

Training and Education in Professional Psychology

Doctoral Training in Counseling Psychology: Analyses of 20-Year Trends, Differences Across the Practice-Research Continuum, and Comparisons With Clinical Psychology

John C. Norcross, Michael A. Sayette, and Caitlin A. Martin-Wagar

Online First Publication, March 9, 2020. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tep0000306>

CITATION

Norcross, J. C., Sayette, M. A., & Martin-Wagar, C. A. (2020, March 9). Doctoral Training in Counseling Psychology: Analyses of 20-Year Trends, Differences Across the Practice-Research Continuum, and Comparisons With Clinical Psychology. *Training and Education in Professional Psychology*. Advance online publication. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/tep0000306>

Doctoral Training in Counseling Psychology: Analyses of 20-Year Trends, Differences Across the Practice-Research Continuum, and Comparisons With Clinical Psychology

John C. Norcross
University of Scranton

Michael A. Sayette
University of Pittsburgh

Caitlin A. Martin-Wagar
University of Akron

Training in counseling psychology boasts a distinguished history, but not much longitudinal research on its broad parameters. This study tracked doctoral training in APA-accredited counseling psychology across 20 years (1995–2015) in terms of program, student, and faculty characteristics. At each interval, more than 95% of the programs participated. Temporal changes include the emergence of PsyD counseling programs, a gradual decline in the average number of applicants, and pronounced increases in the percentage of women and ethnic minority students. Faculty theoretical orientations remained consistent; about 45% cognitive-behavioral, 30% existential/humanistic, 22% systems, and 20% psychodynamic. Programs' respective placement along the practice-research continuum (practice oriented, equal emphasis, research oriented) replicated findings that the "model does matter" concerning admission requirements and financial assistance. Comparisons between counseling psychology PhD programs ($n = 54$) and clinical psychology PhD programs ($n = 169$) indicated proportionally more behavioral and cognitive orientations among clinical faculty and more psychodynamic and humanistic orientations among counseling faculty. Clinical programs featured more student applications and higher Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, whereas counseling programs reported proportionally more ethnic minority students. These findings can guide graduate programs, potential applicants, and academic advisors in accurately portraying the multiple training options for health-service psychology.


Public Significance Statement

Graduate training profoundly impacts the activities and interests of mental health professionals. This study identifies training trends in counseling psychology and compares them with clinical psychology. The results can inform potential clinicians, academic advisors, and the general public about the characteristics and practices of psychologists.

Keywords: counseling psychology, clinical training, theoretical orientations, graduate student characteristics, graduate admission requirements, clinical psychology

Counseling psychology, and the larger field of professional psychology, has frequently considered its intended activities, debated its distinctiveness in health-service psychology, revisited its

training mission, and examined its members. This lengthy and distinguished history, however, has not frequently entailed longitudinal research on its training programs. Moreover, less is known

 JOHN C. NORCROSS, PhD, ABPP, is Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of Scranton and Adjunct Professor of Psychiatry at SUNY Upstate Medical University. He received his doctorate from the University of Rhode Island and completed his clinical psychology internship at Brown University School of Medicine. His research interests center on psychotherapy, clinical training, and graduate education.

MICHAEL A. SAYETTE, PhD, is Professor and Director of Graduate Studies in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pittsburgh, where he directs the Alcohol and Smoking Research Laboratory. He received his doctorate from Rutgers University and completed a clinical psychology internship at Brown University School of Medicine.

His research interests include social, cognitive, and affective characteristics of cigarette craving, and psychological theories of alcohol use and abuse.

CAITLIN A. MARTIN-WAGAR, MA, is a doctoral candidate in counseling psychology at the University of Akron and is completing her clinical internship at the Minneapolis VA Medical Center. Her research interests include eating disorders, sexual trauma, emotional dysregulation, and PTSD. She is also passionate about health outcomes associated with systems of oppression.

CORRESPONDENCE CONCERNING THIS ARTICLE should be addressed to John C. Norcross, Department of Psychology, University of Scranton, 800 Linden Street, Scranton, PA 18510-4596. E-mail: norcross@scranton.edu

about doctoral training in counseling psychology due to its substantially fewer doctoral programs (and thus counseling psychologists) than clinical psychology programs.

This study aspires to provide a relatively comprehensive and longitudinal examination of the overarching trends in counseling psychology training—to examine the “forest,” not only the “trees.” Our results pose interesting implications for how programs define themselves and their curriculum, as well as how they communicate with others about their programs, including their administrators and potential applicants. We envision these temporal and comparative results helping training programs be more intentional in how they organize their programs (as counseling, clinical, or combined); administrators understand how to support and promote these graduate programs, particularly in the era of increasing cost-efficiency; students base their application decisions on accurate information; and fellow psychologists appreciate the distinctive values of counseling programs among health-service psychology.

Each year, tens of thousands of potential graduate students begin their search for doctoral training in professional psychology that fits their needs (APA, 2017). Because the differences and similarities between counseling and clinical psychology remain of keen interest to graduate programs, training directors, prospective students, and academic advisors, more reliable information about program, faculty, and student characteristics is warranted.

In this study, we track doctoral training in counseling psychology across two decades (1995–2015) and analyze program, student, and faculty characteristics at 4-year intervals across that span. We then examine potential differences in these APA-accredited counseling programs across the practice-research continuum (practice oriented, equal emphasis, and research oriented). Finally, we compare the most recent data on counseling psychology programs with clinical psychology programs.

Longitudinal Trends

We are unaware of any published longitudinal studies on all counseling psychology programs beyond the indirect information provided in the *APA Graduate Study in Psychology*. The response rate of that biennial and now annual survey of psychology graduate programs is typically in the 70% range (American Psychological Association, 2017). Analyses of the *Graduate Study in Psychology* database over the years (e.g., Norcross, Kohout, & Wicherski, 2005; Stoup & Benjamin, 1982) have not focused specifically on any subfield, but some trends are evident, nonetheless. For example, the total number of counseling psychology graduate programs has inched higher over the years, but the subfield has not experienced the explosion of other professional/health service fields in psychology (APA, 2017). Counseling psychology doctorates now account for approximately 8% of all doctorates in psychology (clinical psychology for more than half).

Model Differences

Neimeyer, Saferstein, and Rice (2005) asked whether “the model matters” in counseling psychology. Does the training model embraced by counseling psychology programs matter in relation to program and student outcomes? They compared 36 practice-oriented, equal-emphasis, and research-oriented counseling psy-

chology PhD programs (response rate = 50%) in terms of six faculty activities and four student activities related to research. In a second study (in the same article), they compared three aspects of internship match among nine practice-oriented, 37 equal-emphasis, and 19 research-oriented counseling programs. Practice-oriented counseling psychology students were less likely than students in equal-emphasis or research-oriented counseling psychology programs to present articles at professional meetings. Students from the three types of counseling psychology programs fared equally well in matching to APA-accredited internships, but students from the equal-emphasis and research-oriented programs were matched at higher rates to university counseling centers and VAMC settings. Overall, the results of their studies supported the conceptually consistent relationship between the training model and program outcomes.

Five years later, Norcross, Evans, and Ellis (2010) revisited the question of whether the model matters with a larger database (66 programs) and a higher response rate (99%) of APA-accredited counseling psychology programs. Research-oriented programs were distinctive in lower acceptance rates, higher quantitative GREs, and longer training. Along with equal-emphasis programs, research-oriented programs awarded significantly more financial assistance than practice-oriented programs. This pattern of between-program results essentially parallels those found in the field of clinical psychology (e.g., Cherry, Messenger, & Jacoby, 2000; Gaddy, Charlot-Swilley, Nelson, & Reich, 1995; Norcross, Castle, Sayette, & Mayne, 2004; Sayette, Norcross, & Dimoff, 2011).

Comparisons With Clinical Psychology Programs

A recurrent question among prospective psychologists, career advisors, and graduate faculty is how counseling psychology differs specifically from clinical psychology. The research on this query largely hails from comparisons of their respective professional activities and career outcomes. Below we outline the results of those comparisons, along with some data-based differences in training.

The easiest and most accurate conclusion is that the traditional distinctions between clinical psychology and counseling psychology have steadily faded. Both types of accredited programs prepare licensed, doctoral-level psychologists who can provide health care services, secure psychology licensure, and practice autonomously. The APA ceased distinguishing many years ago between clinical and counseling psychology internships; almost all jurisdictions in the U.S. license psychologists generically. Studies on the functions of clinical and counseling psychologists substantiate robust similarities (e.g., Brems & Johnson, 1997; Goodyear et al., 2016, 2008; Norcross & Karpiak, 2012).

In terms of training and students, the average acceptance rates of PhD clinical (6%) and PhD counseling (8%) psychology programs are quite similar despite the higher number of applications to clinical programs (e.g., Norcross, Evans, & Ellis, 2010; Norcross, Sayette, Mayne, Karg, & Turkson, 1998; Sayette et al., 2011). The grade point averages (GPAs) and GRE scores for incoming students were nearly identical in PhD clinical and PhD counseling psychology programs (3.5 for both).

At the same time, six robust differences between clinical psychology and counseling psychology still prove visible (Lichten-

berg, Goodyear, Hutman, & Overland, 2016; Norcross et al., 2010; Norcross et al., 1998; Sayette et al., 2011). First, clinical psychology graduate programs are almost exclusively housed in departments or schools of psychology, whereas counseling psychology graduate programs are located in a variety of departments (one quarter in psychology departments, one quarter in departments of counseling psychology, one quarter in departments or colleges of education, and one quarter in assorted other departments). Second, clinical psychology graduates are more likely trained in projective and intellectual assessment, whereas counseling psychology graduates conduct more career and vocational assessment. Third, counseling psychologists more frequently endorse a humanistic or person-centered/Rogerian approach to psychotherapy, whereas clinical psychologists are more likely to embrace cognitive-behavioral or psychodynamic orientations. Fourth, one third of doctoral counseling psychology programs require a master's degree prior to entry; essentially no clinical psychology program requires a master's degree before admission (Littleford, Buxton, Bucher, Simon-Dack, & Yang, 2018; Norcross, Sayette, Stratigis, & Zimmerman, 2014).

The other two differences concern employment outcomes and research areas. Research (e.g., Bechtoldt, Norcross, Wyckoff, Pokrywa, & Campbell, 2001; Norcross & Karpiak, 2012) consistently reveals that 15% more clinical psychologists are employed in full-time independent practice than are counseling psychologists, but 10% more of the latter are employed in college counseling centers. Sixth and final, counseling psychology faculty report more research involvement than clinical faculty in minority/multicultural issues (69% vs. 32% of programs) and vocational/career testing (62% vs. 1% of programs). The clinical psychology faculty, in turn, are far more active in research pertaining to psychopathology (e.g., anxiety disorders, depression, personality disorders) and activities traditionally associated with medical settings (e.g., neuropsychology, pain management, pediatric psychology).

Counseling psychology training boasts plentiful data on individual programs but not an overarching perspective across programs and across time. Within this context, the present study was designed to analyze 20-year trends in program, student, and faculty characteristics across APA-accredited counseling psychology programs. What has remained stable and what has changed over the past two decades? Looking then within programs, we examine potential differences in program and student characteristics according to the practice-research continuum. Does the model still robustly matter in counseling psychology training? Lastly, we compare the most recent findings on counseling psychology PhD programs with those of clinical psychology PhD programs. What are the vital similarities and residual differences between them? In more expansive terms, these analyses permit a fairly novel way to examine the big picture of doctoral training in counseling psychology and to potentially inform health-service psychology more broadly.

Method

We collected program data from directors of APA-accredited counseling and clinical psychology doctoral programs every 4 years from 1995 to 2015. Only fully accredited programs were included; those not accredited or on probation were excluded.

Directors of clinical training provided data on several program, faculty, and student characteristics. These data can be found in each edition of the *Insider's Guide to Graduate Programs in Clinical and Counseling Psychology* (Norcross & Sayette, 2016). Data were collected the year prior to book publication; for example, the 2015 results were published in the 2016/2017 edition of the book. The questions asked of directors of clinical training remained relatively stable, with several minor additions over the years (noted with "NA" designations in Table 2).

The program information collected included the following: type of degree program (PhD, PsyD); program emphasis on the practice-research continuum (1–7 rating, with 1 being *most focused on practice*, 4 *equally emphasizing research and practice*, and 7 being *most focused on research*); average number of years to complete the program, including internship; attrition from the program over the past 7 years; percentage of students who received APA-accredited internships; percentage of students receiving full tuition waiver only, assistantship/fellowship only, or both full tuition waiver and assistantship/fellowship; and number of applications received, number of offers extended to students, and number of incoming students.

Faculty information focused on theoretical orientation. That was operationalized as the percentage of faculty subscribing to psychodynamic/psychoanalytic, applied behavioral/radical behavioral, family systems/systems, existential/humanistic, and cognitive/cognitive-behavioral approaches. Percentages did not need to sum to 100. Eclectic/integrative was not offered as an option, and some programs elected to add other orientations.

Information was also collected on doctoral student characteristics. These included average verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing GRE scores of accepted students (converted to the new score format), mean GPAs of accepted students, the percentage of incoming students with a BA/BS only or a master's degree, and the percentage of students identifying as women, ethnic minorities, and international.

Response rates for the counseling psychology programs were above 95% for each year included. Depending on the year (see Table 1), between 57 and 67 counseling psychology programs produced data. Response rates for clinical psychology programs were also above 95%. Between 157 and 236 clinical psychology programs had available data, depending on the year.

New doctoral programs emerged during the 20-year data collection period, and other programs closed or did not report data each interval. Thus, repeated-measures analyses of variances (ANOVAs) and multilevel modeling (MLM) proved unsuitable. Instead, for the longitudinal analyses, we present trends of averages and frequencies for the counseling psychology programs in tables and figures. For the cross-sectional analyses of the 2015 data within counseling psychology programs as well as between counseling and clinical programs, we relied on the standard ANOVA and MANOVAs to identify statistical differences (Student-Newman-Keuls post hoc comparisons).

Results

Analysis of 20-Year Trends

The means and standard deviations for counseling psychology program and student characteristics that demonstrated notable

Table 1

Means and Standard Deviations of Variables Demonstrating Notable Longitudinal Shifts in APA-Accredited Counseling Psychology Programs

Variables	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011	2015
# of programs	57	58	65	64	66	67
% programs awarding PsyD	0.0	5.2	4.6	4.7	3.0	7.5
% women students	65.48 (16.82)	67.45 (13.49)	70.73 (10.05)	72.01 (10.99)	73.38 (13.31)	72.11 (12.53)
% ethnic minority students	24.40 (11.71)	26.71 (12.35)	29.02 (17.19)	29.72 (14.07)	31.95 (16.99)	33.47 (16.91)
# of applications	132.23 (53.74)	106.05 (61.43)	74.71 (43.91)	84.57 (51.82)	86.09 (46.49)	99.28 (58.28)
% of students accepted	7.56 (3.71)	10.87 (7.21)	19.90 (12.58)	17.46 (12.44)	15.33 (10.69)	14.94 (12.25)
% students receiving assistantship/fellowship only	8.02 (16.92)	14.38 (26.15)	14.91 (24.96)	16.02 (27.41)	22.26 (34.54)	22.05 (36.07)

Note. Standard deviations are presented in parentheses.

changes during the 20-year period are presented in Table 1. The number of counseling psychology programs increased by 17.5% from 57 programs in 1995 to 67 programs in 2015. Half of that increase in APA-accredited counseling programs can be attributed to the addition of PsyD programs, which rose from zero in 1995 to five in 2015.

The average number of applicants to counseling psychology programs experienced a gradual but variable decline. In the 1990s, the number of applicants averaged 130, but more recently in the 80s or 90s per program (approximately 33% less than in 1995). As a consequence, the mean percent of applicants admitted has risen over time from 8% to 15%.

The funding available to incoming doctoral students also morphed during the 20-year time period. The percent of students receiving only an assistantship or fellowship rose steadily from 8% in 1995 to 22% in 2015. At the same time, the percent of students receiving only a tuition waiver and those who received both a tuition waiver and an assistantship/fellowship remained relatively stable. Overall, these findings indicate that program funding to counseling psychology doctoral students has risen slightly during the 20-year period, but as presented

below, funding patterns are strongly related to the type of counseling psychology program.

Probably the most notable change within counseling psychology programs is the percentage of women and ethnic minority students enrolled. The average percentage of women increased 10% over the 20-year period; now, almost three quarters of students in counseling psychology programs are women. The average percentage of racial and ethnic minorities increased by 37% from 1995 to 2015; now, racial and ethnic minorities comprise about one third of counseling psychology doctoral students.

Many features of counseling psychology programs remained relatively stable, with occasional fluctuations, over the 20-year period (see Table 2). Faculty theoretical orientations, for one, remained quite consistent: cognitive/cognitive-behavioral at about 45%; existential/humanistic at about 30%; family systems at 22%; psychodynamic/psychoanalytic at 20%; and behavioral at 2% or 3%. Program ratings on the practice-research continuum also remained constant over the decades, with average ratings at 4 on the 7-point scale. The average number of admission offers consistently ranged between nine and 10, with

Table 2

Means and Standard Deviations of Variables Evidencing Temporal Stability in APA-Accredited Counseling Psychology Programs

Variables	1995	1999	2003	2007	2011	2015
% cognitive faculty	43.15 (26.77)	42.21 (24.90)	42.95 (22.91)	43.28 (22.89)	41.63 (22.59)	45.08 (23.49)
% psychodynamic/analytic faculty	20.35 (15.41)	18.79 (14.43)	18.41 (17.27)	18.86 (14.85)	19.21 (16.41)	21.30 (21.67)
% behavioral faculty	4.86 (12.05)	4.41 (8.63)	4.02 (10.82)	2.98 (6.81)	1.73 (4.49)	1.60 (4.89)
% existential/humanistic faculty	28.03 (17.61)	27.96 (19.01)	28.29 (19.96)	28.37 (21.63)	31.95 (22.78)	32.88 (23.75)
% systems faculty	21.08 (16.51)	22.88 (17.37)	23.92 (17.49)	21.65 (17.70)	19.72 (17.49)	22.08 (19.90)
Rating on practice-research continuum	4.14 (0.69)	4.14 (0.80)	4.18 (0.86)	4.28 (0.90)	4.31 (0.87)	4.25 (0.94)
GRE verbal score	159.38 (3.06)	158.15 (3.05)	157.36 (2.53)	156.43 (2.64)	156.25 (2.67)	156.86 (3.82)
GRE quantitative score	148.29 (2.31)	147.80 (2.40)	147.74 (2.43)	148.21 (2.87)	149.00 (3.44)	149.88 (3.76)
Overall/cumulative GPA	3.54 (0.20)	3.51 (0.20)	3.50 (0.23)	3.57 (0.19)	3.59 (0.19)	3.64 (0.21)
# of admission offers	8.77 (3.12)	8.67 (3.01)	10.60 (3.50)	10.45 (3.74)	9.91 (3.59)	10.08 (4.61)
% of incoming students	NA	NA	7.32 (2.22)	6.73 (2.14)	6.84 (2.50)	6.85 (2.37)
% students entering with bachelor degrees only	30.55 (30.94)	28.59 (32.31)	31.22 (31.09)	32.72 (30.16)	37.18 (33.44)	32.79 (29.59)
% of students entering with master's degrees	68.39 (30.66)	71.41 (32.31)	68.85 (31.41)	67.67 (30.07)	62.65 (33.31)	67.20 (29.60)
% students receiving full tuition waiver only	6.43 (16.18)	2.64 (7.77)	5.74 (18.73)	4.69 (18.15)	3.20 (14.22)	5.43 (18.80)
% students receiving full tuition waiver and assistantship/fellowship	66.54 (35.71)	63.91 (39.23)	65.02 (36.22)	72.03 (38.87)	65.65 (41.12)	68.49 (42.38)
% of students who are international	NA	NA	NA	8.00 (6.40)	10.10 (10.15)	7.96 (7.34)
# years to complete program	NA	NA	5.49 (0.82)	5.53 (0.76)	5.74 (0.79)	5.69 (0.82)
% applicants accepted into APA internships	NA	92.11 (13.87)	91.54 (16.87)	NA	NA	80.23 (26.09)
Attrition rate in past 7 years	NA	NA	NA	8.28 (5.12)	8.65 (4.85)	7.46 (4.48)

Note. GRE = Graduate Record Examination; GPA = grade point averages; NA = data not available. Standard deviations are presented in parentheses.

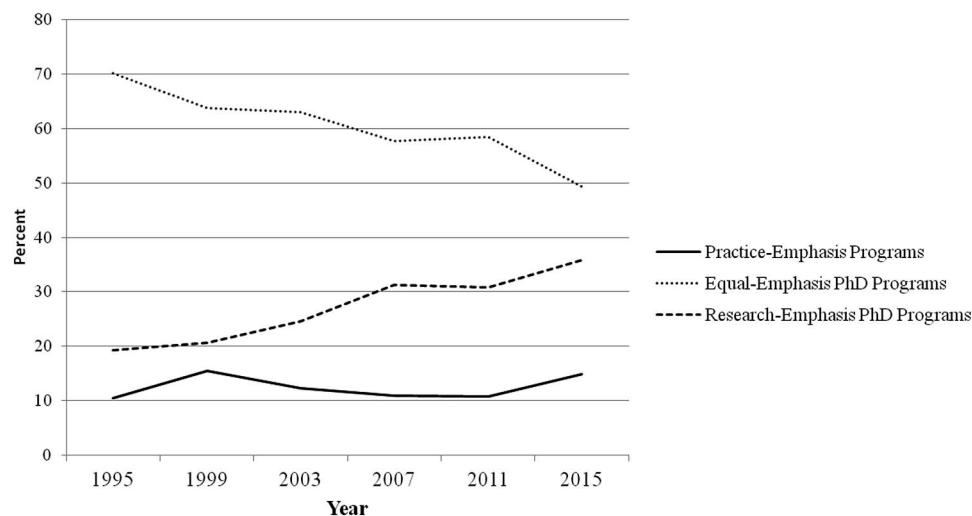


Figure 1. Percent of counseling psychology programs characterized as practice oriented, equal emphasis, and research oriented from 1995 to 2015. Practice-emphasis programs rated themselves 1–3 on the 1–7 continuum and all PsyD programs; equal-emphasis PhD programs rated themselves a 4; research-emphasis PhD programs rating themselves 5–7.

the number of incoming students per year at six or seven, indicating cohort size has remained stable. The percentage of students entering with only a bachelor's remained around the low 30% most of the time. Enrolled students' average GRE scores and GPAs stayed about the same. The percentage of international students admitted was not collected until 2007, but has been at 8% to 10% since that time. The number of years to complete the program (including internship) remained consistent, as did the proportion of doctoral students leaving the programs, at approximately 8%.

Differences Across the Practice-Research Continuum

Counseling psychology programs were considered *practice oriented* ($n = 10$) if they indicated a 1–3 or if they were a PsyD program, *equal emphasis* ($n = 33$) if they indicated a 4, and *research oriented* ($n = 24$) if they indicated a 5–7 rating on the practice-research continuum.

Using this categorization, Figure 1 presents the percentage of programs characterized as practice oriented, equal emphasis, and research oriented over the years. In 1995, 70% of APA-accredited counseling psychology programs were equal emphasis, but in 2015, that percentage was down to less than 50. The concomitant rise in programs characterizing themselves as research oriented; from 20% to nearly 40% during that time interval.

Counseling psychology program, faculty, and student variables were compared on their placement along the research-practice continuum for the 2015 data. Table 3 summarizes the significant program differences as a function of the practice-research continuum and also reports the correlations between the program's practice-research emphasis (7-point continuous variable) and the statistically significant variables.

The average GRE scores of students differed significantly across the program research-practice continuum. On the verbal scale, students in the research-oriented programs scored higher

Table 3

ANOVA Results for Research-Practice Emphasis on Counseling Psychology Program, Faculty, and Student Characteristics

Characteristic	Practice-oriented programs	Equal emphasis programs	Research-oriented Programs	<i>F</i> (<i>df</i>)	<i>p</i>	<i>r</i>
# of applications	73.50	84.81	132.05 ^b	6.37 (2, 61)	.003	.36*
% accepted	30.97 ^b	13.88	9.19	16.60 (2, 61)	<.001	-.19*
% students receiving full tuition waiver & assistantship	39.50 ^a	65.88	84.74 ^a	4.54 (2, 63)	.014	.34*
% women students	80.03 ^a	68.41 ^a	73.74	3.93 (2, 63)	.025	-.10
% ethnic minority students	22.88 ^a	32.98	38.51 ^a	3.25 (2, 62)	.045	.37*
# years to complete program	5.21 ^a	5.59	6.01 ^a	3.93 (2, 61)	.025	.34*
GRE verbal score	154.50 ^a	156.32	158.76 ^a	4.44 (2, 47)	.017	.40*
GRE quantitative score	147.00	148.92	152.59 ^b	10.53 (2, 46)	<.001	.51*

Note. ANOVA = analyses of variances; GRE = Graduate Record Examination.

^a Significantly differs from one other group. ^b Significantly differs from both other groups.

* Significant correlation at .01 level with continuous research-practice emphasis.

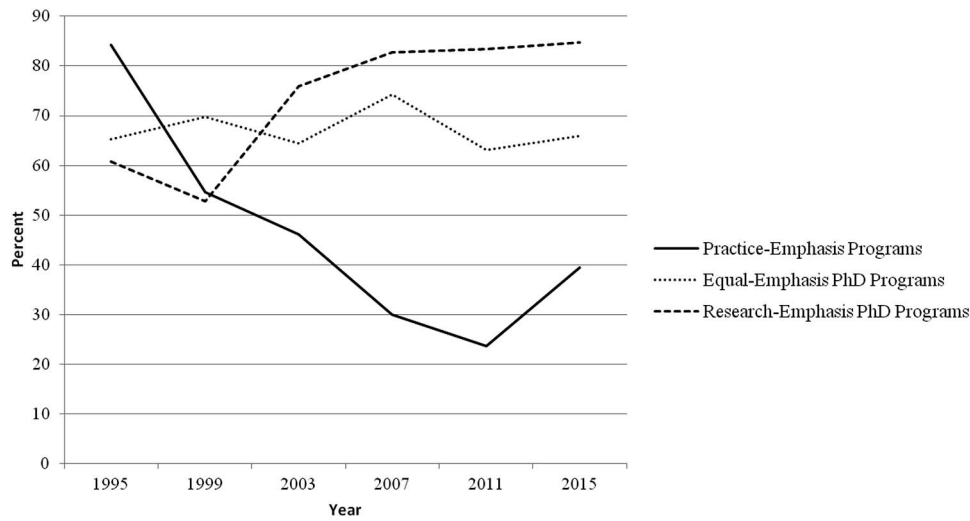


Figure 2. Full tuition waiver and assistantship/fellowship by type of counseling psychology program from 1995 to 2015.

than those in the practice-oriented programs, and likewise on the quantitative scale, research-oriented program students scored higher than students in both the practice-oriented and equal emphasis programs. Students in the research-oriented programs averaged almost a year longer (including internship) to complete their doctorates than their counterparts in practice-oriented programs.

Research-oriented programs enrolled significantly more ethnic minority students than practice-oriented programs (means of 39% vs. 23%). At the same time, practice-oriented programs had significantly more women enrolled in the program than equal emphasis programs (80% vs. 68%).

Although the number of admission offers did not differ across program type, the average number of applications did. Research-oriented programs received far more applications than the practice-oriented and equal emphasis programs. As a result, the percentage of students offered acceptance all differed significantly: Practice-

oriented programs accepted a higher percentage of applicants than research-oriented and equal emphasis programs.

Research-oriented programs provided more direct financial assistance to their incoming students than did the other program types, and their admitted students scored higher on standardized entrance examinations. Research-oriented programs provided both a full tuition waiver and an assistantship/fellowship (85% of students) significantly more often than practice-oriented programs (about 40%).

We examined longitudinal patterns of funding based on the program emphasis on the research-practice continuum. As displayed in Figure 2, research-oriented programs show a steady increase in full tuition waivers and assistantships/fellowships, equal emphasis programs remain relatively stable, and practice-oriented programs show an overall decrease in full funding until a sharp increase in 2015, though still lower than 20 years ago.

Table 4
Counseling Psychology PhD Programs Versus Clinical Psychology PhD Programs on Program Characteristics

Characteristic	Counseling programs		Clinical programs		$F(10, 212)$	p	Partial η^2
	M	SD	M	SD			
Research-practice emphasis	4.39	0.79	5.01	0.99	17.65	<.001	.07
% students receiving full tuition waiver and assistantship	73.19	39.91	77.78	39.71	0.55	.461	.00
Psychodynamic/psychoanalytic	19.43	17.91	11.90	16.98	7.83	.006	.03
Applied behavioral analysis/radical behavioral	1.37	4.54	7.51	11.45	14.76	<.001	.06
Family systems/systems	20.94	18.88	15.38	14.35	5.24	.023	.02
Existential/ humanistic	33.72	23.31	7.47	13.35	106.07	<.001	.32
Cognitive/cognitive-behavioral	44.44	22.86	72.62	24.31	56.54	<.001	.20
Applications received	106.02	56.93	209.89	125.51	34.62	<.001	.14
% students accepted	11.94	7.30	8.65	9.42	5.54	.019	.02
# of incoming students	6.65	2.03	7.89	5.87	2.31	.130	.01

Table 5
Counseling Psychology PhD Programs Versus Clinical Psychology PhD Programs on Student Characteristics

Characteristic	Counseling programs		Clinical programs		$F(8, 150)$	p	Partial η^2
	M	SD	M	SD			
Undergraduate GPA	3.65	0.20	3.68	0.11	1.25	.265	.01
GRE verbal	157.53	3.76	159.79	3.29	13.18	<.001	.08
GRE quantitative	150.40	3.73	154.27	3.53	34.92	<.001	.18
% incoming with bachelor's	39.54	27.90	78.82	19.55	96.09	<.001	.38
% incoming with master's	60.44	27.92	21.16	19.54	96.10	<.001	.38
% women students	69.78	12.10	75.33	10.86	7.39	.007	.05
% ethnic minority students	36.78	17.28	22.48	12.92	30.65	<.001	.16
% international students	9.37	8.10	5.60	5.91	9.97	.002	.06

Differences Between Counseling and Clinical Psychology Programs

Counseling psychology PhD programs ($n = 54$) were compared with clinical psychology PhD programs ($n = 169$) across the 2015 program and student variables using two MANOVAs. The PsyD programs were excluded from these analyses to avoid conflating the degree/training model (PhD vs. PsyD) with the program specialty/subdiscipline (counseling vs. clinical).

Generally, in the MANOVA containing the program variables a statistically significant difference was found between the counseling and clinical PhD programs, $F(10, 212) = 22.17, p < .001$. Specifically, as summarized in Table 4, higher percentages of clinical psychology faculty endorsed behavioral (8% vs. 1%) and cognitive-behavioral (73% vs. 44%) orientations than counseling programs. Conversely, higher percentages of faculty in counseling programs endorsed systems (21% vs. 15%), psychodynamic (19% vs. 12%), and humanistic (34% vs. 7%) orientations. Clinical PhD programs received almost twice as many applications as counseling PhD programs and offered admission to a smaller proportion of students (9% vs. 12%). Finally, clinical psychology programs were significantly closer to the research emphasis end of the research-practice continuum (5 vs. 4). There were no significant differences among counseling and clinical programs on tuition waiver and assistantship/fellowship and number of incoming students.

A MANOVA on student characteristics found multiple differences between the counseling and clinical PhD programs, $F(8, 150) = 17.52, p < .001$, as summarized in Table 5. Counseling psychology programs enrolled proportionally more master's (60% vs. 21%), ethnic minority (37% vs. 22%), and international (9% vs. 6%) students than the clinical programs. Clinical programs, by contrast, enrolled a slightly higher percentage of women students (75% vs. 70%) and students with slightly higher verbal GRE (160 vs. 158) and quantitative GRE (154 vs. 150) scores than counseling programs.

Discussion

Whither counseling psychology training? The longitudinal analyses paint a picture of gradually growing, academically competitive, financially attractive, culturally diverse, and theoretically pluralistic doctoral programs. The number of APA-accredited counseling psychology programs increased slowly, albeit steadily, across the 20-year period studied. Despite the closure in recent years of several PhD

programs, PsyD programs in counseling psychology have appeared. The doctoral programs remain competitive in nature, accepting an average of only 15% of applicants. Incoming students have earned strong GRE scores (149 quantitative, 157 verbal) and GPAs (3.6). Two thirds of the students are women, one third are racial/ethnic minorities, and 8% to 10% are international students.

By contemporary standards, counseling psychology programs typically provide generous financial assistance: Two thirds of enrolled students received both full tuition waivers and assistantships/fellowships, and most of the remainder were afforded some financial assistance directly by the program. Most counseling doctoral programs, including its PsyD programs, provide students with financial resources to succeed and avoid outrageous levels of graduate school debt. In health-service psychology, counseling psychology programs occupy a distinctive niche in terms of professional activities (e.g., career counseling, vocational assessment), research areas (e.g., multicultural issues), and diversity commitments.

Counseling psychology students are also regularly exposed in graduate training to a variety of theoretical orientations, including cognitive-behavioral, humanistic, systems, and psychodynamic (all with greater than 20% of faculty). This differs to some degree with clinical psychology training. Three recent studies have assessed the theoretical orientations of clinical psychology faculty from the *Insider's Guide* data (Heatherington et al., 2012; Levy & Anderson, 2013; Norcross, Sayette, & Pomerantz, 2018). The percentage of clinical psychology faculty endorsing Cognitive Behavior Therapy (CBT) jumped by about 50% during the past two decades; substantial increases were seen in PsyD programs and all types of PhD programs.

But not so in counseling psychology programs. Here, the cognitive orientation has remained within the 40% to 45% range for the entirety of the last two decades. Nor were there differences in the faculty prevalence of CBT as a function of the program type along the practice-research continuum. The traditions of theoretical pluralism and humanistic orientation in counseling psychology prove fully in evidence, whereas clinical psychology shows a greater attraction to CBT.

Another trend in clinical psychology training does not apparently confront counseling psychology to the same extent: The conflict between "getting in" (probability of admission) and "getting money" (probability of financial assistance). In the most extreme comparison, students applying to APA-accredited clinical programs face the pros-

pect of 50% acceptance rates and 1% full funding (full tuition remission plus assistantship/fellowship) in freestanding PsyD programs versus 7% acceptance rates and 89% full funding in research-oriented PhD programs (Norcross et al., 2010, 2018).

The “model does matter” in counseling psychology, but without those harsh financial consequences. Practice-oriented counseling psychology programs (including the five PsyD programs) provided a full tuition waiver plus an assistantship to approximately 40% of their students. That was almost half of the 85% of students in the research-oriented counseling psychology programs, but substantially higher than the clinical PsyD program full financial assistance in the single digits.

Counseling psychology’s historical endorsement of scientist-practitioner training has probably insulated it from some of the draconian effects of the large, occasionally for-profit PsyD programs in independent or specialized institutions. In 2015, all five of the APA-accredited counseling PsyD programs (Carlow University, Chatham University, Our Lady of the Lake, Radford University, University of St. Thomas) were medium-sized, non-profit, comprehensive universities; all accepted only students with master’s degrees as well. Practice-oriented programs in counseling psychology remain firmly tethered to university-based training. This is an area of increasing concern within health-service psychology training, with notable increases in the number of large for-profit graduate programs and the recent closing of a chain of 10 clinical PsyD programs (Argosy University) due to allegations of financial impropriety (APA, 2019).

The training models of counseling psychology programs are embedded within institutional contexts that determine to a large extent those training models (Stoltenberg et al., 2000). Larger research institutions will probably promulgate hiring, tenure, and promotion policies that differentially reward faculty research and publication, while smaller universities are more likely to employ hiring, tenure, and promotion policies that emphasize teaching, licensing, and other practitioner credentials. A program’s training model is profoundly influenced by its institutional context; where programs are housed is a critical unexamined variable in most studies.

In this regard, we are left to wonder about the evolving self-characterization of counseling psychology programs along the practice-research continuum. In 1995, 70% of the counseling psychology programs were equal emphasis, but in 2015, that percentage was down to less than 50. The concomitant rise in programs describing themselves as research oriented, from 20% to nearly 40% during that time interval, proves surprising. What accounts for the change—a desire to highlight their scientific credentials, to acquire more research-inclined applicants, to distinguish themselves from PsyD programs, to accommodate pressure from the educational institutions? Indeed, a major contribution in *The Counseling Psychologist* on grant writing stressed the importance of extramural research funding to the continued existence of counseling psychology training programs, especially in research-focused universities (Burrow-Sánchez, Martin, & Imel, 2016; Eliott, 2016; Fouad, 2016; Martens et al., 2016).

The decline in the average number of applications to counseling psychology programs—from 130+ to 100— is probably attributable to a number of interacting forces. There are more counseling psychology programs overall, as well as more clinical programs, and the emergence of PhD programs in counselor education. All

these programs likely compete directly for applicants with counseling psychology interests.

Earlier research has shown that counseling psychology’s core value of diversity has been actualized in greater faculty involvement in multicultural research than their clinical counterparts. That core value also appears to manifest itself in enrolling proportionally more ethnic minority and international students than clinical programs. A Delphi poll on the future of counseling psychology (Taylor, Kolaski, Wright, Hashtpari, & Neimeyer, 2018) identified diversity as the single strongest core feature, a value also shared by counseling psychologists in the field (Lichtenberg, Hutman, & Goodyear, 2018; Scheel, Stabb, Cohn, Duan, & Sauer, 2018). Though clinical and counseling psychology PhD program faculty identify similar ideal diversity qualifications of applicants, counseling psychology PhD faculty report higher minimum expectations than their clinical counterparts (Karaszia & Smith, 2016). Results of our study highlight the need for research to ascertain which factors explain the higher rates of ethnic and racial minorities in counseling programs (e.g., faculty demographics, research areas, program commitment to diversity).

Future research on the evolution of counseling psychology training and its comparison with clinical psychology programs will look more deeply at program content and the diversity of faculty. In addition, research will examine the extent to which APA’s, 2017 *Standards of Accreditation for Health-Service Psychology* may influence program focus in coming years. Evaluation of training will necessarily involve more variables than collected in this study.

Several limitations should be considered when generalizing and applying these results. Our findings pertain solely to APA-accredited counseling psychology (and clinical psychology) programs. The results rely on the self-reports of institutions’ representatives, typically directors of clinical training. The raw data for individual doctoral programs presented in aggregate here are also published in the *Insider’s Guide*, which may increase accountability. Incentives for directors of clinical training to present their programs accurately may minimize concerns related to the veracity of the data. The data from each counseling psychology program were weighted equally despite the fact that some programs were larger in number of students and faculty than others. We did so because we were concerned with program data.

Comparing the counseling psychology PhD programs with heterogeneous clinical psychology PhD programs (Sayette et al., 2011) also gives us pause. Even within PhD programs, the practice-research emphasis may prove more decisive than the clinical versus counseling psychology distinction. That is, a research-oriented counseling PhD program may prove more similar to a research-oriented clinical PhD than to a practice-oriented counseling PhD program. In all professional/health care psychology training, the model does indeed matter.

We hope that this bird’s-eye view of counseling psychology training can assist graduate programs, potential applicants, and academic advisors in effectively identifying the vitality and distinctiveness of counseling psychology and in accurately portraying the multiple training options (e.g., PhD vs. PsyD, clinical vs. counseling, practice-research continuum) for doctoral training in health-service psychology. Prospective students can be advised to consider numerous admission and match considerations beyond the clinical and counseling psychology binary. Knowing the state of counseling psychology through the past two decades can inform and guide all stakeholders.

References

- American Psychological Association. (2017). *Graduate study in psychology* (2018 ed.). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- American Psychological Association. (2019). *APA affirms plans to support transition of psychology doctoral students affected by Argosy University to accredited programs*. Retrieved from www.apa.org/news/press/releases/2019/03/argosy-closure
- Bechtoldt, H., Norcross, J. C., Wyckoff, L. A., Pokrywa, M. L., & Campbell, L. F. (2001). Theoretical orientations and employment settings of clinical and counseling psychologists: A comparative study. *Clinical Psychologist*, 54, 3–6.
- Brems, C., & Johnson, M. E. (1997). Comparison of recent graduates of clinical versus counseling psychology programs. *The Journal of Psychology*, 131, 91–99. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00223989709603507>
- Burrow-Sánchez, J. J., Martin, J. L., & Imel, Z. E. (2016). Applying for grant funding as a counseling psychologist. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 44, 479–524. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000015626272>
- Cherry, D. K., Messenger, L. C., & Jacoby, A. M. (2000). An examination of training model outcomes in clinical psychology programs. *Professional Psychology, Research and Practice*, 31, 562–568. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0735-7028.31.5.562>
- Elliott, T. R. (2016). External funding and competing visions for academic counseling psychology. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 44, 525–535. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000016634867>
- Fouad, N. A. (2016). Reflections on grant writing from a vocational psychologist. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 44, 536–545. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000016639147>
- Gaddy, C. D., Charlot-Swiley, D., Nelson, P. D., & Reich, J. N. (1995). Selected outcomes of accredited programs. *Professional Psychology, Research and Practice*, 26, 507–513. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0735-7028.26.5.507>
- Goodyear, R. K., Lichtenberg, J., Hutman, H., Overland, E., Bedi, R., Christiani, K., . . . Young, C. (2016). A global portrait of counselling psychologists' characteristics, perspectives, and professional behaviors. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 29, 115–138. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2015.1128396>
- Goodyear, R. K., Murdock, N., Lichtenberg, J. W., McPherson, R., Koetting, K., & Petren, S. (2008). Stability and change in counseling psychologists' identities, roles, functions, and career satisfaction across 15 years. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 36, 220–249.
- Heatherington, L., Messer, S. B., Angus, L., Strauman, T. J., Friedlander, M. L., & Kolden, G. G. (2012). The narrowing of theoretical orientations in clinical psychology doctoral training. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 19, 364–374. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/cpsp.12012>
- Karazsia, B. T., & Smith, L. (2016). Preparing for graduate-level training in professional psychology: Comparisons across clinical PhD, counseling PhD, and clinical PsyD programs. *Teaching of Psychology*, 43, 305–313. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0098628316662760>
- Levy, K. N., & Anderson, T. (2013). Is clinical psychology doctoral training becoming less intellectually diverse? And if so, what can be done? *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 20, 211–220. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/cpsp.12035>
- Lichtenberg, J. W., Goodyear, R. K., Hutman, H., & Overland, E. A. (2016). Counselling psychology in the United States. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 29, 216–224. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2015.1127207>
- Lichtenberg, J. W., Hutman, H., & Goodyear, R. K. (2018). Portrait of counseling psychology: Demographics, roles, activities, and values across three decades. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 46, 50–76. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000018754532>
- Littleford, L. N., Buxton, K., Bucher, M. A., Simon-Dack, S. L., & Yang, K. L. (2018). Psychology doctoral program admissions: What master's and undergraduate-level students need to know. *Teaching of Psychology*, 45, 75–83. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0098628317745453>
- Martens, M. P., Herman, K. C., Takamatsu, S. K., Schmidt, L. R., Herring, T. E., Labuschagne, Z., & McAfee, N. W. (2016). An update on the status of sponsored research in counseling psychology. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 44, 450–478. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000015626271>
- Neimeyer, G. J., Saferstein, J., & Rice, K. G. (2005). Does the model matter? The relationship between science-practice emphasis and outcomes in academic training programs in counseling psychology. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 33, 635–654. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000005277821>
- Norcross, J. C., Castle, P. H., Sayette, M. A., & Mayne, T. J. (2004). The PsyD: Heterogeneity in practitioner training. *Professional Psychology, Research and Practice*, 35, 412–419. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0735-7028.35.4.412>
- Norcross, J. C., Evans, K. L., & Ellis, J. L. (2010). The model does matter II: Admissions and training in APA-accredited counseling psychology programs. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 38, 257–268. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000009339342>
- Norcross, J. C., & Karpiak, C. P. (2012). Clinical psychologists in the 2010s: 50 years of the APA Division of Clinical Psychology. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 19, 1–12. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2850.2012.01269.x>
- Norcross, J. C., Kohout, J. L., & Wicherski, M. (2005). Graduate study in psychology: 1971–2004. *American Psychologist*, 60, 959–975. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.60.9.959>
- Norcross, J. C., & Sayette, M. A. (2016). *Insider's guide to graduate programs in clinical and counseling psychology*. New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Norcross, J. C., Sayette, M. A., Mayne, T. J., Karg, R. S., & Turkson, M. A. (1998). Selecting a doctoral program in professional psychology. *Professional Psychology, Research and Practice*, 29, 609–614. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0735-7028.29.6.609>
- Norcross, J. C., Sayette, M. A., & Pomerantz, A. M. (2018). Doctoral training in clinical psychology across 23 years: Continuity and change. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 74, 385–397. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/jclp.12257>
- Norcross, J. C., Sayette, M. A., Stratigis, K. Y., & Zimmerman, B. E. (2014). Of course: Prerequisite courses for admission into APA-accredited clinical and counseling psychology programs. *Teaching of Psychology*, 41, 360–364. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0098628314549713>
- Sayette, M. A., Norcross, J. C., & Dimoff, J. D. (2011). The heterogeneity of clinical psychology Ph.D. programs and the distinctiveness of APCS programs. *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, 18, 4–11. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2850.2010.01227.x>
- Scheel, M. J., Stabb, S. D., Cohn, T. J., Duan, C., & Sauer, E. M. (2018). Counseling psychology Model Training Program. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 46, 6–49. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000018755512>
- Stoltenberg, C. D., Pace, T. M., Kashubek-West, S., Biever, J. L., Patterson, T., & Welch, I. D. (2000). Training models in counseling psychology: Scientist-practitioner versus practitioner scholar. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 28, 622–640. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0011000000285002>
- Stoup, C. M., & Benjamin, L. T. (1982). Graduate study in psychology, 1970–1979. *American Psychologist*, 37, 1186–1202. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.37.11.1186>
- Taylor, J. M., Kolaski, A. Z., Wright, H., Hashtpari, H., & Neimeyer, G. J. (2018). Predicting the evolution of counseling psychology in the United States: Results from a Delphi poll of academic training directors. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 32, 1–17.

Received December 13, 2018

Revision received December 16, 2019

Accepted December 29, 2019 ■