRIC AND ADULT NEUROPSYCHOLOGY
Department of Neurology, Division of Neuropsychology
Dr. Kristen Triebel / Dr. Daniel Marson

MINOR INTERNSHIP ROTATION
MEDICAL PSYCHOLOGY ASSISTANTSHIP/PRACTICUM

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, respectively, 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 three 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 mild cognitive impairment (MCI), Alzheimer's disease (AD), Parkinson's disease, frontal lobe dementia, dementia with Lewy bodies, stroke/vascular dementia, brain cancer, multiple sclerosis, as well as other disorders seen in neurology. There will be opportunities to evaluate patients with movement disorders who are being considered for Deep Brain Stimulation surgery.

This rotation also provides significant training in general adult neuropsychological assessment. Interns and students will have opportunities to evaluate young and middle-aged adults with neurological conditions such as multiple sclerosis and traumatic brain injury. The Neuropsychology Service receives outpatient referral from the Memory Disorder, Movement Disorder, and General Neurology clinics at The Kirklin Clinic, from geriatric and primary care services at UAB Hospital, and from the greater Birmingham and Alabama medical community.

The rotation is available at either an introductory or advanced level, depending on the intern or student's level of experience. Where possible, preference is given to students with more advanced experience. Training is structured according to the intern or student's experience level. Trainees with more limited experience first learn to administer and score a variety of neuropsychological and psychological test instruments relevant to older and younger adult assessment. Trainees next learn how to interpret and integrate the test results and arrive at a diagnosis and a set of recommendations. During this phase the intern or student will receive supervision in the composition of well-organized and written test reports. Trainees also learn to conduct neuropsychological interviews of the patient and his/her family, and to provide feedback with the patient and/or family members regarding the test results. Trainees with more advanced experience will concentrate on case formulation and report writing skills.

In addition to clinical training, there is a wide variety of research opportunities available for interested students and interns who receive approval for such activity. This includes participation in NIH or institutionally funded projects in the areas of MCI/AD, TBI, brain cancer, and Parkinson's disease, and involves competency, neuroimaging, and cognitive studies.

The Neuropsychology Service is a Division in the Department of Neurology at UAB. Our clinic is located in the Sparks Center (6th floor), and has a patient waiting room, four testing rooms and two interview rooms, several personal computers, and office space for postdoctoral fellows, interns, and practicum students. The Neuropsychology Service is a busy clinical and research environment with three neuropsychologists, an administrator, a neuroimaging lab manager, an administrative assistant, four full-time psychology assistants, and a post-doctoral fellow. Dr. Triebel and Dr. Marson oversee the rotation.

Interested interns and graduate students should contact Dr. Triebel at ktriebel@uab.edu.