



UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

PSYCHIATRY/PSYCHOLOGY

How do the practices of psychiatry and psychology differ?

Psychiatrists - As physicians, psychiatrists can prescribe medication to control a wide range of psychiatric symptoms. Some psychiatrists also provide psychotherapy and counseling services to individuals, and some psychiatrists provide services to couples, groups and families. Psychiatrists can also administer electroconvulsive shock therapy (ECT). Psychiatrists are more likely than psychologists to treat individuals with severe mental disorders, such as schizophrenia. Also, psychiatrists are more likely to work on inpatient psychiatric units in hospital settings.

Psychologists - The services provided by psychologists depend on the training they receive and their specialized interests. Typically, psychologists provide psychotherapy and counseling to individuals, groups, couples and families. Psychologists are trained in the administration, scoring and interpretation of psychological tests. Psychologists are the only mental health professionals qualified to properly interpret psychological tests. These tests can assess a variety of psychological factors, including intelligence, personality traits, relationship factors, brain dysfunction and psychopathology. Neuropsychologists may also do cognitive retraining with brain injured clients.

What type of education is required for psychiatry?

Following graduation from college, all psychiatrists attend medical school for four years. This is the same training provided to all physicians, and involves courses in anatomy and physiology, as well as courses related to the different medical specialties. Those interested in specializing in psychiatry usually take clinical electives specifically related to psychiatry during their third or fourth year. Those interested in psychiatry would choose a placement in psychiatry as one of their rotations.

What type of education is required for psychology?

In addition to undergraduate training, all psychologists must attend graduate school. Some psychologists pursue a Master's degree, but the minimum acceptable standard for professional psychologists today is a doctoral degree in psychology or a closely allied field. The doctoral degree typically requires four to five years of full time study. The degree may be a Ph.D., a Psy.D., or an Ed.D., depending on the graduate training program. The course work includes training in the science of psychology, with core courses covering the social, developmental, learning and biological bases for human behavior. This includes training in personality theory and psychopathology. Specialized training is also provided in diagnostic evaluation techniques, psychological testing, and psychotherapy and/or counseling methods. Many courses have practicums, which combine clinical experience and classroom knowledge.

Where can I get more information?

- University Nevada School of Medicine, Savitt Medical Building 198, Reno, NV 89557 (775) 784-6063 ext. 2016, www.unr.edu/med
- University of Nevada School of Medicine, Admissions and Student Affairs, 2040 W. Charleston Blvd., Suite 400, Las Vegas, NV 89102, (702) 671-6457