

You want to be a therapist. Graduate training that can get you there.

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Many undergraduate students wish to pursue a career as a psychotherapist but are unaware of graduate training options that prepare individuals to work in this field. Many undergraduates think that they must get a doctoral degree in clinical psychology in order to work as a therapist. This is simply not the case. This document was written to provide undergraduates with ideas about types of graduate programs that train individuals for a career in counseling and psychotherapy.

The graduate training options listed here are not exhaustive in terms of the types of programs that focus on training counselors and therapists, but the document does provide a number of alternatives to the clinical psychology PhD. The descriptions of each type of program are purposely general, as different schools that offer the same graduate degree may structure their programs very differently. This document provides examples of graduate programs offering each type of graduate degree listed, but the schools listed are not meant as recommendations or endorsements of specific graduate schools by the Psychology Department at BGSU. In other words, this document is meant to provide students with some information to get them started with their research about graduate training options in counseling and psychotherapy. It is *essential* that students research the specific details of any graduate training option and specific graduate schools in which they're interested.

References to “licensure” and “licenses” are made frequently throughout this document. It is important to note that licensure is determined on a state-by-state basis, and different states have different types of licenses and licensing requirements. Definitions of licenses can usually be found on state government websites. When considering a graduate program, it is important to know if the program prepares students for a specific type of license and in which parts of the United States. A total of 11 graduate training options are listed in this document, along with basic information on the type of graduate degree program, examples of schools in the Midwest that have this type of training, and websites that provide further information on each type of training option.

On page six of this document is a figure that provides a snapshot of all 11 graduate training options described on the preceding pages. Each graduate program name is printed in **bold**, and beneath the name is the type of graduate school where the program is typically housed. **Counseling Psychology** programs, for example, are generally housed in Schools of Education whereas **Clinical Psychology** programs are usually found in Schools of Arts & Sciences or their equivalents. Because we get a lot of questions about the differences among the Psy.D., Ph.D. in Clinical, and Psychiatry degrees, some of the features of these programs are listed in *italics*.

Masters of Social Work (MSW)

- ❖ Most programs take approximately 2 years to complete (full-time); part-time programs take longer
- ❖ Many programs offer specializations (e.g., Infant Mental Health, Interpersonal Practice) to prepare you to be licensed as a social worker who is able to conduct therapy
- ❖ Most programs admit over 200 people each year
- ❖ All 50 states license MSWs, and some states allow MSWs to practice independently (without supervision)

Examples:

- ❖ University of Michigan: <http://www.ssw.umich.edu/>
- ❖ Wayne State University (Michigan): <http://www.socialwork.wayne.edu/>
- ❖ Ohio State University:
<http://www.csw.ohio-state.edu/msw/index.htm>

Relevant websites:

- ❖ National Association of Social Workers (NASW): <http://www.naswdc.org/>
- ❖ Accrediting Body: Council on Social Work Education (CSWE):
<http://www.cswe.org/>

Masters (M.A.) in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT)

- ❖ Most programs take approximately 2 years (full-time) to complete
- ❖ Most programs prepare students for licensure as a marriage and family therapist

Examples:

- ❖ Wayne State University (Michigan): <http://tbf.coe.wayne.edu/edp/marriage.html>
- ❖ Northern Illinois University: <http://www.chhs.niu.edu/fcns/fcs/smft.asp#des>
- ❖ Family Institute at Northwestern University (Illinois):
<http://www.family-institute.org/education/masters.htm>

Relevant websites:

- ❖ Accrediting Body: American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy:
http://www.aamft.org/index_nm.asp

Masters (M.A.) in Counseling

- ❖ Many programs to prepare students for licensure as a professional counselor
- ❖ Most programs take approximately 2 years (full-time) to complete

Examples:

- ❖ Wayne State University: http://tbf.coe.wayne.edu/counseling/masters_degree.htm
- ❖ Michigan State University:
<http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/macounsel/default.htm>
- ❖ Bowling Green State University (Mental Health and School Counseling):
<http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/sis/mhsc.html>
- ❖ University of Toledo (Community Counseling):
<http://hhs.utoledo.edu/cesp/community.html>

Relevant websites:

- ❖ Accrediting Body: Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP): <http://www.cacrep.org/>

Masters (M.A or M.Ed..) in School Psychology

- ❖ Most programs prepare students for certificates or licenses in school psychology
- ❖ Some, but not all, programs prepare students to obtain professional counselor licenses or limited licenses to practice therapy

Examples:

- ❖ Wayne State University (School and Community Counseling): <http://tbf.coe.wayne.edu/edp/school/index.htm>
- ❖ Bowling Green State University (Mental Health and School Counseling): <http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/sis/mhsc.html>

Masters (M.A.) in Rehabilitation Psychology

- ❖ Programs prepare students to work with people with disabilities and facilitate the process of rehabilitation
- ❖ Students who graduate from CORE-accredited programs are eligible to become certified rehabilitation counselors (CRC)
- ❖ Most programs do not prepare students for licensure as a counselor unless additional coursework is completed
- ❖ Some programs prepare students to obtain a limited license in counseling

Examples:

- ❖ Kent State University: <http://www.educ.kent.edu/EFSS/programs/RHAB/programdescription.htm>
- ❖ Bowling Green State University: <http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/sis/rehab.html>
- ❖ Michigan State University: <http://ed-web3.educ.msu.edu/ORD/MAstudents.htm>

Relevant websites:

- ❖ Accrediting Body: Council of Rehabilitation Education (CORE): <http://www.core-rehab.org/>

Masters (M.A. or M.S.) in Clinical Psychology

- ❖ Some states allow people with a masters in clinical psychology to obtain a limited license to practice therapy
- ❖ Some states do not provide any licensure for people with a masters in clinical psychology, but allow masters of clinical psychology to be psychological assistants
- ❖ Some programs prepare students for doctoral-level studies

Examples:

- ❖ Cleveland State University: <http://www.csuohio.edu/psy/clinical/intro.html>
- ❖ Eastern Michigan University (MS in Clinical Behavioral Psychology or MS in Clinical Psychology): <http://www.emich.edu/psychology/programs-grad.html>

Doctorate (Ph.D.) in Clinical Psychology

- ❖ APA-accredited programs have approximately a 10% acceptance rate (Norcross, Kouhout, & Wicherski, 2006)
- ❖ Many programs provide assistantships and tuition remission
- ❖ Most programs take a minimum of 5 years to complete
- ❖ Some programs are more research-oriented than others
- ❖ Students are prepared for licensure as a psychologist

Examples:

- ❖ Wayne State University (Michigan):
<http://www.psych.wayne.edu/graduate/gradclinpsych.htm>
- ❖ Central Michigan University: <http://www.chsbs.cmich.edu/Clinical%5FPsychology/>
- ❖ Miami University (Ohio):
<http://www.units.muohio.edu/psychology/clinical/index.html>
- ❖ Bowling Green State University:
<http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/psych/Facultyprograms.html/ZAreaClinical.html>

Relevant websites:

- ❖ Accrediting Body: American Psychological Association:
<http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/doctoral.html>

Doctorate (Psy.D.) in Clinical Psychology

- ❖ APA-accredited programs have approximately a 40% acceptance rate (Norcross, Kouhout, & Wicherski, 2006)
- ❖ Most programs take a minimum of 5 years to complete
- ❖ Programs are less research-oriented than PhD programs in clinical psychology
- ❖ The focus of these programs is on clinical training
- ❖ Students are prepared for licensure as a psychologist
- ❖ On average, students who graduate from PsyD programs do not score as high as students who graduate from clinical PhD programs on the national licensing exam for psychologists (EPPP)—this could be due to the less selective admissions criteria or to a larger student to faculty ratio (Norcross & Castle, 2002)

Examples:

- ❖ Adler School of Professional Psychology (Chicago):
<http://www.adler.edu/content.aspx?ntopicId=1154>
- ❖ Wright State University (Ohio): <http://www.wright.edu/sopp/>
- ❖ Chestnut Hill College (Pennsylvania):
http://www.chc.edu/page_template.asp?section=3&file=326_intro

Relevant websites:

- ❖ National Council of Schools and Programs of Professional Psychology (NCSPPP):
<http://www.ncspp.info/>
- ❖ Accrediting Body: American Psychological Association:
<http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/doctoral.html>

Psychiatrist: Medical Doctorate (M.D.)

- ❖ Students must complete 4 years of medical school and a 4-year residency
- ❖ Approximately 50% of applicants are accepted to medical school (aamc.org)
- ❖ Students begin seeing therapy patients in their residency years

Relevant websites:

- ❖ The American Medical College Application Service:
<http://www.aamc.org/students/amcas/>
- ❖ American Medical Association:
<http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/2320.html>
- ❖ Association of American Medical Colleges: <http://www.aamc.org/>
- ❖ American Psychiatric Association: <http://www.psych.org/>

Doctorate (Ph.D.) in Counseling Psychology

- ❖ Similar to programs in clinical psychology
- ❖ Programs have a median acceptance rate of 21.5% (Norcross, Kouhout, & Wicherski, 2006)
- ❖ Most programs take a minimum of 5 years to complete
- ❖ Counseling psychologists tend to work with less pathological populations than clinical psychologists (Norcross, 2000)
- ❖ Most programs prepare students for licensure as psychologists

Examples:

- ❖ Notre Dame (Indiana): <http://www.nd.edu/%7Epsych/counseling/index.htm>
- ❖ University of Kentucky: <http://www.uky.edu/Education/EDP/cpdoctoral.html>

Relevant websites:

- ❖ Accrediting Body: American Psychological Association:
<http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation/doctoral.html>

Doctorate (Ph.D.) in Marriage and Family Therapy (MFT)

- ❖ Some programs prepare students to meet requirements for licensure as a marriage and family therapist and/or a professional counselor
- ❖ Some programs are more research-oriented than others

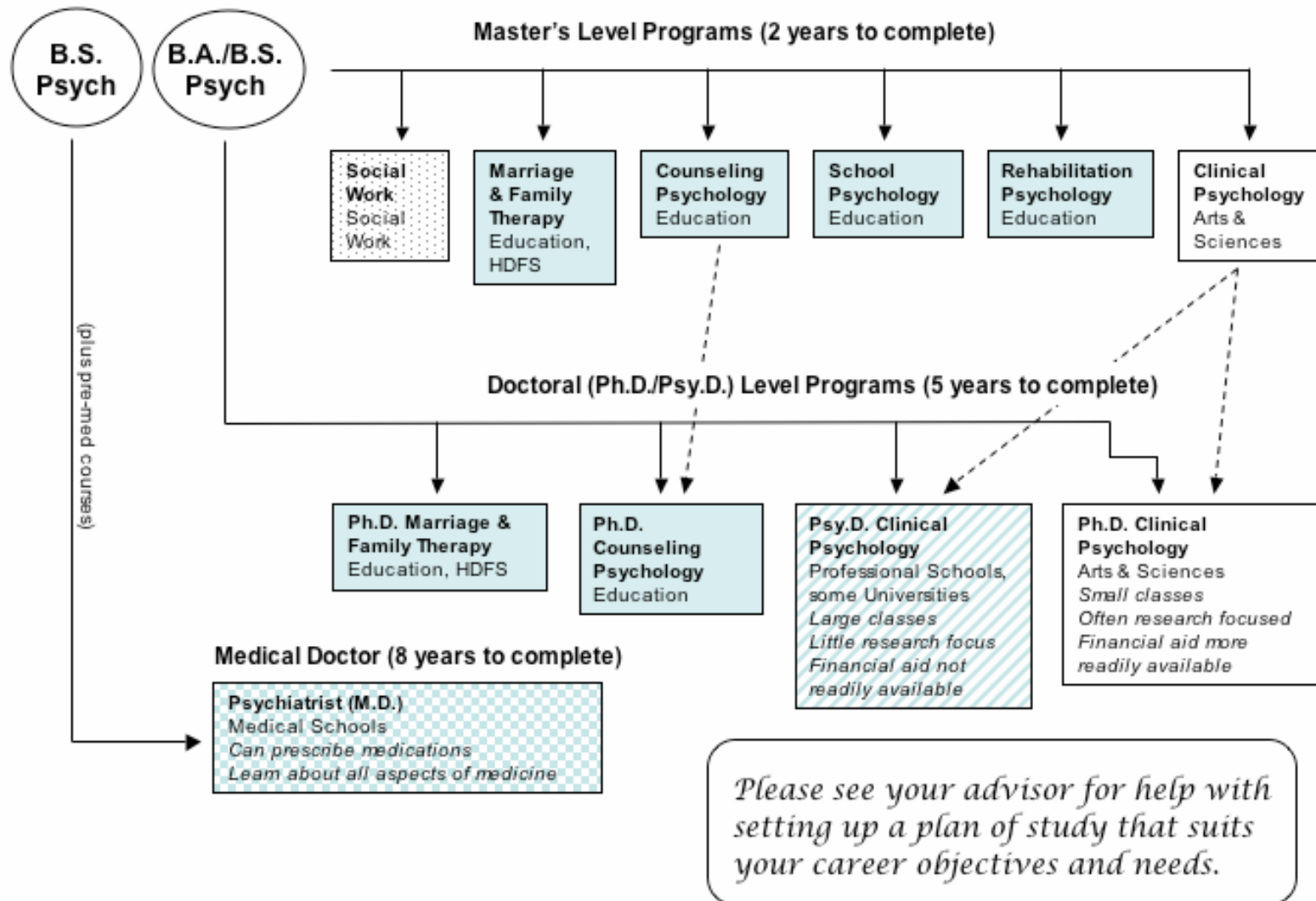
Examples:

- ❖ University of Akron (Ohio):
<http://www.uakron.edu/colleges/educ/Counseling/MFT/doctoraloverview.php>
- ❖ Michigan State University: <http://www.fce.msu.edu/mft/mftIndex.htm>

Relevant websites:

- ❖ Accrediting Body: American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy:
http://www.aamft.org/index_nm.asp

You want to be a therapist. Options in Graduate Training



Additional resources that might be of help:

Norcross, J. C. (2000). Clinical versus counseling psychology: What's the diff? *Eye on Psi Chi*, 5, 20-22. Retrievable: http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_73.asp

Norcross, J. C., & Castle, P. H. (2002). Appreciating the PsyD: The facts *Eye on Psi Chi*, 7, 22-26. Retrievable: http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_171.asp

Norcross, J. C., Kouhout, J. L., Wicherski, M., (2006). Graduate admissions in psychology: II. Acceptance rates and financial considerations *Eye on Psi Chi*, 10, 20-21, 32-33. Retrievable: http://www.psichi.org/pubs/articles/article_549.asp

Reyes, J. (2005). *The social work applicant's handbook: The complete guide to selecting and applying to MSW programs*. White Hat Communications.

Sayette, M. A., Mayne, T. J., & Norcross, J. C. (2006). *Insider's guide to graduate programs in clinical and counseling psychology*. The Guildford Press.

BGSU Psi Chi chapter

Your academic advisor

Any article by John Norcross that discusses undergraduate advising.

* Kristen Abraham is a graduate student in clinical psychology at Bowling Green State University. She would like to thank Dr. Catherine Stein, Jessica Hauser, and Dr. Dale Klopfer for their helpful comments on this document. She would also like to recognize Dr. Dale Klopfer for creating the figure on page six.