

Pursuing a Career in Counseling Psychology

ALL ABOUT COUNSELING PSYCHOLOGY

Counseling psychologists complete graduate, doctoral-level training in programs that require four to six years of graduate study. These doctoral programs of study involve coursework and instruction in the core areas of psychology (biological, cognitive/affective, and social aspects of behavior; individual differences) and specialized instruction in theories of counseling and personality, vocational psychology, human lifespan development, psychological assessment and evaluation, psychopathology, measurement and statistics, research design, professional ethics, supervision and consultation. Their training also includes a supervised internship focused on the development of counseling, psychotherapy, assessment and consultation skills.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Counseling psychologists work in a variety of settings, providing various services to different client populations. Some are employed in colleges and universities as teachers, researchers and service providers (e.g., in university counseling centers). Others work in independent practice, providing counseling, assessment and consultation services to individuals, couples, families and organizations. Still others work in community mental health centers, VA hospitals and other medical facilities, health maintenance organizations, rehabilitation agencies, and business and industrial organizations.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

A doctoral degree is required for a career as a counseling psychologist. While the common educational pathway for a counseling psychologist is similar to that of psychologists working in other subfields — undergraduate degree in psychology, followed by a master's degree and then a doctorate — specialized counseling psychology programs exist for students interested in entering a more intensive graduate doctoral program immediately following undergraduate studies. These graduate programs usually are housed in departments of psychology or in colleges of education at major universities, and most are accredited by APA.

WHAT YOU CAN EARN

Salaries for consulting psychologists can vary widely, depending on the industry, company size, geographical location and years of experience. In 2013, the median salary for clinical, counseling and school psychologists was \$72,713, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which groups these subfields together.

Counseling psychologists help people recognize their strengths and find resources to cope with everyday problems and adversity. Counseling psychologists focus on interactions between people and their environment, and on educational and career development.

Find out where psychology can take you at **WWW.PSYCHSCIENCEACTION.ORG**.