

# WALDEN UNIVERSITY

## Walden University PhD in Clinical Psychology and PhD in Counseling Psychology Program Overview

- Overall, eighteen states already license psychologists equally from substantially online programs, regardless of APA accreditation. This group of states represents approximately 50% of the entire US population, and includes large states such as Texas, New York, California, Illinois, Ohio, and New Jersey.
  - Many of New Mexico's neighboring states recognize the benefits of maintaining licensure standards that assist in addressing the acute shortage of mental health professionals particularly in rural areas.
  - Among New Mexico's neighbors, Texas, Colorado, Arizona, and California all offer a pathway to licensure for graduates of doctoral clinical or counseling psychology programs from regionally-accredited universities to be eligible for the psychologist license in their state.
- Walden University's doctoral programs in Clinical Psychology and Counseling Psychology are blended programs, combining face-to-face and online components. Walden does not believe that clinical or counseling psychologists can be adequately educated in an exclusively online program.
- Walden University shares the Committee's concern for the special value of extensive, in-person interaction with students in doctoral education, and has designed its programs to provide exactly that.
- Walden's programs include the important component of human contact. The university targets these in-person components of the program for the greatest impact.
  - Currently available research shows that information-transmission learning is as effective online as in-person, sometimes more effective. Walden therefore uses online classes for foundational knowledge areas of the program.
  - Walden targets face-to-face in-residence time for professional skills development, which cannot be done effectively solely on-line.
  - The following courses are taught through blended in-residence courses:
    - Ethics and Standards of Psychological Practice
    - Cognitive Assessment
    - Personality Assessment
    - Multicultural Psychology
    - Consultation and Supervision in Psychology
    - Interventions II (Advanced Therapy Course)
    - Writing a Quality Dissertation Prospectus in Psychology
    - Clinical Psychopharmacology
    - Career Assessment and Intervention
    - Selected skills-oriented electives



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- Walden's program is designed as a 5-year experience.
  - Walden requires one full year, four consecutive quarters, of blended, in-residence courses, a majority of each of these courses occur in residence.
  - The practicum is one full year in the Counseling Psychology program, and a minimum of a half year in Clinical Psychology, also by definition face to face.
  - One full year is an internship, which by definition is face to face.
- Therefore, 2.5 to 3 years (or 50% to 60%) of the 5-year program involves direct, person-to-person, regular contact.
- It is Walden's experience that the intensive periods spent in-residence over the Blended Academic Year in Residence offer unique and important opportunities to observe and provide feedback to students regarding professional behavior. Behavioral concerns that might not emerge in a few hours in class over each week can be more apparent in condensed intensives where students must demonstrate professional behavior over an extended period of days/hours.
- Walden has established a set of formal processes and procedures for observing, developing, assessing, and remediating professional and interpersonal skills as needed.
  - Each in-residence session, in addition to the teaching faculty, has a faculty administrator to assess and manage behavioral and professional competency issues.
  - The School of Psychology has a Student Development Coordinator who actively consults with faculty and students at all levels of the programs, and intensively during the Blended Academic Year in Residence, which provides for identifying and managing behavioral and professional competency issues as they come up and with comprehensive remediation plans as well as opportunities to counsel students out of the program and the profession where necessary.
- In addition to the four consecutive quarters of blended/in-residence courses, Walden students are required to attend four PhD research residency events, which each involve four concentrated days of programming over a 5-day period.
  - One or more psychology faculty residency administrators are also present for these residencies, as they are for the blended courses.
  - This provides an additional 8 to 16 intensive days of in-person interaction and observation, beyond the 2.5 to 3 years described above.
- Telepsychology/telemedicine has been used effectively for at least the last 4 decades as a means of providing clinical services to clients/patients at a distance, and is now commonplace.
  - Medicare and many other insurance carriers provide compensation for telemedicine/telepsychology services. Given the conservative nature of payment sources, this is a significant endorsement of the acceptability and effectiveness of these services by skeptical institutions.
  - If clinical services can be provided via mediated in-person experiences, then there is no reason that graduate education and supervision cannot also be provided, at least some of the time, by similar mediated in-person interactions.

