

# ***Postdoctoral Fellowship in Professional Psychology*** ***August 18, 2025 – July 18, 2026***



## **UNIVERSITY COUNSELING SERVICES (UCS) BOSTON COLLEGE**

### **CORE TRAINING COMMITTEE**

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**THE FELLOWSHIP** provides postdoctoral clinical and counseling psychologists a concentrated training experience with advanced focus on emerging adult mental health. The program is progressive and developmental in nature with the goal of aiding fellows in forming fuller professional identities and to foster readiness in becoming independent practitioners. Fellows (1) attain advanced clinical skills with an emerging adult population manifesting the broad spectrum of psychopathology and (2) develop expertise in the challenges prevalent in mental health practice today within an institution of higher education.

At the core of a Fellow's training are individual and group treatment, crisis interventions, individual supervision, consultation, and participation in the teamwork of the department all within a strong generalist perspective. Fellows are viewed as early career professional colleagues and given the collaborative support and guidance necessary to participate fully in the multidimensional service delivery system at UCS. They inevitably acquire considerable depth and breadth in their treatment and consulting skills as they see over 100 clients and triage 40-50 others through psychological emergencies. With the concentrated exposure to a late adolescent and emerging adult clinical population, Fellows hone their formulation and treatment planning skills, and they develop practical understanding of the intersections of psychopathology with developmental and cultural forces. They also gain experience with the unusual diagnostic and treatment challenges posed by those clients who present as both high performing and diagnostically quite complex. Fellows complete the fellowship year with more than 1600 license-eligible hours of supervised practice and with a consolidated sense of their professional competence and personal career direction. In recent years, about half of our Fellows have gone on to acquire permanent positions in university mental health settings. The other half have gone on to work in private/group practices, VAs, or other mental health agencies.

**UNIVERSITY COUNSELING SERVICES (UCS)** is a relatively large, fast-paced, and highly utilized university psychological health delivery system with the primary responsibility of addressing the mental health needs of the Boston College student community. A committed staff of 15 psychologists and social workers and 4 psychiatric prescribers provide a wide range of direct clinical services to approximately 1900 students each year. The department enjoys strong collaborative relationships with faculty, staff, administrators, and student groups, and it reaches the broader university network through indirect services such as consultation, outreach, and prevention programs.

Boston College (BC), the first institution of higher education to operate in the city of Boston, is among highly ranked universities in the northeast and encourages students to “look inward, but reach out” as part of the embedded Jesuit tradition. BC fosters deep thinking and reflection as well as student formation while cultivating service to others. Boston College has 12 undergraduate and graduate colleges and professional schools. BC students are bright, talented, and diverse. Approximately 35% of the student population identify themselves as persons of color, and the graduate student population, in particular, is substantially international. The clients seeking our clinical services are articulate, motivated, and still in the process of shaping key aspects of their identities. They are able to make use of self-exploration and insight-oriented interventions as well as cognitive behavioral treatment strategies to achieve pivotal developmental changes. They make up a psychologically rich population with which Fellows can explore closely and intensively the practice of psychotherapy with late-adolescents and emerging adults.

UCS emphasizes psychodynamic, developmental, and culturally informed approaches in formulating client difficulties, and it prioritizes brief, focused approaches to treatment while maintaining the flexibility to provide open-ended treatment, particularly for those clients with the greatest needs and/or the least resources.

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES** in which Fellows can expect to further their expertise include the following:

**Intake, evaluation and treatment planning.** Fellows manage the intake, evaluation and treatment planning for three to four new clients weekly. Generally, Fellows assume responsibility for determining and carrying out treatment interventions for those clients whom they see on intake and occasionally for those they may see for a short consult or in an emergency. Learning how to balance the needs of a growing caseload of clients with diverse problems generally becomes a particular area of challenge and mastery for Fellows. Opportunities to refine skills in treatment planning, case disposition, and referral are provided through supervision, seminars, clinical case meetings, and collegial collaboration. The “use of self” is also heavily valued and a large component of client care and fellow’s supervision.

**Triage and Same Day Consultation.** Triage phone assessment and Same Day Consultation allows Fellows to hone their skills on clarify presenting problems, assessing for risks, and determining next steps within a brief one-time clinical contact.

**Individual counseling and psychotherapy.** Fellows readily establish caseloads, which allow them to develop skills with a variety of clients and client issues. With three supervisors, they benefit from the varied input of clinicians who have different styles and approaches. While UCS generally provides shorter-term treatment, Fellows are typically able to see a limited number of clients in ongoing psychotherapy over the course of the entire year.

**Group counseling and psychotherapy.** Fellows generally have opportunities to co-lead or lead at least one therapy or support group during their year. Fellows are also provided guidance and supervision to support them in this work.

**Crisis intervention and emergency services.** The UCS staff provides emergency response for the student body throughout the academic year. This work routinely involves collaboration with other caregivers, mental health professionals, university personnel, and students’ family members. Fellows receive close training and have ready access to back-up consultation as they become full participants in the on-call system. UCS staff help to

expand fellow's skillsets around emergency work and client-centered, holistic care within the context of a larger institution. They ultimately hold an 8 - hour daytime shift; (2 to 3 times per month) throughout the fellowship year. Last year the department responded to over 1,000 mental health emergencies, which ranged from the expectable developmental and situational crises to more serious matters of acute Axis I and II symptoms, suicidality, and decompensation.

**Community consultation and outreach.** Fellows have opportunities to develop consultation relationships with university departments or organizations. Along with the entire staff of clinicians, Fellows participate in offering psychoeducational programs, training, and consultation to various campus groups and departments throughout the year. Often additional opportunities develop from a Fellow's pursuit of their own interests and ideas.

**THE TRAINING PROGRAM** is comprised of a combination of activities that emphasize learning through participation in the multidimensional roles and functions of university mental health practitioners. Training components are focused solely on the postdoctoral level allowing for greater attention on fellow development. The training staff represent considerable expertise in university mental health and have a strong commitment to training new professionals. Most members of the permanent UCS clinical and admin staff also provide feedback for the training committee based on interactions and collaborations with the Fellows. After training doctoral interns for many years, we began training postdoctoral clinical and counseling psychologists in 1992 and have expanded the fellowship program in recent years with the support of the institution.

**Areas of Focus** are seen as an opportunity to enhance the fellow's knowledge in areas of training salient to the clinical work of a distinguished university mental health center. This year, fellows will have the opportunity to gain additional skills and support in 1 of 3 areas. Areas of focus are dependent on interest, fellow readiness, and availability. Having an area of focus is not a requirement to complete the fellowship in good standing. We also strongly encourage any fellow interested in a strong generalist perspective to apply. Additional information about each area of focus can be obtained during fellowship interviews. The 3 areas of focus, pertaining to the intersection of emerging adult identity and mental health, are as follows:

- ◆ *Multicultural Issues Focus* (includes, not limited to)
  - Oversight / supervision from Asst. Director for Diversity & Outreach, including targeted support and guidance for a subset of clinical cases using a diversity and inclusion lens
  - Opportunities to discuss and participate in system wide requests and responses from the BC Community using a DEI perspective
  - Potential participation in selected UCS Diversity Committee meetings to help facilitate didactics for UCS staff
  - Opportunity to attend the Boston College Diversity and Inclusion Summit during Spring 2026
- ◆ *Group Therapy Focus* (includes, not limited to)
  - Oversight / supervision from Asst. Director for Groups, including specialized supervision in psychodynamic process-based group facilitation
  - Opportunities to co-facilitate both process and skills/structured groups each semester, typically with a senior staff clinician
  - Opportunity to develop new groups / workshops based on Fellow's interest and identified BC student needs
  - Participation in a UCS staff consultation group for group therapists
  - Opportunity to receive supportive funding to participate in the NSGP Observation Group during summer 2026
- ◆ *Trauma Informed Care Focus* (includes, not limited to)

- Oversight / supervision from Assoc. Director for Clinical Services, including targeted supervision regarding trauma informed treatment
- Collaboration with Associate Director in developing / enhancing a college-based trauma program that addresses both sexual assault survivors and childhood trauma
- Collaboratively design and facilitate workshops for the HEAL group and HEAL retreat
- Gain a unique understanding of how to navigate trauma support and sexual and intimate partner violence in a college mental health setting

**Supervision** is seen as the most critical piece of clinical training as it provides Fellows with the opportunity to explore their work with careful attention and thoughtfulness. Fellows will receive three hours of supervision per week and are encouraged to collaborate with supervisors of different therapeutic styles, theoretical approaches, and clinical interests. Supervision is typically relational in style and attends to the whole person - professional and personal integration. Closer supervision is offered in the initial stage of the fellowship, with increasing encouragement of independence as the year unfolds. Supervisors offer support around continued expansion and refinement of a fellow's "clinical self" and therapeutic style. Fellows also receive supervision in group and couples work when applicable.

**Advanced Clinical Skills** are fostered throughout the fellowship with a particular focus on strengthening fellow's ability to identify and manage complex scenarios within a dynamic and multifaceted mental health treatment system. Training and supervision at UCS aim to facilitate fluency in college mental health trends with the intention of building increased professional mobility after licensure. With completion of the program, Fellows can set themselves apart in the field of psychology having mastered transferrable skills in the treatment of young adults.

Advanced skills include but are not limited to:

- ◆ Holistic care - treatment of the whole person with referrals to additional supports and health and wellness options in the greater surrounding Boston area as well as out of state
- ◆ Navigating both personal and professional – maintaining an open stance with appropriate boundaries for both clients and the clinician self
- ◆ Holding complexity – learning how to think thematically and hold the past, the present, and the future for clients and the clinician self
- ◆ A professional voice – finding an individual voice while being part of and contributing to a larger department and university system
- ◆ Attunement – honing skills in how to listen to understand, not just listen to hear
- ◆ A supportive space – helping clients identify needs and work through competing desires while creating a place clients can feel cared and offering empathic plans for next steps in treatment
- ◆ Thoughtful evaluation – obtaining and reinforcing skills in providing individualized, compassionate, and flexible interventions from client's initial meeting through the course of their treatment

**Didactic sessions and workshops** on topics related to the logistic and structural aspects of psychological service delivery are typically clustered during the comprehensive two-week orientation program scheduled for Fellows in late August. Topics specifically relevant to the provision of psychological services to emerging adults are generally provided throughout the year. A series of **Professional Practice Seminars** for Fellows occurs more so in the spring, covering topics related to professional identity and career development. An ongoing **Multicultural Conversations Hour** explores issues of cultural identity as it applies to the clinical work as well as personal and professional development. Additionally, the department hosts a number of **Professional Development Seminars** which provide training tailored to the needs and interests of the UCS

psychology staff. Presenters for these seminars are chosen for their expertise in specific topics. UCS is approved by the APA to grant Continuing Education Units to psychologists for the latter series of training activities. Fellows are also encouraged to participate in monthly **Journal Discussions** where staff convene to share ideas related to current and relevant literature. Topics of these meetings include aspects of emerging adult development, issues within the field of psychology, and broader topics relevant to professional identity development in the field.

Fellows participate in the weekly **Clinical Case Conference** which is attended by the department's entire clinical staff. This is a forum for presenting and consulting about cases of particular interest and complexity. Case Conference provides staff an opportunity to clarify clinical and administrative issues in difficult cases and exchange a variety of perspectives regarding formulation, therapy process, and treatment planning. Fellows also participate with staff in a regularly scheduled **Staff Meeting**, which focuses on the administrative business of the department and its operations within the systems of the university setting. Program planning, the clarification of policies and best practices, and the discussion of student-life issues are among the matters typically addressed in this meeting. Fellows are also asked to participate in monthly department **Diversity Dialogues** where staff have the opportunity for deeper self-reflection with an emphasis on taking accountability for our own learning and engagement in personal and professional development.

Additionally, Fellows may take advantage of an opportunity to co-facilitate a supervision seminar for advanced practicum students in the Counseling Psychology Ph.D. program as well as a guest membership and mentoring program at Boston Psychoanalytic Society and Institute.

In accordance with APPIC standards, the training program provides a structured process for Fellows to be evaluated, twice a year. Mid-year evaluations are written and discussed formally with Fellows, but mutual feedback is encouraged in an informal ongoing manner throughout the year. Year-end evaluations are geared toward supporting Fellows in their transition toward employment, and they tend to be less structured than those conducted at mid-year. The training program has a well-defined due-process procedure in the event Fellows encounter difficulties in the training experience.

The department's training committee has meetings throughout the year to discuss issues pertinent to the training program, including the progress and performance of Fellows. Supervisors consult one another about all supervisory encounters Fellows receive and material from supervision may be discussed in these contexts in order to aid Fellows' development and maintain the highest level of clinical care for clients of UCS.

**DIVERSITY** is highly regarded and appreciated at UCS. The postdoctoral training program is deeply invested in recognizing and honoring diversity among its staff, postdoctoral Fellows, and clients. UCS devotes both resources and attention to fostering an environment that values awareness and appreciation of all aspects of diversity. Therefore, diversity work is embedded in ALL aspects of our work. Our department's Diversity Committee works to support marginalized and disenfranchised student populations as well as facilitate training and discussion forums for UCS staff on issues of diversity with a social justice frame.

At the larger institutional level, BC recruits and supports a student body that is increasingly comprised of persons of color and persons who come from backgrounds of social and economic disenfranchisement. Presently, the proportion of students identified as AHANA (African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American) at BC is approximately 30%. Students with marginalized identities are a large portion of clients served by UCS and a robust part of each Fellow's caseload.

We strongly encourage Fellows with underrepresented and/or marginalized identities to make use of the mentoring opportunities available to them with our supervisors and staff. We also invite them to develop

useful connections outside of the department with students, staff, and/or faculty. At all levels, we believe this enhances our work and the futures of our Fellows.

### **STIPEND AND BENEFITS**

We have **three eleven-month**, full-time postdoctoral positions available. Each fellowship position has a competitive, **minimum** stipend of \$52,600 for its duration and a full-benefits package that includes medical, dental, vacation, and illness coverage, as well as a range of other perquisites such as professional development time for studying for licensure exams and support and guidance in launching into their first job as a psychologist. We strive to help fellows get a glimpse of what their future professional world may hold.

### **APPLICATION PROCESS**

We are committed to having a counseling service that is diverse and strongly encourage applicants of all identities and abilities to apply to our postdoctoral fellowship program. Applicants must have completed all requirements for a doctoral degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning and a doctoral internship that meets APPIC standards prior to the start of the fellowship on August 18, 2025. We cannot hire individuals who have not completed and defended their dissertations by late-August. Candidates who have not been officially awarded their doctorates must be prepared to provide us with an official letter from their department or dissertation chair attesting to their predicted completion of all components of their doctoral program by August 15, 2025.

The application deadline is **January 2, 2025.**

Completed application “packets” require the following (by or before the January deadline)

- ❑ Personal statement detailing your interest in the fellowship, why you would be a good fit, clinical strengths and growing edges, and training goals
- ❑ A curriculum vitae
- ❑ Two letters of recommendation from clinical supervisors (preferably at least 1 from Internship)
- ❑ Prior and current transcripts of ALL graduate coursework (includes Master’s level)
- ❑ Applicant Questionnaire (obtainable from our website at [www.bc.edu/counseling](http://www.bc.edu/counseling)).

A complete application “packet” can be submitted several ways:

- 1) Via APPA CAS (APPIC Psychology Postdoctoral Application)
- 2) Email to Selina Guerra, PhD ([guerrase@bc.edu](mailto:guerrase@bc.edu)) with the subject heading: COMPLETE FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION MATERIALS FOR (your name)

- 3) Physically mailed to:

Selina Guerra, Ph.D.  
Assistant Director for Training  
Boston College University Counseling Services  
Gasson 001  
140 Commonwealth Ave.  
Chestnut Hill, MA 02467

***Please note: We do not accept any application materials by fax.***