Today’s Speakers

• Jean-Philippe Gagné, M.A. (Past-Chair)
  • PhD Candidate | Clinical Psychology | Concordia University

• Alexandra Richard, B.A. (Chair-Elect)
  • PhD Student | Clinical Psychology | McGill University

• Jérémie Richard, M.A. (Graduate Student Affairs Officer)
  • PhD Student | Counselling Psychology | McGill University

• Alisia Palermo, B.Sc. (Communications Officer)
  • MSc Student | Forensic Psychology | University of Ontario Institute of Technology
Workshop Outline

- Questions for the audience
- Overview of programs
- Application components
- Federal scholarships
- Finding a supervisor

- Preparing for interviews
- Application timeline
- Rejected: what to do?
- Questions (English and French)
Who are you?
The Big Question…

*Why do you want to go to graduate school?*

- Try to think beyond “this is the degree I need to practice”
- Think about the journey and the entire experience
- Answering this question is helpful…
  - while applying (e.g., personal statements)
  - while in graduate school (e.g., staying focused)
Subdisciplines of Psychology

- Applied Behaviour Analysis
- Clinical Psychology
- Forensic Psychology
- Counselling Psychology
- Educational Psychology
- Evolutionary Psychology
- Experimental Psychology
- Health Psychology
- Neuropsychology
- Positive Psychology
- Psychophysicsology
- Sport Psychology
- Social Psychology
- Psycholinguistics

...and many more!
Program Types

- Research (Experimental)
- Clinical
- Research & Clinical
Psychology Degree Types

**MA/MSc/MEd**
- ~2-3 years
- Emphasis on research
- Course work (research methods & statistics)
- Completion/defense of a thesis or other major research project
- Small program (~10)
- May be eligible to practice clinically (depends on province)

**Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)**
- ~5-7 years
- Emphasis on research training (with clinical training, if clinical program)
- Course work, completion of comprehensive exams & defense of a dissertation
- Small program (~10)
- Better clinical internships available
- Eligible to practice clinically
- More widely accepted than PsyD

**Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)**
- ~4-6 years
- Practitioner-scholar model, trained to be a clinician
- Greater emphasis on clinical work with little research
- Larger program
- More difficult to find internships
- Eligible to practice clinically upon completion
# Clinical vs. Counselling Psychology

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<tr>
<th><strong>Clinical Psychology</strong></th>
<th><strong>Counselling Psychology</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>• Care, diagnosis, and treatment of clients</td>
<td>• Consult, deliberate, and advise clients</td>
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<td>• Focus on serious mental illnesses (e.g., bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, MDD, OCD, personality disorders)</td>
<td>• Focus on emotional and/or social issues that arise from life stressors (i.e., family, school, work), including substance abuse</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Psychodynamic and cognitive-behavioural theories, although this varies widely</td>
<td>• Client-centric, wellness, and prevention strategies</td>
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<td>• Training emphasizes psychopathology</td>
<td>• Can work in university settings, family services, rehabilitation centres</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Can work in private practice, hospitals, prisons</td>
<td>• Can work in university settings, family services, rehabilitation centres</td>
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Clinical Psychology Models

Clinician-scientist

• Very strong emphasis on research; trained to be a researcher

- Type of research is based on the specific institution
- Multi-level conceptualizations of psychopathology
- Focus on evidence-based treatments

Scientist-practitioner

• Emphasizes both clinical and research
• Tends to be less research-intensive, trained to be a clinician
• Most PhD programs in Canada are based on this model
Application Components
Transcripts

• “A grade point average (GPA) of 3.6/4.0 begins to be competitive; however a GPA of 3.8/4.0 or higher is more typical.” - University of Calgary
  • Not the only factor!
  • Think about research experience, conference presentations, publications, etc.
• Order (many) transcripts early
  • Usually need to be mailed directly to each institution
  • CEGEP?
• $7-12 (but sometimes free if still enrolled)
CV

• Emphasis on **academic** experiences
• Elements to include
  • Education
  • Research experience (e.g., volunteering, research assistantships, summer NSERC scholarships)
  • Publications
  • Conference presentations (including institutional and local)
  • Awards and scholarships
  • Teaching experience
  • *Relevant* practical experience (e.g., clinical work)
CV (Cont’d)

• Describe your accomplishments
  • Specific award/scholarship

• Describe your research experience
  • What role did you play in the laboratory?

• Cite publications and presentations APA style

• Organize your CV professionally and logically

• Proof read
Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

- Standardized test often used as an admission requirement for graduate school
- Administered by *Educational Testing Service (ETS)*
- General (computerized)
  - Analytical writing
  - Quantitative reasoning
  - Verbal reasoning
- Subject – Psychology (paper-based)
  - Learning, language, memory, thinking, sensation, perception, behavioural neuroscience, psychopathology, development, personality, social, methodology, etc.
GRE (Cont’d)

• Take the test early
  • Opportunity to take it again
• General: offered frequently
• Psychology: September, October, April
  • Visit ets.org
  • Limited spots: check the registration date
GRE (Cont’d)

• Books, courses, flashcards, and practice tests
Reference Letters

- Usually two or three letters
- Academic- and research-oriented
  - Sometimes ask for a clinically-oriented letter
- Who should I ask?
  - Honours/undergraduate/master’s thesis supervisor(s)
  - PI of laboratory in which you volunteered/worked
  - Professor (e.g., from a seminar, excellent relationship)
    - Maintain contact
- Ask **early** (i.e., minimum 1 month) and provide **specific** instructions
Statement of Interest

• Length varies (e.g., 1500 words at Concordia University)
• Tell a (professional) story
  • Not a creative contest
  • Stand out because of your experiences and excellent writing skills
• Discuss your research interests and why graduate school is essential for you to achieve your career goals
• Have your thesis advisor or laboratory supervisor read it over
Statement of Interest (Cont’d)

• State with whom you want to work (i.e., potential supervisor)
  • Clearly indicate how your research interests match your supervisor’s interests – be concrete
  • How will your previous research experiences be beneficial for that specific laboratory and how will they help you navigate that laboratory?

• Tailor your statement of interest to each institution
  • Why is this supervisor + institution the optimal situation for you?
  • Why is it a good fit for you and for them?
  • What can you get from this institution/supervisor that you cannot get elsewhere?
Federal Scholarships
Federal Agencies

CIHR IRSC

SSHRC CRSH

NSERC CRSG
## Canada Graduate Scholarships-Master’s Program

**Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR)** – Frederick Banting and Charles Best Canada Graduate Scholarships

**Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)** – Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarships

**Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)** – Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarships

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Doctoral Scholarships

- **CIHR**
  - Frederick Banting & Charles Best Canada Graduate Scholarships ($35,000/year; 3 max)
- **NSERC**
  - NSERC Postgraduate Scholarships—Doctoral Program ($21,000/year; 3 max)
  - Alexander Graham Bell Canada Graduate Scholarships ($35,000/year; 3 max)
- **SSHRC**
  - SSHRC Doctoral Fellowships ($20,000/year; 4 max)
  - Joseph-Armand Bombardier Canada Graduate Scholarships ($35,000/year; 3 max)
- **CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC**
  - Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships ($50,000/year; 3 max)
Application Components

- Application form
- Canadian Common CV
- Transcripts
- Reference letters (two or three)
- Research proposal
- Additional materials (e.g., statements: program of study; leadership; activities and contributions; interruptions and delays; space and facilities)
Finding a Supervisor
Finding a Supervisor

• What is the role of a supervisor?
  • Academic and research/clinical guidance
  • Setting of work expectations
  • Feedback and evaluations
  • General support

• Finding a supervisor prior versus after admission
  • Consult departmental website
Identifying Potential Supervisors

**What to look for?**
- Similar research/clinical interests
- Currently accepting students?
- Supervision style
- Personality

**Where to find this information?**
- Program / faculty websites
- Laboratory / personal webpages
- Research publications
- Current graduate students
- The potential supervisor
Making Initial Contact

- Professional greeting
- Introduce yourself
- State why you are contacting them
- Express your interest in working with them
- Relevant research experience or skills
- Attach your C.V. and unofficial transcript
- Offer opportunity for further discussion
Finding a Supervisor: Additional Resources

• Many guidelines, tips, and templates can be found online
  • Posted by universities

• Speak to other graduate students!
Activity

• What are some qualities you feel would be important to find in a supervisor given your own personality, learning style, or work ethic?

OR

• If you are already in a supervisory relationship, what qualities do you currently value in this relationship?
Interviews, Application Timeline, and Rejections
Preparing for Interviews

- How to prepare for interviews?
- Potential questions
- Interview format
- Other relevant information?
May to August:
• Think of programs, research, funding;
• Additional experience

September:
• GREs
• Prepare funding applications

October:
• Determine programs
• Visit schools/contact supervisors
• Funding applications

November:
• Ask for LOR
• Transcript requests*

December/January:
• Finalize PS & CV;
• Submit applications*

February:
• Campus visit
• Interview or meeting

March:
• Accept or decline offer(s)

April:
• Celebrate or Regroup

Application Timeline
Rejected: What to Do?

• Don’t be discouraged: more denials than acceptances
• Most people reapply: graduate school in psychology is very competitive!
• Self-care: applications are long and demanding and rejection can be difficult
• Take some time to ask yourself how you can improve your application
  • What were your strengths and weaknesses?
• Restructure your application for the following year
• Do not submit the same documents all over again
• Get more research experience (e.g., lab work, conference presentations, and publications)
Questions?
Good luck!