

As a clinical neuropsychologist, I have a number of different teaching roles at the University of Utah. In undergraduate education, I have primarily been involved in neuroscience-related teaching, and mentoring projects in that area. At the graduate level, I have been responsible for teaching psychological assessment, and providing clinical supervision. However, in all of these roles, I am informed by my teaching philosophy, which holds that every educational situation presents academic and broader professional learning opportunities for students, both of which require consistent attention.

Undergraduate Teaching: In the area of undergraduate education, I have made three primary contributions to the University's teaching mission. These are: teaching Brain and Behavior, directly mentoring undergraduate research, and assisting with the broader development of the Psychology department's cognitive neuroscience curriculum.

One unique aspect of teaching Brain and Behavior is the fact that the material can be more technical than many Psychology majors have encountered up to that point in their education. In light of that, I try to set students' expectations that while they are apt to be challenged, it is through actively engaging with the complexity of the nervous system that they can truly appreciate the marvel of brain-behavior relations. At the same time, I work to present the material in a compelling and accessible way, which I accomplish through the use of clinical case examples, video and other media, creative assignments, and in-class experiments and demonstrations. For example, for the last several semesters I have assigned an "Art and Neuroscience" project which gives students the option of either creating or critiquing a piece of art that relates to the course content. While not every student chooses to create an original piece, the whole class enjoys the opportunity to experience paintings, illustrations, songs, poetry, and even edible neurotransmitter models, as well as to discuss the connection of each work to the course material. Finally, like any course, I also see Brain and Behavior as an opportunity to teach larger lessons about the basic principles of scientific inquiry and critical thinking. To that end, I aim to pose provocative questions that challenge students to identify gaps in our current theories, and links to other disciplines and their own experiences.

I also see supervision of undergraduate research as an important part of my teaching contributions. Since arriving at Utah in 2012, I have supervised three honors theses and one senior project in Psychology, as well as a senior project in Biomedical Engineering. All five of these projects applied for and received University funding, and two of them went on to receive awards at the college or the departmental level. It is extremely gratifying to have been a part of these students' success. Not only have I enjoyed helping these students translate their abstract ideas into viable studies, but I have especially come to appreciate the broader skills and confidence they gain in overcoming the associated challenges.

Last, I have also had the opportunity to assist with our broader cognitive neuroscience curriculum, by working with my colleagues, Drs. Trafton Drew and Brennan Payne, to develop our departmental resources for training in cognitive electrophysiology. In this respect, I was fortunate to have led our successful proposal to the University to fund the purchase of a new shared-use, high-density EEG system; as well as to have assisted Dr. Drew in developing a new Advanced Cognitive Electrophysiology course. Next year, this course will begin utilizing the new system to provide students with hands-on training in EEG data acquisition and analysis.

Graduate Teaching and Clinical Supervision: Since coming to Utah, I have also served as the instructor for the Neuropsychology Observation, Pre-Practicum, Practicum, and Supervision sequence, which collectively comprise our “Neuropsychology Vertical Team.” This course uses an instructional model in which all the students participate together with faculty in a vertically-organized supervisory team, and employs a flexible structure that provides opportunities for content-based instruction, professional development discussions, clinical service delivery and supervision, case presentations, and colloquia with neuropsychologists in the community. I am fully committed to this training model (developed prior to my arrival), which has been essential in enabling our students to successfully compete for elite internships and postdoctoral fellowships across the country.

This year I helped to further enhance the service-delivery component of Vertical Team, through the development of a Cognitive Concerns Clinic. The goal of this clinic is to provide low-fee, cognitive screenings and psychoeducation to older adults, who self-identify for baseline assessments of their cognitive status. Through the Vertical Team, we are able to provide tailored assessments to multiple clients a month, including brief reports, in-person feedback sessions, and referrals for follow-up and any appropriate interventions. Overall, this clinic has brought several new benefits to our students. These include hands-on experience with the process of starting and running a clinic, as well as opportunities to hone their basic clinical, test administration and scoring, and conceptualization skills, all in a rapid service-delivery setting that I believe will serve them well in their future roles.

Since Fall 2015 I have also been fortunate to serve as the instructor for our department’s graduate Cognitive Assessment course—Principles and Techniques of Assessment I. Given the strong focus on intelligence in my research, this course has given me the opportunity to expose students to the latest theoretical and clinical considerations that are relevant to cognitive assessment. Although intelligence is one of the longest-studied phenomena in our discipline, there is still much to be done to understand how biological, personality, and cultural factors influence our ability to accurately characterize someone’s intellectual functioning. Along those lines, I have enjoyed the challenge of helping students appreciate both the value and limitations of contemporary intellectual assessment, and to take ownership of improving that aspect of our science wherever it relates to their own professional endeavors.

Finally, I am also aware of my overarching obligation to facilitate students’ emerging professional identities as clinical scientists. As such, it is my goal that all of our students develop a firm appreciation of the gravity of clinical obligations, an understanding of what clinical science means in clinical settings, and the professionalism and skills to function effectively in those venues. To that end, my goal as a supervisor is to foster an open and mutually-engaged environment that balances the development of students’ autonomy with rigorous but respectful oversight, in the course of delivering excellent care.

Future Teaching Plans: In the next several years I am looking forward to preparing a new graduate-level course in Functional Neuroanatomy. Providing strong coverage of such a large and complex topic will be an exciting and daunting challenge, and I look forward to developing a rigorous course that will be equal parts challenging and stimulating for our students. I have already begun developing the syllabus in light of the preparatory demands I anticipate, which include plans for interactive MRI-based examinations, use of anatomical slides or specimens, and individualized writing assignments. I am particularly excited by the

opportunity this course will provide to extend my graduate teaching contributions to the students in CNS and the other areas of our department, as well as to those coming from allied departments across the university.