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AAFS
STUDENT
WEBINAR

FORENSIC PSYCHIATRY & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE
What is Forensic Psych(ology/iatry)?
Broad Spectrum

FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH

1. Practitioner
- Evaluation
- Treatment
- Testimony

2. Researcher/Consultant
- Social
- Developmental
- Cognitive
- Many other areas

3. ‘Hybrid’
- Practice
- Academia
- Community

LICENSURE
Areas of Psychology

Practitioners

- Forensic
- Clinical or Abnormal
- Counseling
- School
- Experimental
- Cognitive

Researchers

- Quantitative
- Industrial/Organizational
- Educational
- Community
- Developmental
- Social
“Practitioner” Jobs

• Job Tasks
  – Evaluations and testimony in variety of types of legal cases
  – Court-ordered treatment (Correctional)

• Locations
  – Corrections, hospitals, courts, community

• Populations
  • Criminal or juvenile justice
  • Sex Offenders
  • Plaintiffs / Non-criminals
  • Geriatric
  • Children
  • TBI or neuro-damaged
Example Evaluation Types

Civil
- Child Custody
- Workers compensation or personal liability
- Guardianship/Conservatorship
- Fitness for Duty (Police)

Criminal
- Competence to Stand Trial
- Not Guilty by Reason of Insanity
- Juvenile evaluations (CST, study & reports)
- Risk assessment of sexual offenders
Other Practitioner Roles

• Consultant in
  – Criminal investigations
  – Gov’t agencies
• Conduct threat assessment
• Assist in psychological autopsies
• Educator
• Researcher
Research/Policy-Focused Areas

• Subspecialties
  – Developmental Psychologists
  – Cognitive Psychologists
  – Social Psychologists
  – Community Psychologists

• Activities
  – Research, Consultant, Educator, Policy-maker

• Work Setting
  – Academic (Medical, Psychology, Social Work)
  – Research or Policy Institute
  – Government Agencies
  – Non-profit or advocacy settings
EDUCATIONAL PATHWAYS IN FORENSIC PSYCH

CHOOSE YOUR OWN ADVENTURE!
Forensic Grad School Pathway (1)

GRE

Undergrad (4 years)
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Anything you enjoy

Graduate School (4+ years)
- PhD
- PsyD
- Joint JD/PhD

Orals & Dissertation

Internship (1 year)
- Child/Adolescent
- Adult
- Forensic
- Combination

Fellowship (1-2 years)
- Forensic Specialty

Licensure

Practitioner (and Researcher)
Forensic Grad School Pathway (II)

Undergrad (4 years)
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Anything you enjoy

Graduate School (4+ years)
- PhD, sub-discipline of Psychology
- RESEARCH FOCUS

GRE

Orals & Dissertation

Research Areas
- Memory
- Personality
- Social
- Personality
- ETC...
Grad School: Educational Resources

• AAFS Student Page
  – http://www.aafs.org/students

• American Psychology and Law Society (AP-LS)
  – Student Section
  – http://www.ap-ls.org/students/
    • Guide to Graduate Programs in Forensic Psychology
    • Guide to Internships and Fellowships

• American Psychological Association
  – Student Page
  – http://www.apa.org/about/students.aspx

• US News- Programs in Clinical Psychology
Forensic Psychiatry Pathway

MCAT
- Undergraduate (4 years)
  - Premed Track
  - Bio./Chem./Other Science
  - Other + Med School Recs

USMLE
- Medical School (4 years)
  - Rotating Specialties
  - Psychiatry exposure at end of medical school

Psychiatry Boards
- Residency (3-4 years)
  - USMLE Test (1st year)
  - General training in psychiatry
- Fellowship (1 year)
  - Forensic Psychiatry
  - ACGME Accredited
Medical Path: Educational Resources

• General Med School Info
  – Association of American Medical Colleges
    • https://www.aamc.org/students/applying/

• Psychiatry Residency & Specialty
  – American Psychiatric Association
    • http://www.psychiatry.org/learn/medical-students

• Forensic Psychiatry Fellowships
  – American Academy of Forensic Psychiatry
    • http://aapl.org/fellow.php
Licensure and Board Certification

• Who needs a license?
  – Psychologists and psychiatrists who deliver a diagnostic or forensic assessment service on a given individual
  – Both psychologist and psychiatrists licensed by separate boards to practice psychology or medicine in given state

• Board Certification
  – Forensic Psychology
    • American Board of Forensic Psychology (ABFP)
  – General Psychiatry & Forensic Psychiatry
    • American Board of Psychiatry & Neurology (ABPN)
SALARY & EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS
Salary

• Varies greatly
  – Training, area of employment, area of country

• Psychiatrists tend to out-earn psychologists
  – Psychologist (entry level, Ph.D.): $60,000 - $70,000
  – Psychiatrist: $160,000 - 200,000
  – Bachelors or MA level: hold title or psychological assistant or associate
    • $35,000 or $40,000.

• Private practitioners tend to out-earn academics
  – Typical hourly rates vary from $100 to $300 or much more, based on training and area of county
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Employment Type</th>
<th>PROS</th>
<th>CONS</th>
<th>Example Employers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private Practice (Forensic)</td>
<td>• (Possibly) Excellent pay&lt;br&gt;• Flexible hours&lt;br&gt;• Breadth of activities</td>
<td>• Inconsistent paycheck&lt;br&gt;• Business expenses&lt;br&gt;• No benefits/401K/etc.</td>
<td>• Self-employed&lt;br&gt;• Part of group of psychologists of psychiatrists</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Sector (State or Federal gov’t; Hospitals; Correctional facilities)</td>
<td>• Consistent paycheck&lt;br&gt;• Benefits/retirement&lt;br&gt;• Opportunity to provide treatment and do evals</td>
<td>• Fixed hours&lt;br&gt;• (Possibly) less pay&lt;br&gt;• Scope of practice may be limited by policy</td>
<td>• State forensic hospital&lt;br&gt;• State or federal prison&lt;br&gt;• County Jail&lt;br&gt;• FBI or other gov’t agency&lt;br&gt;• Court system</td>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Position (Psych department; medical school)</td>
<td>• Teach and Research&lt;br&gt;• Flexible hours&lt;br&gt;• Benefits/retirement&lt;br&gt;• Consistent paycheck</td>
<td>• (Possibly) less pay&lt;br&gt;• Scope of practice may be limited by policy</td>
<td>• Undergraduate or Graduate School&lt;br&gt;• Medical School&lt;br&gt;• Law School</td>
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<td>“Hybrid”</td>
<td>• Breadth of activities&lt;br&gt;• Flexible hours</td>
<td>• Inconsistent paycheck&lt;br&gt;• No benefits/retirement&lt;br&gt;• May easily overextend self between activities!</td>
<td>• Part time in various above roles</td>
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BENEFITS

DOWNSIDES
**BENEFITS**

- Opportunity to help others
- Diverse career paths
  - criminal courts, consulting, government, education, etc.
- Challenging and rewarding career
- Never boring!
- And more personally ...

**DOWNSIDES**

- Requires significant educational commitment
- Pay can be low relative to amount of education and work required
- Frustration, stress, and burnout can occur
- May wish you could “help” someone, but not your role
SELECT STUDENT RESOURCES

**WEBSITES**

• American Academy of Forensic Sciences: Student Section  
  — http://www.aafs.org/choosing-career

• American Psychology-Law Society: Student Section  
  — http://www.ap-ls.org/students/

• APA Career Center: “Postgrad growth area: Forensic Psychology”  

• American Psychiatric Association: Student Section  
  — http://www.psychiatry.org/learn/medical-students

**BOOKS/ARTICLES**


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