

# Minority Fellowship Program



Fall 2009

## Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Application Instructions (MHSAS)

<b>GENERAL INFORMATION</b> .....	2
<b>DISCLAIMER</b> .....	2
<b>LIST OF REQUIRED MATERIALS</b> .....	2
Group A – Required documents to be submitted online: .....	2
Group B – Required documents to be mailed to the MFP office: .....	3
<b>TIPS FOR APPLICANTS</b> .....	3
<b>SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION ONLINE</b> .....	3
<b>How to Use FAST</b> .....	4
Registering For FAST .....	4
Logging In After Registering .....	4
Navigation .....	4
Instructions/Help .....	4
Sending Links to Recommenders .....	4
Required Items .....	5
Saving .....	5
Returning to your Application .....	5
Submit Data .....	5
Upload Files .....	5
Printing your Application .....	6
<b>APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS</b> .....	6
Application Form .....	6
Other Required Documents .....	8
1) COVER LETTER: .....	8
2) ESSAYS: .....	8
3) CURRICULUM VITA: .....	9
4) THREE RECOMMENDATIONS: .....	9
5) TRANSCRIPTS: .....	10
6) GRADUATE RECORD EXAM SCORES: .....	10

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

This document provides you with instructions for completing the Mental Health Services and Substance Abuse Services (MHSAS) application. Please review the instructions carefully and thoroughly. Following the instructions will 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 send to us.

Students receiving support under the MFP MHSAS program will be required to document that they received some training, or exposure to, substance abuse issues (treatment, prevention, or policy). In addition, and consistent with the mission of the MFP to help improve services provided to communities of color, students receiving support under this program will be required to document that they received some training or exposure to cultural competency (services, theory, or policy). Training or exposure in substance abuse and cultural competency can be in the form of courses, seminars, practica, workshops etc... The training or exposure should first be sought through the Fellow's training program, department, or university. However, the MFP can also work with the Fellow and the university to ensure that the training/exposure is made available. In summary, each Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Fellow must be able to document the following (A-C) upon completion of his/her doctoral training requirements:

- A. Training or exposure to delivering services to ethnic minorities with mental health and substance abuse disorders.
- B. Training or exposure to cultural competency.
- C. Training or exposure to at least ONE of the following: (1) adults with serious mental illness, (2) children with serious emotional disturbance, (3) older adults, (4) rural populations, (5) mental health services research or treatment research.

Please note that **you are not required to specialize in substance abuse** in order to receive this fellowship.

## **DISCLAIMER**

Please be advised that all fellowship awards are subject to future funding from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Although we expect to receive funding for this program, SAMHSA has not yet determined if funding will be available for the 2010-2011 academic year. We will update you regarding SAMHSA's decision as soon as we receive the pertinent information from them.

## **LIST OF REQUIRED MATERIALS**

A complete MFP application includes the following documents.

### **Group A – Required documents to be submitted online:**

- Brief Cover Letter (no more than 1 page) (see page 8)
- Application Form (see page 6)
- Two Essays (see page 8)

- Curriculum Vita (see page 9)
- Three recommendations (see page 9)

**Group B – Required documents to be mailed to the MFP office:**

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

- Official Transcripts (see page 10)
- GRE Scores (see page 10 for our institution and department codes)
- Permanent Resident Card

**Mail all Group B documents to:** APA Minority Fellowship Program  
MHSAS Predoctoral Application  
750 First Street, NE  
Washington, D.C., 20002-4242

**DEADLINE – January 15, 2010**

**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, 2010**

**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, 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, 2010.

### **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**

<b>Screen</b>	<b>Question</b>	<b>Instructions</b>
Contact Information	1(a)	If any of your application materials are listed under a different name, enter your previous name.
	1(a)	<b>Suffix</b> 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 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 <b>and</b> 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 <a href="http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.shtml">http://aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/index.shtml</a> . 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) and if you are requesting a transcript. If you are not requesting a transcript you must explain the reason you are not requesting one.

Screen	Question	Instructions
		<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.</p> <p>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><b>The schools you enter will appear at the top of the Education screen.</b>  <b>Location</b> – City and State  <b>Begin Date</b>– enter the month/year you started at the university (format mm/yyyy)  <b>End Date</b> - enter the month/year you finished (format mm/yyyy). <b>If you are currently attending the school, leave the End Date blank.</b>  <b>Transcript Requested</b> – 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	<b>Highest Degree Earned</b> refers to all education you have completed, what level have <u>you have already obtained</u> .
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  <b>Program Area</b> refers to the major area of study within your department (clinical, social, community etc....).  <b>Doctoral/Master’s Type</b> – 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 same degree, enter the GPA of the most current school. <b>Do not try to calculate GPAs yourself or convert them to a 4-point scale.</b> Be sure to indicate whether your GPA is calculated on a 4-point scale.</p>
	5(c)	<p>Visit the website at <a href="http://www.samhsa.gov/">http://www.samhsa.gov/</a>, go to Centers and Offices to select the Center of your choice (see below for links), and click on the “Overview” link to get more information on each Center’s mission and priorities.  <b>Centers:</b></p>

Screen	Question	Instructions
		CMHS: <a href="http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/">http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/cmhs/</a> CSAT: <a href="http://csat.samhsa.gov/">http://csat.samhsa.gov/</a> CSAP: <a href="http://prevention.samhsa.gov/">http://prevention.samhsa.gov/</a>
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. <b>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.</b>

### Other Required Documents

#### 1) **COVER LETTER:**

Submit a one-page letter introducing yourself and your application to the Training Advisory Committee. Any pertinent information that was not included in other parts of the application may be included here.

#### 2) **ESSAYS:**

This is arguably the most important part of your application. Please write two brief essays. Essay #1 should focus on your specific training interests and career goals. Essay #2 should focus on your choice of university, training program and advisor/mentor and how your choice relates to ethnic minority mental health or your specific training interests and career goals.

***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: TRAINING INTERESTS AND CAREER GOALS.** Please write an essay not to exceed two typed pages which describes how your interests and career goals in psychology will contribute to the major objectives of the MFP Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services program. The major goals of the program are to increase the availability of **culturally competent mental health and substance abuse services** provided to ethnic minorities and to increase the general knowledge of issues related to ethnic minority mental health and substance abuse treatment or prevention. Describe how your training, interests, and career goals will contribute to these objectives. This is your opportunity to introduce yourself and your area of interest and describe how you will contribute to the mental health well-being of ethnic minorities. In your essay, you should discuss your current interests in psychology or mental health and detail your related experiences and training to date. You do not have to be an expert in your particular area of interest, but you should certainly impart some sense of enthusiasm or commitment to that area, as well as an understanding of basic issues.

**ESSAY #2: TRAINING SETTING.** Please write an essay not to exceed two typed pages which describes why you selected the program you are now attending, or to which you are applying. You also should provide a rationale for your choice of advisor or mentor at your university. Identify specific faculty, resources, and training available to you which will provide you with training relevant to ethnic minority mental health and substance abuse prevention or treatment or the specific training interests and career goals you described in your “training interests and career goals” essay. Your essay should make a convincing argument that you will receive training related to ethnic minority mental health treatment and that your advisor (or the faculty you would like to work with) has the resources and expertise to guide you in this area.

For those applicants who are currently applying to several programs, please select your top two training site choices and direct your response to those particular programs.

### **3) CURRICULUM VITA:**

Your curriculum vita must be submitted via FAST. 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. It is certainly to your advantage if you include one.

### **4) THREE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The very best types of recommendations come from faculty who are familiar with your academic work and services 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 psychology with an ethnic minority focus. **If you are already in a doctoral program, you must include a letter from your advisor(s).** Please ask your recommenders to describe your strengths, weaknesses, and potential for developing as a practitioner or practitioner/researcher.

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

**5) 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 Minority Fellowship Program  
MHSAS Predoctoral Application  
750 First Street, NE  
Washington, D.C., 20002-4242**

**6) GRADUATE RECORD EXAM SCORES:**

Please have your GRE scores forwarded to MFP (**our institution code is 0187 and our department code is 5199**). While GRE scores are not used to select fellows, they help us evaluate the effectiveness of our selection criteria, and the relevance of these scores to successful graduate school completion. They are required for the completion of your MFP application. GRE scores should be mailed to the following address:

**APA Minority Fellowship Program  
MHSAS Predoctoral Application  
750 First Street, NE  
Washington, D.C., 20002-4242**

If you have any questions about our application process, you may contact the office at (202) 336-6127 or [mfp@apa.org](mailto: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, 2010**