

Diversity Program in Neuroscience



Fall 2008

DPN Predoctoral Application Instructions

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GENERAL INFORMATION

This document provides you with instructions for completing the Diversity Program in Neuroscience (DPN) predoctoral fellowship application. Please review the instructions carefully and thoroughly. Following the instructions should help you put together the very best application possible. At all times, use language that is clear and concise. As a precaution, and for your own future reference, keep a photocopy of all original material that you submit to us.

Students applying for support under the Diversity Program in Neuroscience program must have a primary interest in neuroscience research. Applicants must be committed to becoming an independent research scientist. Such scientists typically work in university settings, public or private sector research institutes or laboratories, or foundations. Regardless of the setting, neuroscientists are generally expected to be able to formulate research questions, and carry out systematic research/experiments, consistent with the mission of our NIH funding agencies. These studies or research programs are often supported through research grants and the results of these studies are expected to be widely disseminated through research publications or at professional meetings.

Neuroscience is a very broad field and therefore, even though this fellowship program is administered by the American Psychological Association, one does not have to be pursuing one's doctoral degree in psychology, or from a psychology department, to apply. Indeed, we have funded students from a range of fields and departments including biology, neuroscience, and other life science areas. We receive funding from the National Institute of Mental Health, the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, and the National Institute on Drug Abuse. You may visit their websites at www.nimh.nih.gov; www.ninds.nih.gov; and www.nida.nih.gov to get a better idea of the type of neuroscience research of interest to them.

This fellowship is not geared toward practitioners. Therefore, if your intent is to become the type of neuroscientist who spends over half your time providing neuropsychological services (e.g., evaluations, consultations, rehabilitative services, etc...) in clinical settings, we recommend you consider our Minority Fellowship Program's Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services fellowship.

LIST OF REQUIRED MATERIALS

A complete DPN application includes the following documents.

Group A – Required documents to be submitted online:

- Application Form (see page 7)
- Two Essays (see page 9)
- Curriculum Vita (see page 10)
- Three recommendations (see page 10)

Group B – Required documents to be mailed to the DPN office:

We do not accept emailed, faxed or mailed documents besides those listed below. All other documents must be submitted through the online system (FAST)

- Official Transcripts (see page 11)
- GRE Scores (see page 11 for our institution and department codes)
- Permanent Resident Card

Mail all Group B documents to: APA Diversity Program in Neuroscience
Predoctoral Application
750 First Street, NE
Washington, D.C., 20002-4242

DEADLINE – January 15, 2009

TIPS FOR APPLICANTS

- 1) We strongly encourage you to begin preparing your application as early as possible.
- 2) Consult with your advisor or mentor while preparing your application. Your advisor can provide you with valuable suggestions and guidance.
- 3) Share the application instructions with your advisor, mentor, and others who will be submitting letters on your behalf so they will know the requirements.
- 4) Although it may not be possible when forwarding transcripts and GRE scores, it is best if you send them to the office at the same time in the same envelope. This will help ensure that all of your documents will be received in a timely manner.
- 5) If you contact our office for assistance with preparing your application, please make note of the date you contacted us, the question you asked or assistance you sought, and write down the name of the person with whom you spoke.

SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION ONLINE

All applications and recommendations must be submitted via our online system, the MFP Fellowship Application System Tool (FAST). For more information, visit our web site: <http://www.apa.org/mfp>.

DEADLINE IS JANUARY 15, 2009

Compatible Browsers - The FAST online application system has been tested with both PC and Apple systems on the following browsers: IE7, Firefox 2+, and Safari 3+. If you are using another browser, IT IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED that you upgrade to one of these browsers to have access to all of the features of this application.

How to Use FAST

Registering For FAST

- You must register in order to begin the application process. You must have a valid email address to register. After you have registered you will be able to come back and login to return to your application. Your email address and password are sufficient to login after registering for the first time. Set your email filters to make sure they will allow emails from apa.org.

Logging In After Registering

- Once you have registered, you can logon to the system using your email address and password. You will be allowed to return to update your application at a later time using your login and password prior to submitting the application.
- **SAVE** your work frequently. **You must save your work after completing each screen.** The system will automatically log you out if there is no activity after 20 minutes. The system does not automatically save your work and any unsaved changes will be lost if not saved.
- **Logout** will log you out of the system and you will have to reenter your login and password to return to your application. Remember to **SAVE** your work before logging out.

Navigation

The menu bar to the left of the screen of the application form titled FAST Links contains links for all of the sections of the application. You may go to any section of the application using the corresponding link. You may select items by clicking on the item or by using tabs to move from field to field. However, **you must save your data for each screen. If you navigate away from a screen without saving, your data will be lost.**

Instructions/Help

While navigating through FAST, you may access this HELP document with complete Application instructions by using the Need Help button on the FAST links menu bar.

Sending Links to Recommenders

- As soon after registering as possible, complete your recommender information in FAST and click on the button to Email This Recommender or Email All Recommenders. **Note:** You

must complete all your required contact information on the Contact tab for your application prior to sending your recommenders request emails.

- Using the Recommendations link on the left hand menu bar, you will be asked to complete contact information for your Recommenders. After doing so, save your recommenders. You will then be provided with a hyperlink to the right of the recommender to Edit, Delete or Email Recommender. After selecting this hyperlink you will be provided with the option to Email This Recommender. Once you have completed a recommender, use this button to have them notified.
- Once you click on the button, APA will send an email to your advisor and recommenders so that they may complete the recommendation form and attach the recommendation letter. Your recommenders will be required to use this link in order to submit their letter of recommendation.
- After completing all your recommenders, you have the option to have all the emails sent to all your recommenders at the same time.
- Notify your recommenders that they will be receiving an email from apa.org and to have their spam filters allow the email that they will need to complete in order to provide you with a recommendation. If they still do not receive the link, you may log back into your application and request that the link be resent.
- Check with your recommenders to make certain they have received this link **prior to** submitting your application. After you submit your application you will not have access to the portion of the application that allows you to request that the email with the link be sent.

Required Items

Items with **required** in bold parentheses are required items and you will not be able to save the screen without completing the required items. If you try to save, you will be provided with a list of required items not completed in red at the bottom of the page. Make sure you navigate to all tabs on the left hand side of the screen and complete all required items on the application. If you have not completed all the required items in the application, your application will not be allowed to be submitted. If you do not complete these and try to submit your application, you will be provided with a list of items that still need to be completed.

Saving

You must save each screen using the Save button at the bottom of every page before moving when you have completed entering the requested information. If you do not save and go to another screen the data you have already entered will be lost. Be sure to save regularly to prevent data loss. For each screen a message will appear at the top of the screen in green: *Applicant data was retrieved successfully once your data has been successfully saved.*

Returning to your Application

You will be able to go back to your application at any point **prior to submitting your application** by the deadline of January 15, 2009.

Submit Data

Submit data will send your application form. Once you have submitted your application form, you will be allowed to log back in to check the status of your application and to print the application for your own records. You will **not** be able to edit your application form once it has been submitted. Application forms will not be accepted after the deadline.

Check Status

You may check the status of your application at any time by selecting the Check Status item on the left hand menu bar. This will allow you to see what items have been completed and which still need to be completed.

Upload Files

You will be asked to attach several documents to your application. Please prepare your documents beforehand and save them on your computer. These documents must be in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Attachments should be uploaded by the deadline. Attachments only may be accepted after the deadline however, if you choose to submit them after the deadline you run the risk of the attachments not being included in your application package. All documents received by to the deadline will be included in the application package.

Printing your Application

Using the Navigation bar you will be able to print a copy of your application for your records. By selecting Print Application FAST will open a new browser window with your completed application form. Click File and Print from the new window to print the form.

APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

Application Form

Screen	Question	Instructions
Contact Information	1	If any of your application materials are listed under a different name, enter your previous name.
	1	Suffix is anything that comes after your full name such as “Jr” or “III”
	1(d)	Your primary email address will appear as you entered it when you registered. It cannot be changed.
Personal Data	2(a)	If you are a permanent resident with a permanent resident registration card, you must provide a copy of your card. You may scan it into a PDF file and upload it with your other documents. Individuals on temporary or student visas are not eligible.
	2 (c)	This question is based on self-definition and identification. Respond to the question related to ethnicity and race. More than one response is permitted for race.
	2(d)	HHS has just expanded the definition of Individuals who come from a family with an annual income below established low-income thresholds. These thresholds are based on family size, published by the U.S. Bureau of the Census; adjusted annually for changes in the Consumer Price Index; and adjusted by the Secretary for use in all health professions programs. The Secretary periodically publishes these income levels at http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.shtml . For individuals from low-income backgrounds, the institution must be able to demonstrate that such candidates (a) have qualified for Federal disadvantaged assistance; or (b) have received any of the following student loans: Health Professional Student Loans (HPSL), Loans for Disadvantaged Student Program; or (c) have received scholarships from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services under the Scholarship for Individuals with Exceptional Financial Need.
	2(e)	Individuals with disabilities, who are defined as those with a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.
Education	3	List schools you have previously attended including the school name, dates you attended (month/year)

Screen	Question	Instructions
		<p>and if you are requesting a transcript. If you are not requesting a transcript you must explain the reason you are not requesting one.</p> <p>Please list the colleges/universities you have attended in the order of the most recent to those earlier in your academic career (e.g. whatever university/school you are attending now should be your first listing). Do not list colleges you attended for less than one year. You may limit your list to those attended within the last 10 years. In order to add schools, complete the information for one school, SAVE and then you will be taken to a new screen to add additional schools.</p> <p>The schools you enter will appear at the top of the Education screen.</p> <p>Location – City and State Begin Date– enter the month/year you started at the university (format mm/yyyy) End Date - enter the month/year you finished (format mm/yyyy). If you are currently attending the school, leave the End Date blank. Transcript Requested – check this box if you are requesting a transcript from this school. If you are not requesting a transcript you must explain the reason you are not requesting one.</p>
Educational Status	4	<p>Highest Degree Earned refers to all education you have completed, what level have you <u>already</u> obtained.</p>
Educational Status	4(b)	<p>Complete the programs you are currently enrolled in and/or the programs you are applying to for the Fall semester Program Area refers to the major area of study within your department (e.g. behavioral neuroscience, neuroimmunology, neurochemistry, etc...).</p> <p>Doctoral/Master’s Type – select the type of doctoral degree or enter the type of master’s degree you are pursuing.</p>
GPA/Training	5(a)	<p>Enter the GPAs listed on your transcripts. If no GPA is listed on your transcript, leave the question blank. If you attended more than one school for the</p>

Screen	Question	Instructions
		same degree, enter the GPA of the most current school. Do not try to calculate GPAs yourself or convert them to a 4-point scale. Be sure to indicate whether your GPA is calculated on a 4-point scale.
NIH Institute's mission and research	5(b)	Visit the NIH website at http://www.nih.gov , go to the Institute(s) of your choice (links listed below), and click on the “About” link to get more information on each Institute’s mission and research priorities (e.g., click on About NIMH to get more information on NIMH’s mission). Institutes: NIDA: http://www.nida.nih.gov/ NINDS: http://www.ninds.nih.gov/ NIMH: http://www.nimh.nih.gov/
Publications Presentations Honors Clubs Volunteer	6-10	You must answer the question with regard to how many publications, presentations, honors, etc. you have. If you do not have any, enter 0. If you will be listing publications, presentations, honors, etc., it is important to furnish the full citations or references in the space provided. You may include articles that are “in press”, but you may not include works in progress or under review. You may not direct the reviewer to refer to your curriculum vita for this information.
Recommendations	11	Enter the names and contact information of all your recommenders including your advisor. For your advisor under Nature of Relationship, select “Advisor.” For all other recommenders select the Nature of the Relationship that best fits your relationship with your recommender. If you do not yet have an advisor, Just list all three of your recommenders with the appropriate Nature of Relationship. Remember to click on the buttons to have APA send an email to your recommenders. This will provide them with the link they need to submit their recommendations.

Other Required Documents

1) ESSAYS:

This is arguably the most important part of your application. Please write two brief essays. Essay #1 should focus on a description of your research experience and career goals in

neuroscience. Essay #2 should describe how your goals are consistent with the goals of the Diversity Program in Neuroscience.

Size and spacing requirements for all essays are as follows: single-spaced with a blank line between paragraphs; one inch margins (left, right, top, bottom); and a 12 point font size in a True Type Font Setting (such as Times New Roman or Arial). Essays not meeting these requirements will not be favorably reviewed.

ESSAY #1

Please submit a two-page essay describing your previous research experience and current training goals in neuroscience, and how this will lead you to become an independent research scientist. Be sure to describe the type of training you hope to receive in your doctoral program, including the institutional setting where you plan to do your training. Identify specific faculty, resources, and training available to you. You should also provide a rationale for your choice of advisor or mentor at your university, including a specific assessment of his or her research area, and what opportunities it will provide you in reaching your career goals. Strong consideration is given to applicants whose research advisors have funding from NIMH, NIDA, or NINDS.

For those applicants who are currently applying for admission into doctoral programs, please select your top two training sites choices and direct your response to those particular programs.

ESSAY #2

The goal of the Diversity Program in Neuroscience is to increase the diversity of neuroscientists involved in independent research relevant to the missions of the NIMH, NIDA, and NINDS. Their missions include, but are not limited to, neuroscientists whose work is related to the federal initiative to eliminate health disparities. Please submit a one-page essay describing how your career goals are consistent with the mission of the Diversity Program in Neuroscience.

2) CURRICULUM VITA:

A curriculum vita is a short account of one's qualifications, training, career experiences, publications, professional presentations, etc... If you are a graduating senior, then you may not have one at this stage of your career. We strongly urge you to work with someone in your department to develop one. It is a standard document that will be used throughout your professional career.

3) THREE RECOMMENDATIONS:

The very best types of recommendations come from faculty who are familiar with your academic work and research potential. Recommendations should be completed by three people most familiar with your academic accomplishments and/or experiences that demonstrate your ability and interest in pursuing a doctorate in neuroscience. **All recommendation letters and forms must be submitted by university faculty members. If you are already in a doctoral program, you must include a letter from your research advisor(s).** Please ask your recommenders to describe your strengths, weaknesses, and potential for developing as an independent research scientist.

A cautionary note: Missing recommendations account for most incomplete DPN applications! Start early and work diligently with your recommenders to get them in on time.

DPN strongly encourages all of its Fellows to work with a research advisor who is funded by NIMH, NIDA, or NINDS. If you are not currently in a doctoral program and are selected to receive a fellowship, we advise you to work with an advisor funded by one of the above Institutes. This standard is strongly considered when evaluating fellowship applications.

4) TRANSCRIPTS:

Please forward transcripts for any college/university you attended for at least a full academic year within the last 10 years. If you are not requesting a transcript you must explain the reason you are not requesting one. Transcripts must be official with a raised seal or official marking used by the college/university. Transcripts should be mailed to the following address:

APA Diversity Program in Neuroscience
Predoctoral Application
750 First Street, NE
Washington, D.C., 20002-4242

5) GRADUATE RECORD EXAM SCORES:

Please have your GRE scores forwarded to DPN (**our institution code is 0187 and our department code is 5199**) or send a photocopy of your GRE scores. GRE scores should be mailed to the following address:

APA Diversity Program in Neuroscience
Predoctoral Application
750 First Street, NE
Washington, D.C., 20002-4242

If you took the MCAT instead of the GRE, please forward your MCAT scores to the DPN office.

If you have any questions about our application process, you may contact the office at (202) 336-6127 or mfp@apa.org. We wish you much success in your graduate school training and as you apply for our fellowship!

REMEMBER, THE APPLICATION DEADLINE IS JANUARY 15, 2009

IMPORTANT

All Diversity Program in Neuroscience Fellows are required to apply to the Summer Program in Neuroscience, Ethics, and Survival Skills (SPINES) during their first summer.

SPINES begins in June and ends in July at the Marine Biological Laboratory (MBL) in Woods Hole, MA. SPINES students are also invited to spend the following month pursuing research in the laboratory of selected MBL scientists. For specific dates and information, please visit the MBL web site at http://www.mbl.edu/education/courses/special_topics/spines.html or contact the DPN office.

The program provides a rich two-month experience in neuroscience. In the first month, students are given neuroscience knowledge in seminar, lecture, laboratory, and demonstration format; in responsible conduct of research using case studies; and in survival skills such as grant writing, teaching, and public speaking, using a lecture and workshop format. Students then may participate in a one-month laboratory research experience working in the laboratories of SPINES mentors George Augustine, Joe L. Martinez, Jr., Allen Mensinger, Stephen Zottoli or other MBL scientists. The program is targeted to groups underrepresented in neuroscience (African-American, Hispanic American, Native American, and Pacific Islander), although applications from any qualified student who is interested in the SPINES curriculum are welcome.



This is a full fellowship program; all costs of attending the course, including travel, housing, and meals at MBL are covered by the National Institute of Mental Health and the MBL.

Directors: Joe L. Martinez, *University of Texas, San Antonio*; and James Townsel, *Meharry Medical College*.

2008 Course Faculty & Lecturers:

Pragathi Achanta, Ph.D., John Hopkins University
Catherine Carr, Ph.D., University of Maryland
Edward Castaneda, University of Texas at El Paso
John Dowling, Ph.D., Harvard University
Anne M. Etgen, Albert Einstein College of Medicine
Clara Franzini-Armstrong, University of Pennsylvania
Thomas O. Fox, Harvard Medical School
Karen Gale, Ph.D., Georgetown University
Erica Glasper, Ph.D., Princeton University
Jeffrey I. Gordon, M.D., Washington University of St. Louis
Stephen Heinrich, Ph.D., VA Medical Center
John G. Hildebrand, University of Arizona
Erich D. Jarvis, Ph.D., Duke University
Bruce Johnson, Ph.D., Cornell University
Daniel Johnston, University of Texas at Austin
Darcy Kelley, Ph.D., Columbia University
Edward A. Kravitz, Harvard Medical School School
John E. Lisman, Brandeis University
Allen Mensinger, University of Minnesota

Rae Nishi, University of Vermont
Alfredo Quinones-Hinojosa, Johns Hopkins University
Robert Savage, Williams College
Thomas M. Schmidt, Michigan State University
Ann Stuart, University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
Keith Trujillo, California State University - San Marcos
Harold Zakon, Ph.D., University of Texas at Austin
Steven Zottoli, Williams College
