Postdoctoral Fellowship in Clinical Neuropsychology and Rehabilitation Research 2017-2019

The Postdoctoral Fellowship in Clinical Neuropsychology and Rehabilitation Research is offered through the Brain Injury Research Center (BIRC) in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, funded in part by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Centre for Neuro Skills Foundation (CNS). The program follows the scientist-practitioner model of training, with the goal of producing graduates with outstanding skills in clinical neuropsychology and rehabilitation psychology as applied to a variety of patient populations, as well as skills in clinical research.

The program meets requirements for licensing as a psychologist in New York State and eligibility requirements for board certification in clinical neuropsychology and/or rehabilitation psychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP).

The program has been a member of the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) since 1994. The program will NOT participate in the Association of Postdoctoral Programs in Clinical Neuropsychology (APPCN) Resident Matching Program in 2017.

There will be one (1) or two (2) funded post-doctoral fellowship positions available for the 2017-2019 training period. Training will begin on Friday, September 1, 2017.

Stipend amounts are set by National Institutes of Health guidelines, and effective in December 2016, the stipend will be $50,000. Additional benefits include paid attendance at one professional conference each year and free participation in unlimited seminars,
workshops, and courses offered by the School of Medicine on topics such as research methodology and professional development, computer program skills training, and leadership skills and public speaking. Fellows also receive a minimum of 15 vacation days, 12 sick days, and 8 major holidays per year. Health, vision, dental, and malpractice insurances also are provided.

The Medical School Real Estate Office located at 1249 Park Avenue (212-659-9630) can provide information about affordable housing in the area. Mount Sinai is easily accessible by public transportation from all surrounding boroughs. Parking at Mount Sinai is available for a reduced monthly fee and may be arranged through the Real Estate Office. Hotel, travel, and entertainment (e.g. Broadway shows) discounts are available through the Recreation Office at 19 East 98th Street (212-241-6660).

**CLINICAL TRAINING**

Fellows spend at least 80% of their time providing clinical services to patients in the Department’s Neuropsychology/Rehabilitation Psychology Faculty Practice under the supervision of clinical faculty. Clinical training is designed to adhere to the Houston Conference guidelines for specialty training in clinical neuropsychology. Fellows conduct neuropsychological evaluations as well as cognitive remediation and psychotherapy in individual, family, and/or group formats. Neuropsychological evaluations conducted within the practice are comprehensive and hypothesis-driven. Evaluations are conducted to inform diagnosis and formulate practical recommendations for improving daily functioning and informing patients’ decision-making (e.g. return to work). Treatment provided within the practice can be either short- or long-term. Cognitive remediation typically involves developing and carrying out a structured cognitive exercise program and teaching patients compensatory cognitive techniques. Psychotherapy offered within the practice reflects an integrative but predominantly cognitive-behavioral approach with the goal of educating patients about, and facilitating adjustment to, neurological disability.

Fellows will mostly see adults with acquired brain injury (TBI, anoxia, stroke) but will also occasionally see individuals with other diagnoses (e.g. dementia, movement
disorders, and spinal cord injury), all with or without co-morbid mood and/or adjustment disorders. The practice occasionally accepts children and adolescents, and these patients are assigned to fellows based on fellows’ prior experience and/or interest in working with pediatric patients. The variety of clinical diagnoses and symptom presentations of patients referred to the practice, coupled with cultural and socio-economic variety of individuals living in New York City, ensure that fellows gain experience with an extremely diverse patient population.

Clinical training is designed to help fellows develop a sophisticated understanding of brain-behavior relationships, enhance neuropsychological evaluation skills, and maximize ability to provide rehabilitation treatments that improve patients’ ability to cognitively compensate for and emotionally adjust to their disability. Weekly individual and group supervision with one or more clinical faculty is provided. Direct supervision is provided for intake/diagnostic interviews and neuropsychological evaluation feedback and on an as-needed basis in the context of ongoing treatment. Fellows attend weekly seminars in neuropsychological data interpretation, biweekly seminars in clinical neuroscience and rehabilitation interventions for cognitive and/or emotional disorders, and monthly seminars in functional neuroanatomy. Fellows can attend weekly neuropathology conferences and brain cuttings offered by the Department of Pathology and grand rounds offered by the Departments of Rehabilitation Medicine, Neurology, and Psychiatry. Fellows can also take advantage of the translational neuroscience seminar series and programs offered through the Friedman Brain Institute and The Translational and Molecular Imaging Institute, including the Brain Imagining and Alzheimer’s Disease and Neurodegeneration Clubs. Fellows are also involved in teaching and some supervision of pre-doctoral interns in the department’s APA-approved rehabilitation neuropsychology internship program.

**RESEARCH TRAINING**

Fellows, working closely with a multidisciplinary team of accomplished TBI researchers, spend approximately 20% of their time in research activities, engaging in every stage of the research process, including project conceptualization, execution, analysis, and
dissemination. Fellows participate in existing research studies but also develop and carry out individual research project(s) by conducting secondary analysis of existing data resources under the mentorship of fellowship faculty. Fellows’ research efforts are expected to culminate in at least one presentation at a national conference and/or completion of a peer-reviewed publication prior to the end of fellowship training. Major studies conducted at the BIRC include clinical trials of treatments for cognitive and affective sequelae of TBI (e.g. phototherapy, emotion regulation skills training) and longitudinal studies of outcomes following moderate-severe TBI (e.g. health status in the elderly). Applicants can visit the BIRC’s website at www.TBIcentral.org for further information.

Fellows are expected to demonstrate competence in basic research skills (e.g. reviewing scientific literature, deriving hypotheses from previous work, familiarity with data analysis and scientific writing) at the start of training. Research training is designed to help fellows further improve existing skills and develop additional skills essential for conducting clinical rehabilitation research. Research training activities include individual and group supervision as well as participation in weekly research planning/progress meetings that include all BIRC staff. Fellows also attend regular seminars in research design and statistical methods. In addition, a wide variety of didactic seminars on topics such as effective scientific writing, preparing a competitive grant application, and scientific presentation skills are offered within the larger Mount Sinai community. In addition, fellows have the opportunity to assist faculty in the preparation of manuscripts and center-wide grant applications.

THE TRAINING ENVIRONMENT

The Mount Sinai Medical Center (MSMC), located on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, is one of the oldest and largest hospitals in the country, with more than 1,200 beds and approximately 150 outpatient clinics that provide services in all medical specialties and subspecialties. MSMC is the flagship site of the recently formed Mount Sinai Health System, which includes Mount Sinai Hospital, Mount Sinai Brooklyn, Mount Sinai Queens, Beth Israel Medical Center, Mount Sinai West, St. Luke’s Hospital, and the New
York Eye and Ear Infirmary.

The Mount Sinai School of Medicine, recently renamed the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai, was founded in 1852 and has achieved national and international recognition for its programs in education, basic and applied research, and innovative patient care. The School consistently ranks among the top medical schools in the US (#21 for research and #25 for primary care, *US News and World Report*).

The Department of Rehabilitation Medicine at Mount Sinai consistently ranks among the best of the nearly five thousand rehabilitation departments in the nation (#12 in 2017, *US News and World Report*). Specialty programs in brain injury and spinal cord injury are core components of the department, which is staffed by more than 110 professionals who provide clinical care services during approximately 85,000 patient visits per year. The department provides comprehensive interdisciplinary physical rehabilitation along a continuum of care that includes acute hospitalization, inpatient and outpatient treatment, and long term follow-up (e.g. community integration). The department houses training programs for a variety of rehabilitation disciplines, including physiatry, psychology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech therapy, social work, vocational counseling, and therapeutic recreation.

**TRAINING FACULTY**

Wayne A. Gordon, Ph.D., ABPP-CN, FACRM, Jack Nash Professor and Vice Chair of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine, is Chief of the Neuropsychology and Rehabilitation Psychology Service and Principal Investigator of the New York TBI Model System and the TBI Injury Control Research Center. Dr. Gordon received his PhD in Education Psychology from Yeshiva University. Dr. Gordon is board-certified in clinical neuropsychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology and a Fellow in the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research. He has published over one hundred peer-reviewed articles and has been a member of NIH study sections and a peer reviewer for NIDILRR. He is a past president and fellow of the American Congress of Rehabilitation Medicine (ACRM), and is on the editorial board of the *Archives of*
Kristen Dams-O’Connor, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Rehabilitation Medicine, is a clinical neuropsychologist who specializes in neuropsychological assessment, neurorehabilitation, and cognitive remediation. Dr. Dams-O’Connor is Co-Director of the BIRC and Director of Research in the Mount Sinai Injury Control Research Center. She is principal investigator of a NIH-funded K01 Career Development grant, a principal investigator on projects funded under the NY TBI Model Systems and Mount Sinai Injury Control Research Center, and she is co-PI on a study funded by the NIH to examine late functional and neuroanatomical effects of moderate to severe TBI. Her research focuses on applying advanced psychometric methods to rehabilitation outcome assessment tools, measuring long-term outcomes after TBI, TBI in the elderly, and sports concussion. Her clinical specialization is in working with adults with neurological impairments resulting from TBI, stroke, anoxia, sports concussion, brain tumors, dementia, and movement disorders. Dr. Dams-O’Connor received her doctorate in counseling psychology at the University at Albany, State University of New York. She completed a pre-doctoral internship in rehabilitation psychology at the Rusk Institute/ NYU Medical Center and a postdoctoral fellowship in rehabilitation research and clinical neuropsychology at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine.

Maria Kajankova, Ph.D., Clinical Instructor and Training Director, is a clinical neuropsychologist specializing in neuropsychological evaluations, cognitive remediation, and psychotherapy with patients experiencing a variety of neurological disorders, including stroke, movement disorders, and acquired brain injury. Dr. Kajankova received her Ph.D. in counseling psychology from Fordham University. She completed her pre-doctoral internship in rehabilitation psychology at the Rusk Institute of Rehabilitation Medicine and her post-doctoral fellowship in rehabilitation research and clinical neuropsychology at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai Mount Sinai. Her research focuses on qualitative research methods and topics related to pediatric brain injury and rehabilitation, evaluation of concussion policies, and interventions for individuals with TBI and their caregivers.
Marcel Dijkers, Ph.D., FACRM, Professor of Rehabilitation Medicine, received his Doctorate in Sociology, specializing in the fields of rehabilitation and quantitative research. Dr. Dijkers brings a wealth of research experience in the areas of SCI and TBI, and he has published extensively on issues of psychological adjustment following disability, functional assessment, quality of life, life satisfaction, and outcomes in diverse groups of individuals with disability. He is a past-president and fellow of ACRM and serves as a reviewer for several peer journals.

Lisa Spielman, Ph.D. is the statistical consultant for the BIRC, a position she has held since 1998. She has served as a senior data analyst for the Geriatric Clinical Research Center at Westchester Division of New York Hospital and for the HIV Clinical Research Program at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center. Dr. Spielman consults with private organizations and numerous principal investigators in academic settings on design and statistical analysis for federally funded grants.

Margaret Brown, Ph.D., Assistant Clinical Professor of Preventive Medicine, serves as Director of Dissemination and Knowledge Translation for the BIRC. She has been a program director of the Aaron Diamond Foundation Postdoctoral Research Fellowship Program and Research Director of the American Paralysis Association. At NYU Medical Center, she was the Director of Training of the RRTC on Head Trauma and Stroke and project coordinator of the Rehabilitation Indicator Project. She has published over 25 articles and book chapters. Dr. Brown received her doctoral degree from New York University in Community Psychology.

Adjunct Faculty

Suzan Uysal, Ph.D., Associate Professor in the Department of Anesthesiology, is a research psychologist involved in ongoing studies of neurocognitive changes following cardiac surgery. Dr. Uysal is board certified in clinical neuropsychology by the American Board of Professional Psychology. Prior to her current position, Dr. Uysal was a research psychologist in the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine. Dr. Uysal received her Ph.D. in experimental psychology from New York University and a certificate of re-specialization in clinical neuropsychology from the City University of New York. Her
areas of specialization include neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, and neuropsychological assessment.

**Dale Hesdorrfer, Ph.D.**, Associate Professor of Clinical Epidemiology at the Mailman School of Public Health at Columbia University, is an epidemiologist whose research interests include seizure disorders, co-morbidity of epilepsy and psychiatric disorders, and the epidemiology of neurological abnormalities among children with febrile seizures. She has been the recipient of NIH and CDC funding. She has been the lead investigator of a Brain Trauma Foundation grant, involving several projects, including a prospective cohort study of outcome predictors after severe traumatic brain injury, a survey of compliance with acute care guidelines in trauma centers across the United States, and a quality improvement program for the acute management of severe TBI in New York State. She also serves as a co-investigator for an NIH-funded data-coordinating center for clinical trials in TBI, where she directs the data input unit.

**APPLYING TO THE PROGRAM**

Individuals with a doctoral degree in clinical or counseling psychology who have training and experience in clinical neuropsychology and/or rehabilitation psychology are strongly encouraged to apply. Candidates should have completed all doctoral degree requirements and be eligible for a limited permit to practice psychology in New York State by the time training begins. Preference will be given to applicants who have completed an APA-approved doctoral program, but candidates from non-approved programs are welcome to apply. Applicants must have completed an APA- or CPA-approved clinical internship.

Individuals with a doctoral degree in an allied rehabilitation discipline (e.g. Disability Studies, Public Health, Sociology), and those from minority and/or disability backgrounds, are encouraged to apply. Preference will be given to individuals who are US citizens or permanent residents, but others may apply if they anticipate being able to obtain the credentials needed to complete the program.
All successful applicants must provide the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs with a copy of their doctoral degree or a letter from their doctoral program’s Registrar documenting completion of all degree requirements before training begins. In-person interviews at Mount Sinai are strongly preferred, but interviews via videoconferencing (e.g. Skype, Go-To-Meeting) will be considered on a case-by-case basis for applicants with extraordinary travel limitations. Interviews with both faculty and current fellows will be scheduled in late December and early January.

**Completed applications must be received by December 15, 2016**

Applications must include the following in order to be considered:

1. Cover letter
2. Curriculum vitae that includes citizenship and languages spoken fluently
3. Statement of clinical psychology experience that addresses:
   a. Prior clinical training/experience, including patient populations served
   b. Your preferred approach to neuropsychological evaluation and treatment (both cognitive remediation and psychotherapy)
   c. Goals for clinical training and professional development during fellowship
4. Statement of research experience that addresses:
   a. Prior research training/experience with data management, research design, and statistics
   b. Rehabilitation research interests
   c. Goals for research training and professional development during fellowship
5. Two to four letters of recommendation:
   a. One or two letters from clinical supervisor(s), e.g. internship training director, AND
   b. One or two letters from research supervisor(s), e.g. dissertation chair/mentor
6. Official graduate school transcript
7. One sample neuropsychological report and one treatment case summary (required for applicants with a doctoral degree in clinical or counseling psychology only)
8. Representative copies of abstracts, publications, and/or research presentations
Applications may be sent via regular mail or E-mail to:

Maria Kajankova, Ph.D.  
Training Director  
Department of Rehabilitation Medicine  
Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai  
One Gustave L. Levy Place, Box 1163  
New York, New York 10029-6574  
Tel: (212) 241-3379  
Fax: (212) 241-0137  
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