



# Loma Linda University

## School of Behavioral Health

### Department of Psychology

#### Student Funding Sources

Dear prospective and current students,

We are pleased that you are either considering or are currently enrolled in the Clinical Psychology PhD or Clinical Psychology PsyD in the Department of Psychology at Loma Linda University. The department recognizes that, for many students, funding their doctoral program in clinical psychology is an important issue that requires thoughtful consideration. This document is aimed at helping you understand the funding sources available to our doctoral students. Most students in the department utilize federal (e.g., Stafford) and/or private loans to fund the majority of costs associated with graduate school. However, there are other potential sources of funding that, though limited and competitive in nature, *do not* require repayment and can assist students in offsetting some of the costs of the program. These potential sources of funding include:

**Teaching Assistantships:** Many instructors in the department utilize one or more teaching assistants (TAs) in teaching their graduate courses. Though the number of courses that utilize TAs at any given time can vary to some degree, the majority of courses in the department utilize TAs. Students who have already completed a course and possess the skills necessary to serve as a TA are able to express an interest in serving as a TA in a subsequent year and are considered by the instructor of the course. Students are typically paid hourly (5-10 hours/wk, depending on the class) through Federal Work Study (FWS) funds, which results in students needing to take fewer federal/private loans.

**Research Assistantships:** Most faculty in the department utilize one or more research assistants (RAs) to help manage the needs of their research labs. Through these positions, students can often be involved in the conceptualization, background/literature review, IRB process, data collection/analysis, results/discussion writing, and professional presentations/publications related to the work being conducted in the lab. Some of these positions are funded through FWS (through which students are paid an hourly rate, which in turn reduces the amount of loans students must take) or other mechanisms (e.g., grant funding secured by a faculty member). Students who possess an interest, commitment, and the necessary skill set to contribute as an RA in a particular lab are typically considered by faculty for these positions.

**Teaching positions:** Though there is no undergraduate psychology major at LLU, there are a few programs on campus that require prospective students to take specific undergraduate psychology courses as pre-requisites for admission to their programs. Our doctoral students serve as the instructors for these undergraduate psychology courses, which have included Introduction to Psychology, Life-span Development, and The Exceptional Individual. Students are selected by faculty to teach these courses based on their performance and progress in the program, as well as the relevance of teaching to their professional goals. Students who teach these courses are paid directly through a teaching contract.

Furthermore, our doctoral students have, on occasion, been able to teach undergraduate or masters level courses at surrounding universities, including Cal State University – San Bernardino (CSUSB), University of Redlands, and La Sierra University. Students who secure these positions are also paid directly through a teaching contract.

**Tuition remission awards:** The department provides a limited number (i.e., typically 6-8) of partial tuition remission awards for first year students that are typically \$10,000 each and are awarded through two mechanisms.

A number of these awards are merit-based, and are given based on faculty appraisal of the strength of a student's academic background, performance, and potential. In addition to these awards, the department also provides a number of partial tuition remission awards to diverse individuals in support of the department's continual efforts to recruit and retain diverse students.

Full or partial tuition remission awards may be provided to students in cases in which a faculty member has written such awards into grant budgets secured by the faculty.

**Training grants:** Though, consistent with the larger practicum landscape in Southern California, the vast majority of practicum sites in which students are placed are not paid experiences, there are some notable exceptions. Consistent with our department, school, and institutional identity, the department has secured multiple training grants aimed at supporting student clinical training and professional career development in several areas, such as health psychology/primary care, neuropsychology, and clinical child psychology. Many of these grants have provided millions of dollars in stipends/scholarships to students who provide clinical services in underserved or disadvantaged areas and who are committed to pursuing careers in these areas. Occasionally, there are also practicum sites that are willing to pay students for their clinical service delivery activities.

**Clinic Associate and other department positions:** There are a limited number of FWS funded positions available to advanced students who are selected to work at the LLU School of Behavioral Health Resiliency Clinic (SBHRC), which is an integrated behavioral health treatment facility that houses the department's training clinic (along with training clinics operated by Social Work and Counseling & Family Sciences). Students selected to work as Clinic Associates at the SBHRC typically perform clinic administrative and research tasks

related to clinical services provided to the community. Given that these positions are funded by FWS funds, students are paid an hourly rate, which in turn reduces the amount of loans students must take. There are also, occasionally, paid positions in the department that are filled on a temporary, as-needed basis.

**Support for professional development:** Students are eligible to receive up to \$400 annually for approved expenses (e.g., research conferences in which students are presenting their work, clinical training workshops, research-related costs, practicum-related costs, etc.). A full list of approved expenses is maintained in the department's central office.

Though the department aspires to provide funding to as many students as possible, the department is currently unable to provide funding to all students and current funding is limited to the aforementioned mechanisms. Therefore, as previously mentioned, students typically fund the majority of costs through federal and/or private loans. To our knowledge, no student has ever been unable to complete the program due to the inability to secure financial support from a combination of loans, the other sources of funding described in this document, and/or outside support.

We hope this information is helpful to you whether you are a prospective or current student in the LLU Department of Psychology. We wish you the very best in your future endeavors.

Sincerely,

**David A. Vermeersch, PhD**

Chair and Professor

Department of Psychology