

Questions to consider if you plan to apply to Ph.D. programs in clinical and/or counseling psychology

Do you enjoy conducting research? Have you performed well in the Statistics courses that you've taken?

- Most programs require that you conduct quantitative research for your master's thesis and doctoral dissertation. Apart from these basic requirements, many (if not most) programs require students to conduct additional research.

Do you have a bachelor's degree in Psychology?

- Some doctoral programs will require that you have one.

Are you interested in devoting half a decade of your life (or more) to graduate education and training?

- The median time to completion in many programs is between 5 to 7 years. After completing all of the on-campus requirements of your respective program, you will have to secure a year-long, full-time, predoctoral internship. Many students are finding it increasingly difficult to successfully "match" at these sites because of an imbalance between the number of applicants and available training sites. For a more detailed discussion, see: <http://www.apa.org/apags/issues/internship.aspx>.

Will you be able to complete your applications ONE FULL YEAR before you plan on starting graduate school?

- Most doctoral programs in Clinical/Counseling psychology admit students only once a year (i.e., for fall semester). Many have deadlines in December & January.

How will I know if I am a competitive applicant?

- Check Student Disclosure Data (sometimes called Applicant and Admissions statistics) for programs that interest you. **Make sure that your GPA and GRE scores are equal to or above the published averages for students recently admitted to your programs of interest.**
- Make sure that you have clearly defined research interests that closely match the interests of the professor(s) for whom you are applying to work.
- Ensure that you will be able to have very positive letters of recommendation from an average of 3 professors. Ideally, all of your letter writers will be Ph.D. level psychologists.
- Make certain that you have strong evidence of research experience (e.g., publications in empirical journals, poster presentations at a professional conference, or a senior honors thesis).

How do I find Student Disclosure Data for programs of interest?

- Go to your preferred search engine
- Type in the name of the University & the type of program (e.g., Texas Tech University Clinical Psychology program)
- Go to the section of the website designated for prospective applicants, future students, etc.
- Most sites will list the student disclosure data under the following heading: "Student Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data"

What is the likelihood that I will successfully gain admission to a Ph.D. program in Clinical or Counseling Psychology?

- Ph.D. programs in Clinical/Counseling psychology are highly selective. An article published in the September 2010 edition of gradPSYCH magazine estimates that Ph.D. programs in Clinical Psychology admit only seven percent of applicants.

How much debt am I likely to accumulate in my pursuit of a Ph.D. in Clinical or Counseling psychology?

- According to the Doctorate Employment Survey conducted by the American Psychological Association (APA) in 2001, the average debt reported by recent graduates of psychology doctoral programs was as follows:

Clinical	\$64,345
Clinical neuropsychology	\$56,216
Counseling	\$40,151

- For more information about student debt associated with graduate study in psychology, refer to the April 2004 edition of gradPSYCH magazine (<http://www.apa.org/gradpsych/2004/04/index.aspx>).