

## **The Capstone Course**

In the Spring semester of students' second year in the program, all students will be enrolled in a section of PSY 8382 that has been designated as a Capstone Course. The purpose of the Capstone Course is for students to demonstrate that they have developed the skills and competencies in assessment, treatment planning, and treatment needed to advance to PSY 8382. It also serves as the equivalent of the Comprehensive Exam required by the university for master's students. The course will involve doing clinical therapy and assessment work under supervision at an assigned site. It will also involve selecting one therapy case and one assessment case on which to do concentrated work. At the end of the course, students will be required to present their selected cases to a panel of faculty members.

The oral presentation should be approximately 90 minutes in length and devote approximately equal time to discussing the therapy and assessment cases. A five-minute audio/video excerpt from each case demonstrating a key skill or intervention must be included in the presentation. Presentation time is slotted in 2-hour blocks to allow time for questioning. Presentations will be judged on the comprehensive consideration of all the relevant factors in the case, (1.) the proper weighting of those factors in case formulation, (2.) the support of the relative weightings using the available empirical and theoretical literature, and (3.) the choice of interventions or recommendations that follow. Students will be expected to integrate contextual factors and symptom presentation and derive a diagnostic impression and/or treatment plan that follows logically from the available data. Special consideration should be given to documenting empirical support for a given diagnosis, recommendation, or intervention.

Students will only be allowed to advance to doctoral practicum in the Fall of their 3<sup>rd</sup> year if the panel determines that the student has demonstrated a level of clinical skill that is appropriate for second year practicum students. If either of the cases is deemed unacceptable, a specific remediation plan will be developed by the faculty. For students entering the program without a master's degree in psychology, the Capstone Course will take the place of the more traditional master's level comprehensive examination.