

2023 SCOPE Appendix

Links to Resources

APAGS Video Series on Preparing and Applying for Graduate School

<http://www.apa.org/education/grad/application-video-series.aspx>

Graduate School Application Timelines

<http://www.princetonreview.com/grad-school-advice/application-timeline>

<https://psychology.ucsd.edu/undergraduate-program/undergraduate-resources/graduate-career-resources/applying-grad-school/application-process.html>

General Information on Applying to Graduate School

<https://mitch.web.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4922/2017/02/MitchGradSchoolAdvice.pdf>

<http://www.usnews.com/education/best-graduate-schools/top-graduate-schools/applying>

<http://psych.hanover.edu/handbook/applic2.html>

<http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/guides/grad-school.aspx>

<https://mallorydobias.medium.com/open-access-tips-materials-for-clinical-psych-phd-applications-e9e81be3d132>

<https://clinicalpsychgradschool.org/>

<https://www.apa.org/monitor/2017/01/letter-recommendation>

Kisses of Death in the Graduate School Application Process

http://psychology.unl.edu/psichi/Graduate_School_Application_Kisses_of_Death.pdf

Career Advice

<http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/guides/college-students.aspx>

APAGS Resource Guide for Ethnic Minority Graduate Students

<https://www.apa.org/apags/resources/ethnic-minority-guide.pdf>

Research and Mentorship Opportunities

<https://www.apa.org/education-career/undergrad/research-opportunities>

<https://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/>

<https://www.macalester.edu/psychology/research/summerresearch/>

<https://www.asfp.io/>

<https://www.project-short.com/>

<https://wordpress.auburn.edu/bgpsa/diversity-campus-experience-dice/>

<http://clinicalpsych.unc.edu/diversifying-clinical-psychology-weekend/>

<http://odg.mit.edu/undergraduate/msrp/>

<http://www.apa.org/pi/mfp/index.aspx>

<http://www.apa.org/pi/mfp/psychology/institute/index.aspx>

<http://www.apa.org/pi/mfp/psychology/preddoctoral/index.aspx>

<http://www.apa.org/about/awards/pubint-cemrrt.aspx?tab=3>

http://www.psychologicalscience.org/members/apssc/mentorship_program

Podcasts about Graduate School

<https://www.thedailyba.com/episodes/2021/0302/owning-your-weaknesses-program-fit-applying-to-aba-graduate-school>

<https://www.thedailyba.com/episodes/2021/0316/relocation-dream-schools-backup-plans-applying-to-aba-graduate-school>

<https://www.thedailyba.com/episodes/2021/0330/students-also-interview-their-graduate-school-staff-applying-to-aba-graduate-school>

<https://www.thedailyba.com/episodes/2021/0216/references-and-letters-of-recommendation-applying-to-aba-graduate-school>

<https://www.thedailyba.com/episodes/2020/1215/choosing-between-a-psyd-or-phd-in-applied-behavior-analysis-aba>

<https://www.thedailyba.com/episodes/2020/1216/dispelling-myths-of-the-psyd-phd-in-applied-behavior-analysis-aba>

Choosing a Graduate Program

APA-Accredited Programs: <https://www.accreditation.apa.org/accredited-programs>

https://www.psychologicalscience.org/members/apssc/undergraduate_update/summer-2011/choosing-a-graduate-program

GRE Resources

<https://www.ets.org/gre/score-users/reducing-barriers/fee-reductions.html>

<https://www.kaptest.com/tuitionassistance>

Sample CV

Sample Personal Statements

Personal Statement 1 (Clinical Psychology Adult Track)

There is no singular moment when I realized that I wanted to pursue a career in clinical psychology research. Much like the research process itself, it has been a long and deliberate path, with times of obstruction, but with an ultimate conclusion. My path began in my high school psychology class when I realized that my intellectual curiosity and predisposition to analytical approaches, coupled with my passion for helping those in need, could culminate in the discipline of psychology. Since then I have explored and participated in different areas of specialization within the field, but ultimately decided upon a career in clinical psychology research, with an emphasis on trauma studies.

I am drawn to the field of trauma psychology because it allows for as close to a 'clean' relationship between environment and behavior as can be assessed from a psychological perspective; changes in behaviors, cognitive functioning, and even in genetics can be observed after a traumatic event. The allure to the field does not lie in simplifying the human condition; rather, I view trauma as an in vivo manipulation of the typical human experience that produces a myriad of positive and negative responses. The closer we come to understanding these responses, the closer we are to understanding the basis for behavior, thereby enabling us to prevent and treat mental disorders. A Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology would allow me to pursue these theories, both in research and practice, and I strongly believe the scientist-practitioner model at XXX will bestow the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to work that helps distressed populations.

As a student in psychology courses at XXX, I quickly realized that getting involved in hands-on research was the next logical step in furthering my understanding of the field. I joined two research laboratories during my undergraduate career and ultimately completed an honors thesis titled "Attentional Binding of Location and Color in 4- and 5-Year-Old Children", in Dr. XXX's Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience lab. The thesis expanded upon a previous study's finding that verbal cues enhance pre-school aged children's ability to bind and maintain color-location features of objects and had implications for understanding how to optimize children's performance on tasks that require dual cognitive processes. After designing, recruiting, and piloting my study, I was unable to replicate the previous study's findings with my sample. With adjustments to my methodology, I was able to analyze the data and complete my thesis with a newfound appreciation for the challenging quest that is experimental research. Despite null results, the research process taught me the important implications of sound science, and I was more motivated than ever to jump into research, with one significant amendment: I wanted to pursue research that had more direct clinical applications.

The study of posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) struck me immediately as an area that has clinical implications and would draw on my experience in cognitive research, given the fundamental role of maladaptive learning of fearful stimuli in its etiology. That interest led me to

the Center for the Study of Traumatic Stress (CSTS) where I have worked for two years, first as a research assistant and now as a project coordinator. The Center's work focuses on investigating mental health outcomes of military service members and their families. In the course of the four projects I have worked on at CSTS, I have been part of teams that investigated complicated grief in military families, the role of mutilation fear in PTSD, risk factors for developing a mental health diagnosis when deploying without one's regular unit, and organizational resilience, all of which have expanded my understanding of traumatic stress and overall mental health. For each of these projects, I learned about military psychology and trauma from psychologists, psychiatrists, epidemiologists, and social workers. Working with a dynamic team has taught me the importance of collaborating across disciplines, both in treatment of patients and in research. I strongly believe that this skill will become increasingly imperative in functioning as a clinician and researcher in the next several decades, given the move toward transdiagnostic treatments and integrated care.

The most valuable skill I have learned through observation and practice at CSTS is the development of a hypothesis and accompanying analytic plan with large datasets. In the Reserve and National Guard study under the direction of Dr. XXX, we have collected data from 2,000 service members across four time points, with hundreds of variables measuring everything from genotype, to family functioning, to personality traits. I am an author on three manuscripts derived from this dataset; one of these manuscripts examined the role of deploying without one's regular unit had on depression, PTSD, and binge drinking and has been recently submitted to the American Journal of Public Health. I learned to take the perspective of clinicians and providers when developing these analytic plans; while before I may have chased whichever question seemed most interesting to me, I have developed the maturity to understand that research questions should be inspired from clinical (and in this case, organizational) applicability. For example, we targeted unit structure as a potential risk factor partially because of the well established literature on social support's impact on PTSD, but also because it is amendable. In other words, knowing that those who deploy without their regular units are at higher risk for mental health disorders helps the military target their pre-deployment trainings and resources accordingly.

While working with team members to develop analytic plans and prepare manuscripts is endlessly valuable to my growth as a researcher, the time I have spent in the field collecting data from Army reservists has left a lasting impression on me, professionally and personally. I have administered questionnaires and collected saliva samples in the hub of Los Angeles, the barren Mojave Desert, and in a field in the middle of Pennsylvania. At XXX, I stood outside wondering where our participants were, when suddenly 40 tanks returning from live fire drills rolled in. At XXX, I stood in a dark (lit by the headlights of my car), muddy field and briefed a unit of soldiers who had been doing field training for over a week. I witnessed firsthand the difficulty of conducting field research, and those experiences have led me to appreciate the opportunity to reach a population in their natural environment, and sparked questions about the setting in which we deliver interventions. If it was that difficult to administer a survey to these soldiers, the difficulty in administering therapy is surely immense.

Just as CSTS has solidified my confidence and interest in being a researcher, the XXX, where I volunteer as a hotline counselor, has bolstered my confidence in my clinical skills and interest in working with traumatized populations. Our frequent callers require the utmost sensitivity and empathy, given their history of abuse and psychiatric diagnoses. Because of the time constraints and limitation of anonymity, counselors must quickly establish the client's immediate needs and identify the best course of action, whether it is a referral or employing a specific therapeutic technique over the phone. These experiences have elicited a personal call to action for more comprehensive and effective treatments for those suffering from psychological distress.

As a graduate student and researcher, I hope to delve deeper into the etiology of anxiety disorders, specifically PTSD. I am interested in the discipline of experimental psychopathology as a way to understand the basic mechanisms that exacerbate symptomology in these disorders. In line with this, I seek to add to the growing body of literature that supports targeting maladaptive cognitive processes in the form of an intervention, such as retraining attention biases to alleviate symptoms of anxiety in trauma-exposed populations. Further, I am eager to leverage mobile and/or web-based technology as a way to deliver interventions that use the aforementioned theories in order to reach populations that have inadequate access to psychological resources.

To study under Dr. XXX's mentorship would certainly help me achieve these goals. Dr. XXX's research uses both experimental and applied approaches to understand many of the same cognitive (e.g. attentional bias) and behavioral (e.g. experiential avoidance) processes I seek to research. Additionally, the Clinical Psychology program at XXX has a storied reputation for producing productive scholars and skilled clinicians. The abundance of opportunities to learn from the accomplished faculty and rich clinical placements would surely impart me with the skills necessary to make significant contributions to the field throughout my career.

Personal Statement 2 (Clinical Psychology Child Track)

My interest in psychology as an area of study arose during my freshman year of college while I was taking a Parent-Child Relations class. This course explored some of the notions that society holds about parenting practices, such as using spanking as a disciplinary tool or allowing an infant to self-soothe, and evaluated them using psychological research methods. While taking this class, one of the things that I found most thought provoking was the misconception that people held about parenting behaviors being "common sense" or "natural." For example, developing parenting practices that are beneficial and effective, a process that most believe to be instinctual, can vary depending on several factors, including the practices used by one's own parents, the values to which one subscribes, and the environment in which one was raised. After taking this class, I began questioning facets of life that I thought I understood, which fostered my curiosity to learn more about why people act, think, and feel the way that they do. Since discovering my interest in psychology, I have had several opportunities to explore this subject in both research and applied settings. My first exposure to research was after my sophomore year when I was awarded a XXX Summer Research Fellowship. For this

project, I partnered with XXX Psychology professor Dr. XXX, Ph.D. and the local organization Family Services, Inc. in order to conduct a research study that I designed and implemented. This opportunity allowed me to be involved in every step of the research process, including applying to the IRB, designing measures, recruiting participants, conducting interviews, analyzing data, and presenting my findings at the 2012 XXX Undergraduate Research Day. Through this fellowship, I gained first-hand experience in working with research participants, collaborating with others in a professional setting, and performing statistical analyses using computer programs such as SPSS. Additionally, I helped facilitate a psycho-educational group for at-risk families called the XXX, which allowed me to experience how psychological research can be applied.

My experience working on this project also helped to solidify my main research interests: parent-child relationships, particularly in minority or at-risk populations. By working with the XXX group and the research participants, I was able to see how important effective parenting can be to positive child outcomes and the type of negative outcomes that can arise when parents lack this knowledge. Additionally, I came to realize that while there is variability in parenting based on cultural background and context, there are also some basic elements of effective parenting, such as setting age-appropriate boundaries and expressing love, which all parents should know to promote positive child development. This experience also allowed me to understand the problems that parents face in trying to establish their role and authority with their children. Such problems were especially apparent for populations who were already at-risk for poorer outcomes due to poverty, discrimination, and other environmental factors. This topic is especially important for research because of the large amount of diversity that exists in family structures and the shifting of ideas about family roles and dynamics that is occurring in the United States, such as the increasing prevalence of single-parent families and the decreasing adherence to traditional gender roles. Researchers need to understand how these changes affect child development, particularly in high-risk situations, and how to improve family functioning.

In order to enhance my research experience, I applied to and was accepted into the Psychology Honors Program at XXX during my junior year. This program is designed to prepare students for work in research and graduate school as well as to help students explore their interests. As a part of this program, I have participated in two specialized courses that focused on critical thinking, research skills, and advanced statistical analyses. In addition, I am in the process of investigating a research topic of my choosing under the supervision of my faculty mentor, Dr. XXX. For my project, I am conducting secondary data analysis to investigate how experiences with an older child affect parenting expectations and practices for a younger child as that child reaches adolescence. As a culmination for this project, I will write a thesis reporting the results of my project and present my findings to both faculty and students. Additionally, I have had two other experiences that enhanced my exposure to research and applied psychology. First, this past summer, I worked as an intern for the XXX. In this position, I helped design a study and collect data on work readjustment for military veterans who were employed by XXX detention and corrections facilities. Although this project did not focus on my main research interests, it allowed me to explore other areas of psychology and gave me a

greater understanding of the research process. My second experience looked at how psychology research could be applied in everyday life. During the spring of my junior year, I interned with XXX, an organization that treats children with behavioral and emotional problems. I was assigned to work at a local elementary school in a program that helped students with ADHD and Autism Syndrome Disorder learn the skills necessary to function better in a normal classroom environment. In this program, I was able to observe certain techniques that the teachers used, many of which were designed for these types of students, and to see the effectiveness of the methods. As such, I was able to see how psychology research could be implemented in order to better serve different types of people.

All of these experiences have given me insight regarding the path that I hope to follow in the field of psychology. With regard to further schooling, my goal is to be accepted to a child clinical Ph.D. program so that I can learn more specifically about how the development of children and adolescents is affected by various factors, including biology, environment, and family. A clinical psychology program would also give me access to both research and clinical work in psychology. Ultimately, these are two sides of psychology that I hope to incorporate into my future career. Working in research would allow me to explore my interests in parent-child relations and parenting while also contributing to the knowledge base of the psychological community. Additionally, clinical work would allow me to interact with the families that I would be studying in research, to see firsthand how factors such as parental efficacy and expectations affect their outcomes, and to understand how to best implement my research findings.

The Clinical Psychology Program at XXX offers great resources that would help me obtain a rich and comprehensive schooling experience to better prepare me for my career. With regards to clinical experience, Auburn University gives students the opportunity to interact with clients as early as their second or third year and has many practicum sites in which students are able to work. The sites in which I am most interested include the XXX Youth Development Center, Head Start, and XXX Psychological Services Center.

For psychology research, I would be very interested in working with Dr. XXX. Her research involving parent-child observations and Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) aligns very well with my research interests in parenting and parent-child relationships. Particularly, I am interested in her work with PCIT because it is an intervention programs that teach parents more effective parenting practices to manage their child's behavioral problems. As such, I would like to work in her Parent-Child Research Lab in order to see how PCIT is taught and the effects that it has on families. I would also be interested in investigating what factors impact the effectiveness of PCIT and ways to make the program more effective for a diverse range of families. Both of these clinical and research opportunities contribute to my belief that XXX would provide the best environment for me to explore and learn.

Over the last 15 years, my mother cared for over 100 teenage girls as foster children. Each one of them was given a diagnosis by psychiatrists, doctors, social workers, and teachers. They were bipolar, depressed, sociopathic, psychotic, intellectually disabled, sexually deviant, etc. Unlike other professionals, behavior analysts do not worry about putting labels on people. They

look at the individual's behavior and identify the maintaining consequences for it. Within the ethics of applied behavior analysis (ABA), intervention has to be function-based and individualized. Behavior analysis is field of psychology that does not attach stigmas; an individual's behavior does not equate to the worth or value of the person.

Because of the core principles behind ABA, I chose this field of study as an undergraduate and graduate student. The courses I have taken at XXX pushed me to think of behavior as always a product of the environment, not a part of life that is instinct, inherited, or destined. Behavior can always be altered and changed based on the antecedents proceeding or consequences following it. At A XXX my passion for ABA was ignited under the supervision of Dr. XXX. While pursuing my Master's degree in 2012-2013, I took eleven courses in either behavior analysis or developmental disorders, maintaining a 4.0 GPA. Following graduation, I worked closely with Dr. XXX as a practicum coordinator at Auburn University for several years. From graduate school and working at XXX, I have gained a breadth of clinical work experience that ranges from school consultation; staff training with Master's level graduate students, undergraduate students, teachers, and other professionals; clinic work with a variety of clients; and supervising individuals at a residential facility. Because of my academic background and field experience, I am strong candidate for the CaBS program at XXX.

There are several long-range objectives I have for obtaining an advanced degree in psychology. I desire to help populations with or without intellectual or developmental disabilities by designing and researching evidence-based programs that help increase communication and adaptive skills, as well as decrease challenging behavior. I aim to be an active graduate student by helping any research project within the ABA department, while simultaneously carrying out my own research projects. I also aspire to use an advanced degree to either work in an academic setting, advising other students with research, or using my degree in a clinical setting to push the field to use empirically supported practices. I hope to continue graduate studies as a doctoral student under the guidance of Dr. XXX. XXX's ABA department offers a wide range of clinical work experiences; I plan to expand my repertoire as a researcher within these settings. I also look forward to growing my knowledge in other psychology subsets outside of ABA, while pushing others to understand my philosophical beliefs behind behavior in the courses within the CaBS program.

Behavior analysis is more than a course of study for me; I have seen the effects it has had on populations in schools, homes, clinics, and residential facilities. By no means is it a "quick-fix; ABA interventions require commitment and high fidelity implementation. I have worked at settings where research findings are unvalued and often disregarded. I have witnessed missed opportunities for individuals when labels are attached to their person and their behaviors, especially for the foster children my mom took into our home. Never do I want to use psychology to brand people, and the doctoral study of behavior analysis within the CaBS program will provide me with a strong foundation in both clinical and research opportunities. By obtaining a doctoral degree, this may allow me to educate individuals in principles of ABA. I am eager to influence how caretakers, psychiatrists, other psychologists, students, and social

workers look at behavior and teach them to detach the individual from the behavior, instead finding environmental explanations to why it occurs.

Clinical Psychology Personal Statement 4 (Pediatric Track)

My pursuit for a career in clinical psychology is driven by my motivation to learn about human behavior and my compassion to help those in need. For many years, my career goal was to become a pediatric oncologist. However, after being exposed to the psychological side of a child diagnosed with a chronic illness, I realized that my passion for these children dealt with the psychological obstacles they were forced to face at such a young age. Throughout my remaining years of college, I partook in several research and clinical experiences that continued to reinforce my true calling of becoming a pediatric psychologist.

During my undergraduate career, I was fortunate to have opportunities to participate in several research labs examining pediatric populations. My most current research experience is under the supervision of Dr. XXX. The research conducted in this lab is focused on understanding the etiology behind child anxiety, particularly in how fearful and inhibited temperament leads to anxiety, within a developmental framework. My role as a research assistant in the Behavior, Emotion, and Relationships lab has provided me with direct interactions with young populations experiencing anxiety as I enact roles for laboratory protocols such as the Strange Situation. It is also my responsibility to analyze the heart rate data of the mothers, specifically looking for elevated average heart rates when the child is exposed to novel situations. My honors thesis is derived from these data, and I hypothesized that primiparous mothers and younger mothers will show increased heart rates and cortisol levels when their children are exposed to stressful situations.

I have also worked under Dr. XXX in an EEG lab studying electrophysiology. I have taken three training classes under Dr. XXX; therefore, I consider myself highly trained in running an EEG experiment. In this lab, I learned how to properly net a participant's head and use the equipment in order to create P300 waves and measure EEG activity on NetStation. This past summer, I participated in research under Dr. XXX and Dr. XXX at XXX who have specializations in pediatrics and public health. During my time in this lab, I was involved in three projects that investigated children who are suffering medically, obese children, and children living in homeless shelters. My responsibilities included analyzing the data on SPSS, organizing the databases, coding lunchtime in elementary school lunchrooms, assisting in the collection of research articles to support hypotheses, and practice in writing manuscripts. My research experiences under these great mentors have sparked my interest in pediatric psychology and afforded me meaningful experiences that have taught me the values of leadership, responsibility, and teamwork in a lab, along with providing me opportunities for designing experiments, running statistical analyses, collecting data, and writing scientific manuscripts. In addition to research experience, I have two clinical experiences that have expanded my skills and strengthened my passion for psychological research with pediatric populations. In the summer of 2012, I was hired to be a camp counselor at Camp XXX, a camp in Eustis, Florida that serves terminally and chronically ill children. These children have spent most of their lives

in a hospital, sheltered from the beauty of a carefree childhood. At camp, we, as counselors, empower these children to face and overcome their greatest fears. Children bald from chemotherapy sing under the spotlight at Stage Day. Adolescents with HIV adhere to their medicine regimens without putting up a fight because for once, they do not feel alone in their constant struggles. When these children are at home, they are always labeled as the “sick kid.” Through self-fulfilling prophecies, they become that label, but here at camp, these kids can just be kids. Camp XXX made me realize my true passion in pediatric psychology; it rests in the beautiful realization that once I gave my entire heart and soul to a summer with the world’s bravest children, I could find a pure sense of joy unlike anything else I have ever experienced before.

This summer, I also spent time volunteering in the child life specialist unit at XXX Hospital. To see children come into the hospital full of pain, sadness, and fear, and leave with a sense of confidence, peace, and understanding is one of the most beautiful transformations to witness. Because of this positive experience at the hospital, I strongly believe that I have the patience, empathy, and compassion to help a chronically ill child cope with his or her illness, improve medical adherence, and become a source of comfort to the child and the family.

During graduate school, I hope to obtain skills in interventions, clinical assessments, empirically based research, methodology, critical and integrative thinking, and advanced statistical analyses. Through the mentorship with my faculty member, it is my goal to become a leader and innovator in the field of clinical pediatric psychology. I believe that my dissertation will teach me to apply the skills I will have learned in order to investigate problems of interest in pediatric psychology. Although my plans after achieving my doctorate are to pursue clinical practice, I am strongly interested in the research behind these pediatric populations, and I plan to contribute to ongoing research studies in a children’s hospital. I am most interested in the adherence of medical regimens, problems with disease management, quality of life assessments, and the coping mechanisms utilized by the family and child during medical procedures and throughout the illness. What factors provide successful coping and disease management? How can medical adherence be improved in order to reduce treatment failure? What are the psychosocial outcomes of children with chronic illness? It is my belief that research will vastly expand my knowledge and allow me to better understand the psychosocial obstacles my pediatric clients and families are dealing with.

I believe that XXX is an excellent fit for the education I desire to pursue. Their ability to provide me with a specialization in pediatric and child psychology will enhance my skills working with the specific population I am passionate about. As a graduate student at Auburn University, I would be very interested in working with Dr. XXX. Dr. XXX’s background and education constitute the path that I have imagined for my graduate studies. Because of my research interests, I would be pleased to be a part of her studies regarding the promotion of adherence to medical treatment in children and adolescents with chronic illnesses such as inflammatory bowel disease, illness stigmatizations, and psychosocial functioning in chronic illness. I find her work addressing the transitions in health care, academic life, and relationships from adolescent

years to adult years fascinating. I appreciate your consideration of my application, and I am looking forward to hearing back from you.

Personal Statement 5 (Experimental Psychology)

Serving my Alma mater as a professional has exposed me to some of the greatest minds in South Florida. My time with XXX covers many walks of collegiate life, ranging from the classroom, to academic administration, to ultimately nurturing my commitment to research through the Neuroinformatics and Brain Connectivity Laboratory. Under the direction of Drs. XXX and XXX, I've become an autonomous thinker: both inquisitive and resourceful. I've worked alongside top-notch doctoral students from the fields of radiological science, physics and psychology, and now look forward to my own emerging career in academia. I enthusiastically seek a program that can prepare me for research at the highest level, while helping me establish myself as an independent scientist. With new neuroimaging tools in-hand, I hope to eventually secure a tenure-track faculty position at a research university and develop programmatic research in cognitive and affective neuroscience.

Being the largest Hispanic-serving institution in the country, XXX was an excellent choice for me. I was born to Cuban/Puerto Rican parents, and subsequently a first-generation college student. While being the first in one's family to pursue higher education can be challenging, these hurdles presented opportunities for growth, and rendered me better student and person. Shortly after being admitted to XXX as an undergraduate in 2006, both of my parents found themselves unemployed in the Great Recession, and unable to assist me financially as I worked towards my degree. I started working fulltime to support myself while making a concerted effort to finish school. Ultimately, the experience taught me that success is measured in perseverance. I graduated from XXX's Department of Psychology with a B.A. in Psychology, having learned valuable lessons both inside and outside the classroom.

XXX shaped the working professional I am today, and the scientist I want to be tomorrow. As an administrator in the College of Arts and Sciences, I worked closely with the Associate Dean for the Sciences, charged with "bringing" neuroscience to XXX. Having worked in research labs in the Departments of Psychology (Drs. XXX and XXX) and Biological Sciences (Dr. XXX), I was poised for the challenge. Working with faculty spanning several disciplines, our exhaustive efforts lead to the recruitment of Dr. XXX, who would establish XXX's Cognitive Neuroscience and Imaging Center. Thereafter, I joined Dr. XXX's XXX Laboratory as Coordinator of Research. In that capacity, I managed four awards from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and National Science Foundation (NSF), while simultaneously facilitating neuroscience initiatives at XXX. This included establishing a consortium of neuroimagers in South Florida, conferences (e.g., XXX), and our Distinguished Lecture Series.

The greatest benefit to working in this multidisciplinary atmosphere was exposure to graduate students from many fields. Our lab supports students from graduate programs in psychology, radiological science, computer science, neuroscience, and physics. Soon, I was working alongside doctoral candidates, asking insightful questions of my own and, more importantly,

learning how to answer them. I've developed a fervent interest for the intersection of cognitive and affective neuroscience. More and more, research tells us these domains are seldom mutually exclusive (Lindquist & Barrett, 2012; Ochsner et al., 2012). With neuroinformatics having such a presence in our research, I've received extensive training in the pragmatics and interpretation of meta-analytic methods for neuroimaging data. Currently, I'm utilizing several meta-analytic connectivity techniques to understand the network-level architecture of emotional processing paradigms (Yanes et al., In Preparation). These efforts aim to discern general neurobiological components recruited across hundreds of neuroimaging experiments in the domain of emotion. In the future, I hope to advance our understanding of domain-interactions (e.g. emotion-cognition), and what contexts mediate those interactions (e.g. social variables throughout the lifespan, stress, nutrition, etc.). Moreover, I am excited to explore less-intuitive interactions, such as associations between affective and motor processes (Jacob et al., 2013). I've also received more traditional training in functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) data acquisition and pre- and post-processing data analysis, including resting-state functional connectivity using seed-based and independent component analysis, and more recently, graph theoretical analysis. Here, we used node-module assignments to develop behavioral interpretations for our data across atlases (Ray et al., In Preparation). Now, I am looking to expand my developing skillset by working with top minds from psychology, cognitive and affective neuroscience, and fields related to neuroimaging.

XXX's Department of Psychology is an excellent representation of the environment I'm seeking. The Doctoral Program in Cognitive and Behavioral Science boasts faculty with diverse research interests, from neurotoxicology to stressful decision-making, and presents unique opportunities for multidisciplinary graduate work. Before completing my application, I had fantastic conversations with Dr. XXX, Assistant Professor of Psychology. This gave me perspective on the climate for research at XXX and wonderful ideas of inter-departmental and cross-departmental collaborative projects that could ultimately lead to dissertation aims. Her scholarly contributions to neuroscience and neuroinformatics (i.e. meta-analytic connectivity modeling) shaped my initial understandings of functional connectivity, while underscoring the importance of innovative techniques for analysis of neuroimaging data (Robinson et al., 2010). Moreover, her research on emotion-cognition interactions as measured by fMRI reflects fast growing trends in translational neuroscience. With her mentorship, I hope to develop well informed research questions, a multi-level experimental design (i.e. behavioral, physiological, neural, etc.), and compelling data-driven interpretations that deepen understandings of emotions, particularly the role of well-known intrinsic connectivity networks in emotion processing. My work with Dr. XXX is an excellent example. My contributions to his meta-analysis of nicotine administration experiments identified differences in default mode network (DMN) activity in smokers and non-smokers (Sutherland et al., In Press). These findings led to our well-received submission to Biological Psychiatry, and addressed reduced- and enhanced-deactivations throughout the DMN during cognitive and emotional paradigms. With her extensive knowledge of meta-analysis and intrinsic functional connectivity, I find Dr. XXX and the Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience Laboratory at XXX to be an exceptional match for me.

Given my background in academic and research administration, experience with meta analysis of neuroimaging data, and interest in domain- and network-level interactions, I am prepared to make significant contributions to research endeavors in the Department of Psychology. If given this opportunity, XXX will have gained a hard-working student, one with the experience and ambition needed to succeed in graduate school and after.

Templates

Email template asking if the professor plans on accepting students (only use if it is not clear from the website):

Dear Dr. XXX,

My name is XXX, and I plan to apply to the Clinical Psychology PhD program at XXX for Fall ####. Will you be accepting a graduate student at this time? I am very interested in working with you, as I think that our research interests are aligned.

I graduated from XXX in #### as a Psychology major. I have spent the last two years working at the University of Pennsylvania's Positive Psychology Center coordinating psychological resilience trainings for the U.S. Army. As a prospective student, I am interested in research topics applicable to military populations, and your research on intimate partner violence and substance abuse is highly prevalent in military populations. I believe I would add a unique perspective to the lab because I have experience with this population. I would be very interested in reading any of your current research.

I look forward to hearing from you,

XXX

Email asking professors if they are in need of a research assistant:

Hello Dr. XX,

I hope that this email finds you well. My name is XX. I am a Junior/Senior at XX University, where I am majoring in XX. I would like to obtain research experience to learn more about the research process prior to applying to graduate programs in psychology. I am interested in studying the underlying constructs and cognitive deficits in anxiety and mood disorders and in examining the efficacy of current and novel treatments for anxiety and depression. After looking

into your research, I believe my interests align well with yours. I am writing to see if you have any openings for undergraduate RAs in your lab?

My CV is attached to this email.

Thank You,

XXX

Personal Statement Templates

https://docs.google.com/document/d/14YwJ1fEw8JMNfWsAjBPRYcPfiEM7mBGv_3LXPKtHPmc/edit

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Graduate applications spreadsheet template