

Faculty First Grant Report – 2019

Graduate School and Career Options with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology:

Website: mentalhealthcareers.utk.edu

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Project Overview and Course Overview

This Faculty First Grant project focused on creating a website that would be able to distribute important information about pursuing a career in the mental health field. It was originally intended to be used for 4 psychology courses each semester (2 sections of Psych 432: Childhood Psychopathologies, and 2 sections of Psych 330: Abnormal Psychology); however, it can be used for any psychology course (especially courses that are focused on professional/career development) and the website is open to the public. This website includes 6 instructional videos explaining the various options in graduate school for mental health-related careers and it gives important information about the types of careers a person might pursue by obtaining certain degrees (e.g., a master's degree vs. a doctoral degree). It also explains different areas of specialization, as well as ways to maximize your chances of getting accepted into a doctoral program in clinical psychology. In addition to the videos, this website includes links to other important resources, including websites, UTK links, informational sites, and other resources. It can help UTK students find career questionnaires (by linking to the UTK career counseling website), set up psychology advising appointments, and connect to UTK psychology faculty members to inquire about research opportunities. Due to its open-access nature, all students at UTK, as well as anyone else finding the resource/website via a search engine can explore it and be instantly connected to UTK resources, such as the Psychology Department and UTK career services. It is interactive and engaging, yet simple and user-friendly.

Semesters the project has been and/or will be utilized

The website will be made available in the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters, as well as all future semesters. The website can be accessed by the url: mentalhealthcareers.utk.edu or it can be found as a link on the UTK Psychology Department website under: "Undergraduate students" → "What can I do with this major?"

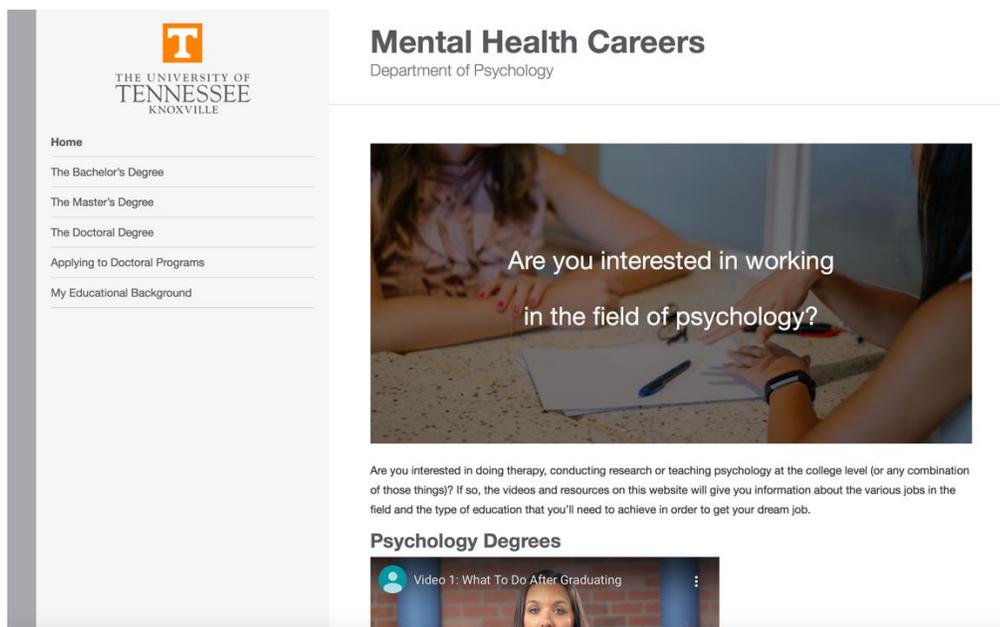
Number of students affected

As this is an open-access website that is not necessarily tied to any one course, the hope is that it will help countless students and individuals. In the Spring and Fall 2020 semesters, approximately 220 students *per semester* will be affected by this website (since it will be distributed to the students in the courses listed above). Our entire campus can benefit from this project as all students have access to the website and can reference it at any time. I believe it will be *most* valuable to the Psych 432 classes (and other psychology classes that cover mental health and/or careers in psychology), since most of these students are seniors and they are actively looking for information about graduate school and career options.

Project outcome and products

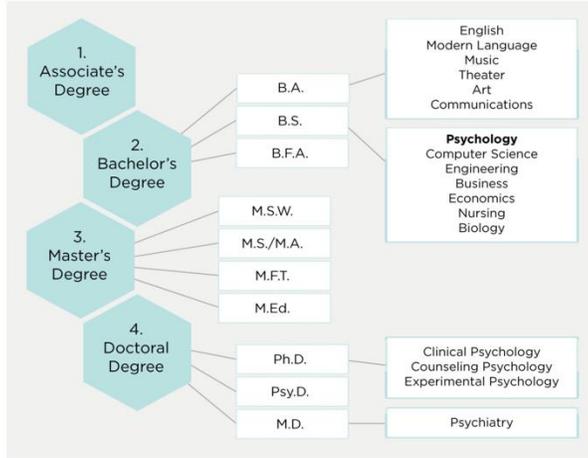
The website can be accessed by the url: mentalhealthcareers.utk.edu or it can be found as a link on the UTK Psychology Department website under: “Undergraduate students” → “What can I do with this major?” Most of the videos in the website are based on past conversations that I’ve had with students regarding possible career options in the field of mental health and/or psychology (and other related fields). Based on my interactions with past students, they have given me feedback that the information was incredibly helpful, as it opened up ideas for possible graduate school options. This information can be difficult to obtain through simply trying to search for it on the internet, and most psychology classes do not cover this type of information. I fully expect the website to have positive results, as it will be distributed more widely and it won’t depend on an individual meeting, which is sometimes difficult to schedule with each student who has questions about careers in psychology.

Below are some screenshots from the actual website:



- Home
- The Bachelor's Degree
- The Master's Degree
- The Doctoral Degree
- Applying to Doctoral Programs
- My Educational Background

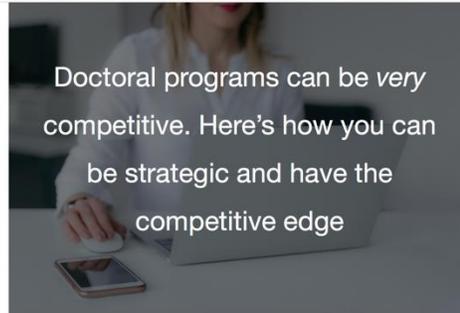
Psychology Degree Options



*This chart displays the most popular options, but is not a complete list

- What can you do with a psychology major? <https://whatcanidowiththismajor.com/major/psychology/>
- UTK Psychology Advising <https://psychology.utk.edu/grad/pac.php>

- Home
- The Bachelor's Degree
- The Master's Degree
- The Doctoral Degree
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The following video explains how to *maximize* your chances of getting accepted into a doctoral program by:

- Making sure you get the right professional experience for the program you're applying to
- Selecting and applying to programs that fit your career goals



Student evaluation

The website has not yet been distributed to students, but it will be distributed within the first month of the Spring 2020 semester. The preliminary results will be back at the end of the Spring 2020 semester. Students in the 4 courses (listed above) will be asked to review the website and then they will give feedback about how helpful it was, and other related feedback (such as what they still have questions about or if anything was unclear). Another set of results will be obtained at the end of the Fall 2020 semester. This report will be updated once the results are completed. The feedback that will be

received after using it for 2 semesters will be incorporated into the website and appropriate changes will be made. Additional resources and websites may be added, accordingly. In addition to course/student feedback, I can use analytics to gauge interest (number of visits to the website), searchability, and overall usage.

Project benefits for the department of psychology and UT

This project helps contribute to 3 of the major goals that are listed in UTK's Top 25 initiative, including 1) Undergraduate Education, 2) Graduate Education, and 3) Research and Engagement. It helps undergraduate students learn critical information about what types of professional experience they should be trying to obtain during their undergraduate training, it gives them information about what types of graduate programs are available (including graduate programs at UTK, such as clinical/counseling and experimental psychology, counseling education, school psychology and social work), and it helps to connect them with important resources, such as UTK career counseling and UTK psychology advising. Overall, it can give undergraduate students a sense of clarity and direction in where they are headed next. It can help with overall motivation and a drive for a professional career in the area of mental health (as well as direct guidance with how to *achieve* their desired career).

This website also has the potential to help with graduate education because of the way it connects students and non-students with the various graduate school options at UTK. It advises students who are interested in pursuing the highest level of degree, such as the highly competitive Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology.

This website emphasizes the importance of obtaining research experience, if the student is interested in pursuing a Ph.D. in psychology and other related fields. It connects students with professors at UTK who are doing different types of research and it gives them information for how to sign up for research labs and how to get course credit for regularly volunteering in a research lab.

In addition to the above goals, this website will help the Psychology Department achieve important goals, such as reaching more students and distributing important information about what kinds of careers are available in the field of mental health and psychology.

Conclusion

Overall, I believe this website will *significantly* contribute to student success, post-graduation. It will give students a new interest in the field of psychology with the knowledge that these career options are available (and obtainable) and it will give them critical information for how to achieve their dream job. The website looks amazing, it's easy to use, and it has valuable resources. It distributes up-to-date, accurate information.

This project has *far exceeded* my own goals. I received *excellent* guidance from Susannah Finley (OIT), who was working with me every step of the way. She is clearly an expert in instructional technology

and I thoroughly enjoyed working with her. She worked with me at a reasonable pace, she respected my busy schedule, and she kept me on-track. She was able to explain difficult concepts and she helped me learn how to use a complicated web-design program in order to put the website altogether. When I experienced difficulty in making certain things work (such as editing things within the website), she was persistent in figuring out the problem and coming up with a solution. She was also available during after-work hours and was available for Zoom calls. I never would have been able to create a website like this without her help.

Additionally, Jason Brown (and his team) played an extremely vital role in this project with his expertise in video production. He made the process of filming 6 complex videos seem effortless. In working with him and his team, I could tell that they have many years of experience and they are *extremely* good at what they do. The videos are incredible.

The future plans for this project will include adding to the links and resources listed on the website and exploring additional pages on the website to explain other careers in psychology, especially based on student/user feedback and suggestions.

Overall, this project was a great success. I look forward to implementing the website this upcoming year and would love to do similar projects in the future. I am *extremely* grateful for the resources provided by OIT and the countless hours that Susannah Finley and Jason Brown invested in making this project a success.