

CLINICAL NEUROPSYCHOLOGY OF BRAIN INJURY & SPORTS CONCUSSION

FELLOWSHIP OVERVIEW

Head injuries, especially sports related concussions, have become a major focus of attention in recent years in the media, largely due to research (human, neuroimaging, and laboratory) suggesting that alterations in brain functioning may have clinically relevant neurobehavioral consequences, even if transient. In both concussion and more severe head injuries, various factors predict the course of recovery, including nature of the injury itself, as well as premorbid functioning, family functioning, and comorbidities, including psychiatric and psychological factors. Ultimately, graduates of this track will be prepared to meet the pressing need for timely, evidence-informed, comprehensive assessment and treatment of this growing population. The current collaboration between the **Medical Psychology Assessment Center** and the UCLA Steve Tisch BrainSPORT Program is designed to exponentially expand clinical, research, and community outreach work that has been ongoing within the UCLA Department of Neurosurgery's Brain Injury Center, as well as the division of Pediatric Neurology at UCLA. It connects the best of UCLA's multidisciplinary faculty with both clinical and research skills for a comprehensive approach to assessing and treating head injuries in youth.

The fellow in this track will be part of the UCLA Steve Tisch BrainSPORT Program, a multidisciplinary and comprehensive center which allows fellows to take on leadership roles in providing clinical care, research opportunities (laboratory and clinical), community outreach, and education.

The 2-year fellowship track has a primary clinical emphasis and is designed to prepare its graduates for the independent clinical practice of neuropsychology as a specialty, with additional expertise working with sports related concussions and more severe head injuries. The track also meets the guidelines for APA's Society for Clinical Neuropsychology (Division 40), preparing fellows for a path towards Board Certification in Clinical Neuropsychology. This fellowship provides exposure to a multidisciplinary team (including neurology, occupational therapy, sports medicine, and clinical dietician specialties), where trainees receive a significant amount of protected time (~30%) to participate in clinical research in concussion/head injury. Various clinical and translational research projects within our program allow for ample opportunities to develop independent investigations, collaborate, or contribute to ongoing research projects. This protected time allows active participation in one or more of a wide spectrum of ongoing clinical and/or laboratory research opportunities through the UCLA Steve Tisch BrainSPORT Program, including multi-center studies on youth concussion including advanced neuroimaging studies.

(continued)



CURRENT RESEARCH PROJECTS INCLUDE:

- ▶ **A brief cognitive-behavioral therapy with biofeedback remote intervention for individuals with persistent post-concussion symptoms.**
- ▶ **Several multi-site clinical research programs found on our [website](#).**
- ▶ **Basic science research programs developed through the [UCLA Brain Injury Research Center](#).**

Approximately 50% of the fellow's time will be spent providing direct clinical services. Specifically, ~30% of the clinical training will encompass time working within a multidisciplinary team, in neurology outpatient clinics. Fellows will provide clinical services, including neuropsychological assessment and brief psychotherapy treatment primarily to concussion patients, as well as exposure to patients with more severe head injuries, retired professional athletes, and military service members. A fellow's neuropsychology experience within the concussion program will consist of multiple abbreviated batteries and same day feedback to patients per week, with populations across the lifespan. Psychotherapy experience is also part of the fellow's clinical training, including cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and a brief exercise-CBT combination treatment. Tiered supervision of trainees (e.g., neuropsychology interns and externs) is also often a part of fellows' training plan.

The remainder of the clinical hours (~20%) will include taking a general neuropsychology clinical case (roughly 1 complex/pediatric or 2 brief evaluations a month) through UCLA Semel Institute's Medical Psychology Assessment Center (MPAC), providing the fellow exposure to greater clinical breadth and a more well-rounded training. Patients seen at MPAC are referred for a wide range of complex medical, neurological, genetic, neurodevelopmental, and other disorders and conditions. Pre-surgical, language mapping, and inpatient assessment is also available for those with interest. Supervision models include renowned faculty supervisors within the Semel Institute, as well as a network of volunteer faculty that provides a breadth of training opportunities through MPAC.

Fellowship training also involves a rich, weekly didactic curriculum (~20%) including lectures on Functional Neuroanatomy, Neuropsychology Syndromes, and Professional Development. Fellows have the opportunity to take part in Wada procedures, observing brain-cutting didactics, cortical grid-mapping, and language mapping.

For more information about the application process and the UCLA Semel Institute's fellowship program as a whole, visit the [Medical Psychology Assessment Center webpage](#).