



Loma Linda University

School of Behavioral Health

Department of Psychology

Student Funding Sources

Dear Prospective Psychology Student,

We're pleased that you're considering one of our clinical psychology programs in the Department of Psychology at Loma Linda University. The department recognizes that, for many students, funding their doctoral program is an important issue that requires thoughtful consideration. The purpose of this document is to help 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. Courses that routinely involve TAs include, but are not limited to: Psychometrics, all Stats courses (I, II, and III), all Evidence-Based Psychological Practice courses (I-IV), and all Psychological Assessment courses (I-III). 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/week, 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 currently include: 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 master's 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 (typically 4-6 out of a combined PhD/PsyD entering cohort of 25) of partial tuition remission awards for first year students that are typically \$5,000-\$10,000 each and are awarded through two mechanisms.

- 1) 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. Currently, the minimum criteria for being considered for a partial tuition remission award is that the sum of the percentile ranks of the student's GRE Verbal and Quantitative subtests must be equal to 150 or higher, and the student must obtain a 4.5 or higher on the Analytical Writing subtest. For students who meet these minimum criteria, faculty then consider other components of their application in reaching a decision regarding recipients of these awards. In addition to these awards, the department also provides multiple partial tuition remission awards to diverse individuals in support of the department's continual efforts to recruit and retain diverse students, as well as multiple partial tuition remission awards aimed at increasing the representation of qualified students who identify as Seventh-day Adventist (SDA).
- 2) Full 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.

Funding for Clinical Service Delivery: 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 a couple of notable exceptions.

1. The Department of Psychology, in recent years, has secured multiple, multi-million dollar training grants that have provided our students with millions of dollars in stipends that help offset the cost of graduate training. These training grants typically require that students be placed in specific clinical settings which have goals that align with the goals of the grant. These grant opportunities are competitive in nature and require an application, which is then considered by the faculty serving as investigators on that grant. Examples of such grants have included the Primary Care & Training Enhancement (PCTE) grant awarded through the U.S. Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA), HRSA grant for substance use disorders (SUD) and opioid use disorders (OUD), and the HRSA 4p grant designed to increase the representation of individuals who are financially disadvantaged. Information regarding these and other grants is provided to students as such funding mechanisms are required.
2. There are, on occasion, practicum sites with which we maintain an affiliation that have paid students hourly for their work.

Clinic Associate and Other Department Positions: There are typically a limited number of FWS funded positions available to advanced students who are selected to work in our department's training clinic (which is also integrated with training clinics operated by Social Work & Social Ecology and Counseling & Family Sciences). Students selected to work as Clinic Associates typically perform clinic administrative and research tasks related to 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.

Funding for Travel: Students are eligible to receive up to \$400 annually for approved expenses which include travel to conferences in which the student is a formal contributor, costs associated with practicum training, and other training costs (see full list of approved expenses maintained by the department).

Though the department aspires to provide funding to as many students as possible, the department is currently unable to provide funding to the majority of 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 as you consider your options for graduate study. Again, we appreciate your interest in potentially pursuing your graduate training in the Loma Linda University Department of Psychology. We wish you the very best in the application process and in your future endeavors.

David A. Vermeersch, PhD

Chair and Professor

Department of Psychology, Loma Linda University