Student access and opportunities

The Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences offers several advanced training programs, including a psychiatry residency, psychology internship, and senior fellowships. We encourage applicants from all backgrounds to apply to our programs. We encourage minorities, women, and graduates from the University of Washington School of Medicine and Ph.D. Psychology program to submit applications. We have developed informative websites to introduce our training programs and to outline our clinical and research missions.

Our Psychiatry Residency Training Program aims to provide excellent training in clinical Psychiatry, with an emphasis on preparing trainees for leadership roles working with underserved and chronically mentally ill populations, within the Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) region, and in academic and clinical practice settings. The program includes both a Seattle Track and a Spokane Track. The Spokane Track includes training in both Seattle and Spokane and has been highly successful in training psychiatrists to practice in underserved WWAMI regions. Both tracks offer WWAMI region rotations in underserved populations, with Alaskan natives, and in rural communities, as well as clinical rotations with underserved and ethnically diverse populations. An Admissions Committee reviews applications based on the qualifications and interests of each applicant. Interviews are conducted and applicants visit sites that most closely match their clinical/research interests. Final candidate selection is conducted through a MATCH process which strictly adheres to the ACGME accreditation standards. Prior experience with and a commitment to working with diverse and underserved groups is one of the major factors considered favorably by the Admissions Committee.

The Psychology Internship Program encourages and actively fosters diversity as part of its clinical, research and training activities. A variety of rotations serve primarily ethnically diverse communities. Applicants from diverse backgrounds are encouraged to apply, and experience and interest in diversity research and clinical activity are positively weighted in the rating of applicants for admission. We recruit nationally for applicants and stress our commitment to diversity training as part of our mission. Final candidate selection occurs through a match process conducted in accordance with the standards of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers. The Psychology Internship Program has established a Diversity Advancement Committee, chaired by Kate Comtois, Ph.D. to provide training of residents and faculty in issues of individual and cultural diversity as these relate to theories and methods of assessment, diagnosis and effective intervention; consultation, supervision, and evaluation, and research methods/design. Residents are encouraged to participate in the activities of this committee.

Multiple sites of practice at Harborview Medical Center, University of Washington Medical Center, Children’s Hospital and Regional Medical Center and the VA Puget Sound Health Care
System in addition to community psychiatry rotations offer students access to unique patient populations and distinct clinical opportunities.

**Student Development and Retention**

Our residents come to the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences from a variety of backgrounds and are seeking to expand their experience working with our faculty in unique patient populations. The Department offers diverse clinical settings through affiliations with community outreach agencies and through the WWAMI region as described earlier. Trainees are assigned faculty preceptors who share their clinical and research interests and are encouraged to seek additional mentors in the community, in private practice, or in UW clinical settings. Chief residents work with the junior residents to provide leadership and guidance, and each Psychiatry resident is assigned a “big sibling”, or senior resident similar in background and interests, to help them feel at home within the program. A variety of faculty-resident interest groups within the Psychiatry Residency provide opportunities for formal and informal mentorship, specialized rotations, and career development. Our Psychology Internship Program is a one year program and our retention rate is nearly 100%. Many graduates of the internship remain at the University of Washington to pursue postdoctoral training or other professional positions. We are pleased that our four-year Psychiatry residency program has high recruitment standards and retention of trainees in our program exceeds 90%.

**Engagement with the external community**

The Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences strives to provide diverse opportunities for trainees both in clinical settings and working with diverse patient populations. Through a new telemedicine program and the purchase of new equipment, it is hoped that physicians and trainees in our department will develop consultation affiliations with rural communities. Many rural communities do not have a mental health professional or psychiatrist on staff and this program will offer them access to our physicians on a consultation basis. As indicated earlier, our training programs throughout the WWAMI region provide additional clinical opportunities working in rural communities and underserved patient populations. We are proud of our affiliations with the WWAMI region and hope to develop these relationships even further. Psychology interns provide clinical, consultation and program evaluation services to a number of community and government agencies serving the greater Seattle area, including the King County Correctional Facility, the Department of Youth Services, the Special Commitment Center, and the Department of Mental Health. Specialized training is available in assessment and treatment of mental health issues with disabled populations. Psychiatry residents work in diverse community settings in the greater Seattle area and Washington State, including community mental health centers; community clinics for specific ethnic populations and the underserved; juvenile detention centers, King County Corrections, and Walla Walla State Penitentiary; and Western State Hospital.

**Staff and administrative diversity**

The Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences is proud of the diversity of our staff and the background/experiences that they bring to their positions. Staff members work directly with the trainees and the faculty to enhance the programs and maintain the high integrity of our training programs.
Curriculum and research

The training directors work closely with the faculty to offer diverse topics for the didactics sessions. Didactics are reviewed and revised as new topics become relevant to our trainees. Each week residents attend didactic sessions which cover such topics as social/cultural diagnosis, cross-cultural psychiatry, ethics, treatment with sexual minorities, and working with interpreters. Because of the vast research and clinical interests of our faculty and the many areas of strength within the department we are committed to excellence in patient care and research. Trainees are provided with individual opportunities for working with patients at different sites, choosing preceptors that best match with their research or clinical interests, or choosing a rotation to serve in a rural community with an underserved patient population. The WWAMI region offers multiple training rotations in Spokane, Alaska, Montana and Wyoming providing opportunities for trainees to work with physicians serving the disadvantaged or underserved populations in these communities. Residents are actively involved in residency committees and decision-making processes and their input is taken very seriously in constantly improving the program.

Climate

The Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences is strongly dedicated to providing a diverse environment to our faculty, staff and students. We appreciate the knowledge and backgrounds of all individuals and what they can bring to the department to serve as a resource to others. Our goal is to provide our trainees with excellent and balanced training, preparing them for leadership roles in academic, community, and clinical settings.