



Cognitive Behavioral Institute of Albuquerque

Postdoctoral Fellowship in Advanced Behavioral and
Cognitive Psychology

Candidate Brochure

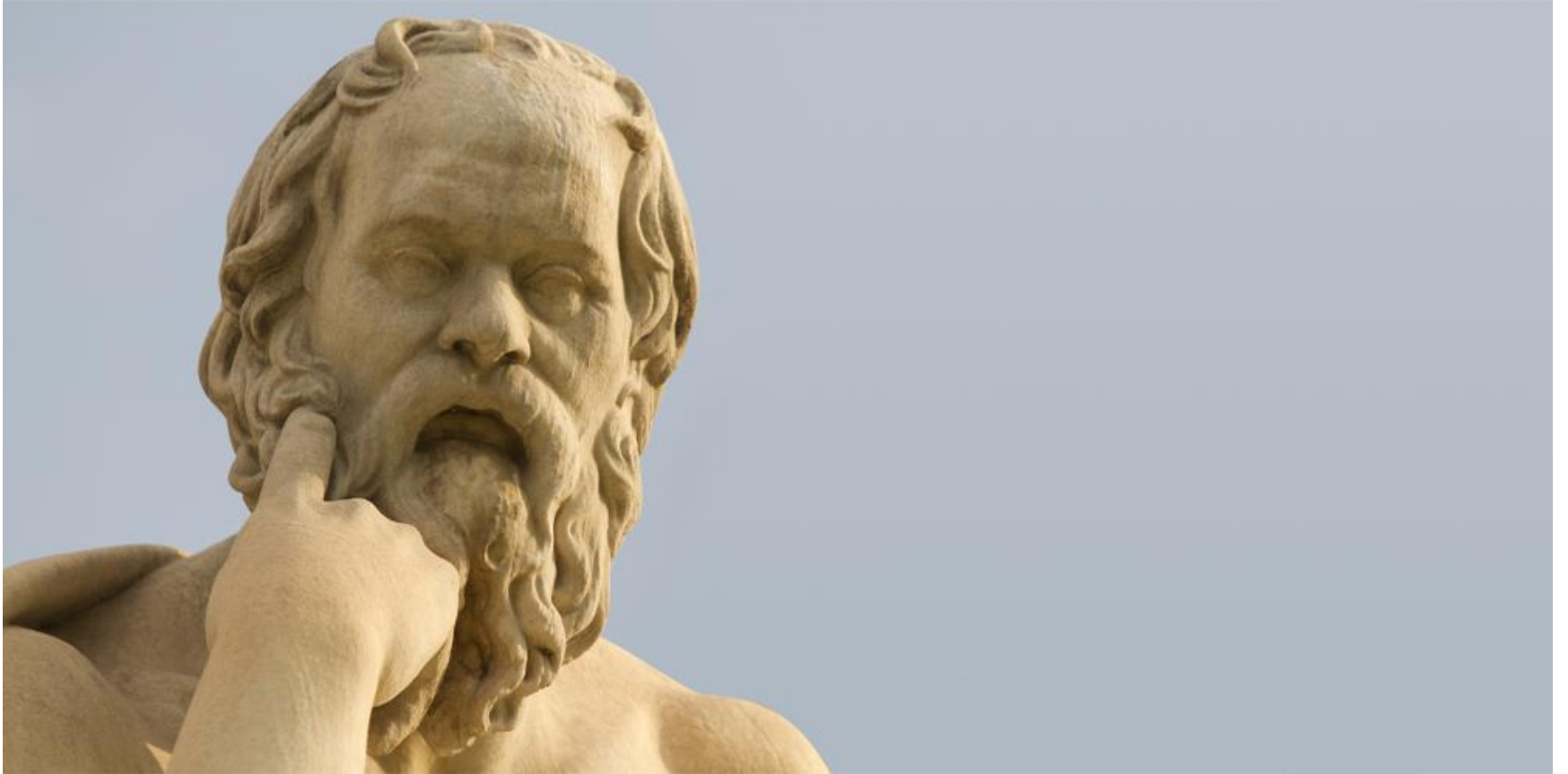
Mission and Philosophy

The mission of The Postdoctoral Fellowship training program in Advanced Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology is to help graduates achieve the highest pass rates on ABPP credentialing exams. Our training program is tailored to meet the specialization requirements for Board Certification in Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology, with potential sponsorship for certification by the Academy of Cognitive and Behavioral Therapies, the American Board of Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology, and the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP).

One single year of supervised postdoctoral training, no matter how individualized and intensive, cannot be sufficient to prepare graduates to quickly and easily pass the ABPP oral examinations. In this way, preparation for efficient passage of the ABPP exam in CBT resembles preparation for the ABPP-CN exam in Clinical Neuropsychology. This extra preparation is simply a function of the burgeoning sciences in these fields, and cannot be done reliably over a single training year.

Not every candidate for a postdoctoral fellowship in CBT wants to earn recognition as an expert in the field. Some are content to accrue the minimum number of hours of supervised practice required to obtain independent licensure. While this is an entirely respectable and laudable goal, it is not compatible with the training mission of our program.

Our central philosophy, both in the clinical services we provide and in the Postdoctoral Training Program, is simply the cultivation of the maximum possible competence in applying the highest possible scientific standards in treatment. Luckily, continued pursuit of the best science in practice makes the task interesting, enjoyable, and personally rewarding for everyone involved. Because the entire clinical and training staff thoroughly enjoys the process of continually updating our scientific bases, we easily help our trainees achieve high pass rates in their oral examinations.





Professional Responsibilities of Fellows

Each week the Fellow's time is allocated as follows:

- Approximately 25 hours of direct, face-to-face, adult individual Cognitive Behavior Therapy per week. This includes study and training in the typical psychometric measures used in CBT, including PHQ-9, GAD-7, OEQ-44, PCL-5, & MCMI-IV, with others as needed.
- Approximately 4 hours per week of individually assigned reading in the scientific bases of intervention, all of which are new to each Fellow
- Two hours per week of individual, face-to-face clinical supervision custom tailored to the Fellow's previous training and experience
- Two hours per week of didactics/case conference, in which the Director, Training Supervisor or invited guest scholars provide specialized presentations in state-of-the-art methods, controversial new scientific results, or novel case conceptualizations, all of which are new to each Fellow
- Approximately 7 hours per week of paid EPPP study time using study materials purchased and provided by the Institute

Design of the Course of Training

- In competency-based training and study, such as for the GRE or EPPP exams, a strictly linear sequence of presentation would be one of the least effective ways to train, as any successful graduate student in psychology would know all too well
- For true competency-based training, such as for ABPP Oral Examinations, it pays to differentially study and train in weakness areas, cycling through these compensatory topics and practices in a spiraling fashion until individual competency is reliably sustained in all areas critical for credentialing
- For this reason, the course of training at this Institute is idiographic, based on relative strengths and weaknesses in the Foundational and Functional Competencies as defined by ABPP (<https://abpp.org/application-information/competency-requirements/>). These strengths and weaknesses are identified through direct observation by the supervisor, and indirectly through supervisory viewings of the Fellow's weekly video-recorded sessions
- Because the ABPP in Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology requires the highest levels of awareness of scientific support/falsification available for each intervention, all Fellows start with readings in the Philosophy of Science
- In order to understand how scientific progress maximally informs practice, Fellows must have an adequate understanding of, and familiarity with, Pragmatism as a theory of science (Peirce, James, Dewey). This is the uniform beginning of training.





Other Core Components of Our Curriculum

- **Behavioral Learning Theory** - Fellows learn terminology and theory pertaining to Classical Conditioning and Operant Conditioning, and how to keep track of the different types of behavioral learning targeted in therapy.
- **Emotion Theory and Research** – Fellows learn how emotions affect aims and cognitive processes that mediate behavioral learning so as to better target their therapeutic learning interventions.
- **Cognitive Psychology** – Fellows learn advanced research in cognitive learning and memory so as to better target and monitor their therapeutic learning tasks. This enables better retention by clients and faster progress.
- **Cognitive/Affective Neuroscience** – Fellows learn how current progress in understanding brain/behavior relationships can inform selection and design of the best treatments.
- **Empirically Supported Treatment Mechanisms** – It is not sufficient to know a manualized treatment. There can be no substitute for knowing the mechanisms that mediate all of the most empirically supported treatments currently available, so that the most efficient interventions can be designed for each client.
- **Empirically Based Case Conceptualization** – Fellows learn to conceptualize clinical cases in terms of developmentally sensitive models of personality.

Individualized training: Supervision and didactics

Different emphases are required for each trainee

Professionalism
Reflective Practice/Self-Assessment/Self-Care
Scientific Knowledge and Methods
Relationships
Individual and Cultural Diversity
Ethical Legal Standards and Policy
Interdisciplinary Systems
Evidence-Based Practice
Assessment
Intervention
Consultation
Research/Evaluation
Supervision
Teaching
Management-Administration
Advocacy

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On the left side are the most general ABPP Foundational and Functional Competencies across all Specialties, and on the right side are the same competencies as they are typically emphasized by the oral examinations in Behavioral and Cognitive Psychology. Our training additionally modifies emphases idiographically, based on the previous training, experience, and demonstrated competencies of each Fellow during training. This custom-tailoring for each trainee is reflected not only in individual supervision, but also in selection of topics for our weekly 2-hour didactic case conferences.

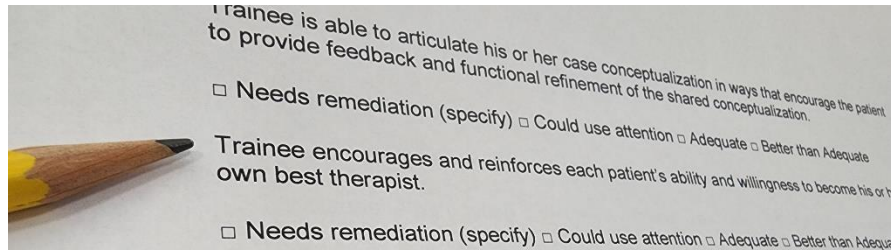




Example of a single 2-hour didactic case conference

- The general topic of CBT for Depression is opened with reference to a specific case being treated by the Fellow
- All attendees will have received and will have read an important article on the biological functions of Depression:
<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychiatry/articles/10.3389/fpsy.2021.667592/full>
- The patient's developmental case history, and history of being treated for depression using medications and a likely incomplete understanding of rumination will be reviewed, with special focus on important learning opportunities most likely having been previously missed by both the patient and previous treatment providers
- If the Fellow is unfamiliar with behavioral research in Operant Avoidance Learning, a brief summary and review will be provided, with cogent references if necessary, at a length suitable for the Fellow
- The Fellow will participate in a group discussion toward a better case conceptualization, using the new understanding that SSRIs can prolong depressive episodes and prevent the learning necessary to resolve them. Conceptualizing personality development to include specific cognitive skills necessary to resolve Avoidance Learning problems will help the Fellow to identify new therapeutic learning opportunities, and devise highly targeted therapeutic interventions and homework for the patient. This part of the discussion could take more than 1 hour, as the Supervisor and other attendees make references to other findings in Cognitive Psychology, Emotion Theory, Cognitive/Affective Neuroscience, and intervention research unfamiliar to the Fellow, to assist in the conceptualization and treatment design. The Fellow will learn how to avoid others' mistakes.
- New points presented to the Fellow and all attendees are reviewed at the end, with discussion of how the new learning can be effectively generalized to larger classes of patients, and in advocacy.

Feedback, Evaluation, and Success



- Evaluations of Fellows' progress take place every 6 months, and are intended to support individual progress toward meeting all of the Training Goals
- During the first year of training, the standards applied are for an introductory trainee. During the second year of training, the standards are raised one evaluative step, to more closely resemble standards used on ABPP Oral Examinations
- Overall success in the training program requires an evaluation in which no area "Needs Remediation." Trainees are notified immediately if any of their performance "Needs Remediation" at any time during training.
- Applicants are encouraged to peruse our "Training Standards" posted on the Training page of our website, www.cogtherapy.com to determine whether our training ethos seems to be compatible with their long-term career interests.