

# University of Virginia, Department of Neurology

## Clinical Neuropsychology Postdoctoral Fellowship

Director of Postdoctoral Training: Kathleen Fuchs, PhD, ABPP  
Associate Director of Postdoctoral Training: Scott Sperling, PsyD

### **KEY INFORMATION**

**Openings for 2020-2022: 3 Fellowships in Adult Neuropsychology**

**APPCN Member Program:** Yes

**Interview at INS:** Yes

**Application Deadline:** Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

**Materials to Submit:**

- Letter of Intent
- CV
- Graduate School Transcript
- Sample Report
- 3 Letters of Recommendations

The Department of Neurology at the University of Virginia will have 3 openings for a postdoctoral fellow for 2020-2022. We will be participating in the match as an APPCN program. Our training program follows the Houston Conference model for specialty training in clinical neuropsychology and our former fellows have been very successful at obtaining board certification in clinical neuropsychology through the American Board of Professional Psychology (ABPP). Our application deadline is Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>. **We will be offering an opportunity to interview on-site in an Open House format on Friday, January 10<sup>th</sup>.** Additionally, we will interview candidates at INS in Denver primarily on Tuesday, February 4<sup>th</sup> but also during the meeting (Feb 5 - 8, 2020). For those unable to attend INS, we can arrange an interview via Skype or over the phone. Applicants who are traveling in the area over the winter holidays or prior to INS are welcome to set up an individual, on-site interview.

### **Basics of the Fellowship**

The majority of a fellow's time is devoted to outpatient neuropsychological assessment. The remaining time can be tailored to individual interests, including participation in research, delivery of psychotherapy services, and rotations in other departments that provide neuropsychological services to special populations not typically seen by our service (e.g., traumatic brain injury, psychiatric disorders, epilepsy). The salary is approximately \$42,000 for year 1 and \$44,000 for year 2 with full health insurance benefits and an additional stipend that can be applied toward parking or gym membership. Each fellow is also provided a \$450 cafeteria credit at the beginning of each year, and some travel support is offered for fellows presenting research at a conference. The University of Virginia is the premier academic institution in the state of Virginia with a very highly regarded academic medical center. The Department of Neurology is consistently ranked among the best in the nation, and the U.S. News and World Report ranks the University of Virginia Medical Center as the #1 hospital in the state of Virginia. Forbes recently rated the University of Virginia among the nation's top employers. Additionally, the Charlottesville area has been named one of the best places to live in the United States due to the beautiful surroundings, excellent restaurants, and a vibrant arts and music scene.

## What We Do

The main focus of our work is outpatient neuropsychological assessment of adults with neurological disorders. We see a large number of individuals with neurodegenerative conditions, movement disorders, multiple sclerosis, brain tumors, and stroke. While each attending has a specialty area (Dr. Manning = dementia; Dr. Fuchs = MS and brain tumors; Dr. Sperling = PD), we all see every type of patient. We staff several multidisciplinary clinics including the Memory Aging and Care Clinic (MACC), James Q. Miller MS Clinic, Movement Disorders Clinic, Neuro-Oncology Clinic, and Huntington's Disease Clinic. Our role in these clinics includes individual assessment, feedback to patients, families, and team members, and cognitive/behavioral assessment for clinical trials. We perform pre and post-operative assessments for individuals undergoing deep brain stimulator (DBS) placement surgery to treat Parkinson's disease, and we are occasionally called upon to see inpatients to address issues of competency to return to independent living. Additionally, a fellow has the opportunity to see individuals or couples for psychotherapy. Although this is not required, we feel that delivering psychotherapy services to people struggling with neurologic conditions is a unique and valuable learning experience. The neuropsychology service in the department of Psychiatry sees individuals with epilepsy and TBI. It is possible for a fellow to do a rotation with that service or with inpatient rehabilitation in the second year.

The didactic component of the program includes participation in neurology grand rounds, journal clubs, the neuropsychology seminar series, brain cutting, and independent study (see section **Didactics** below for more detail). There are several opportunities for mentored research (both archival and prospective studies), and it is expected that each fellow will complete a research project for publication or presentation at a national conference. Thus, we consider the breadth of training resources as well as the flexibility to pursue specialized interests to be the strengths of the fellowship. Former fellows have secured positions at academic medical centers and in private practice, and several are now board certified through ABPP.

It is expected that at this point, a candidate for the fellowship will have strong training in assessment, interpretation, report writing, and principles of brain-behavior relationships. Our fellowship is designed to provide a wealth of clinical experience to prepare individuals for independent practice. Candidates with an interest in neuropsychology but without a specialized background in neuropsychology will find that a program with a more foundational (versus advanced) didactic component would better meet their needs.

## The Work

Each fellow is expected to see 5 outpatients per week or 4 outpatients plus the Memory and Aging Care Clinic (MACC). Technicians are used for outpatient assessments, but fellows may need to do their own testing if a technician is unavailable (e.g., due to illness). Fellows are responsible for scheduling a feedback session with each patient (preferably in person). Additionally, fellows may be called upon to see an inpatient on occasion or to assess someone as part of a clinical trial or study. The fellows have a shared office with a refrigerator, microwave, printer, storage, and individual desk and computer where they can spend their time writing when not with patients. Reports tend to be 4 – 6 pages long and are due 7 - 10 calendar days after the patient is seen. The fellows are expected to attend 3-4 didactics per week (see below) with additional grand rounds (psychiatry), conferences (neurodegenerative neuroradiology conference), journal clubs, and division meetings available. A sample work week is shown below.

## Sample Work Week

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<b>a.m.</b>	8:30 outpatient with Manning	9:00 outpatient with Sperling			9:00 outpatient with Fuchs
<b>p.m.</b>	12:30 outpatient with Manning  3:30 Neuropsych Didactic (Journal club alternates with case or professional issues discussion)		12:30 outpatient with Manning	4:00 Neuropsychology Seminar Series	12:00 Neurology Grand Rounds

## Sample Work Week While on MACC Rotation

	<i>Monday</i>	<i>Tuesday</i>	<i>Wednesday</i>	<i>Thursday</i>	<i>Friday</i>
<b>a.m.</b>	8:30 outpatient with Manning	9:00 outpatient with Fuchs	8:00 – 5:00 Memory and Aging Care Clinic		9:00 outpatient with Sperling
<b>p.m.</b>	12:30 outpatient with Manning  3:30 Neuropsych Didactic (Journal club alternates with case or professional issues discussion)	4:00 Neuro-imaging conference		4:00 Neuropsychology Seminar Series	12:00 Neurology Grand Rounds

With each patient, fellows conduct an interview typically lasting between 30 minutes to 1 hour. After the interview a technician takes over with testing. The fellows normally use the rest of the day for report writing, research activities, and feedback sessions.

### Memory and Aging Care Clinic (MACC)

For a 6-month period of each year, fellows spend every other Wednesday leading the MACC. Patients with neurodegenerative diseases and their families are followed long term by our multidisciplinary team which includes a nurse practitioner, neurologists, a geriatric physician, and a social worker. A neuropsychology fellow is responsible for preparing for and leading the morning meeting on the day of clinic. This includes a

brief discussion of the patient's history and plan for their visit. The care provided in MACC is patient/family centered, such that no two visits are exactly alike. The fellow will conduct clinical interviews to assess for changes in cognition, behavior, and functioning. If indicated, the fellow may also conduct brief neurocognitive testing to objectively assess change. In addition, a significant part of the time is focused on providing education and recommendations for implementing nonpharmacological, behavioral and environmental strategies.

## **Supervision**

Each fellow is supervised by each attending throughout the week and in this way a fellow is exposed to a range of supervisory styles. Most supervision is case-by-case with formal supervision sessions scheduled as needed. Supervision is initially more comprehensive (e.g., full participation during interview and feedback) and then "fades" as the fellow progresses. Supervisors are available for more in-depth discussion and problem-solving throughout a clinic day.

## **Education/Didactics**

There are 3-4 required educational sessions per week with opportunities available for additional learning experiences via brain cutting and clinic-specific journal clubs.

On Mondays our group meets twice a month for journal club with fellows taking turns selecting articles and leading the discussion. On alternate weeks there are interactive case conceptualization and professional development seminars led by an attending. These seminars are designed to improve fellows' case conceptualization and consultation skills, as well as to support their professional growth and prepare them for independent practice.

On Tuesdays (1-2 times per month), fellows attend the neurodegenerative neuroimaging conference in which diagnostically challenging or rare cases are discussed with neurologists and other clinicians in our department. Fellows are responsible for presenting brief histories and clinical data on patients they have seen, who are being reviewed in conference.

The Thursday Neuropsychology Seminar Series is a joint meeting with the fellows from the neuropsychology service in the Department of Psychiatry. This seminar consists of talks by faculty within and external to UVA, mock written and oral ABPP exams, and presentations by fellows. Seminar topics are selected by the senior fellows, and in the past guest speakers have presented on specific medical conditions, sleep disorders, the Social Security Disability process, the legal requirements for capacity and guardianship, and ethical issues in neuropsychology.

On Fridays our department holds Neurology Grand Rounds with academic presentations by faculty members, residents, or outside speakers. Once a quarter we have an Interesting Case Conference in which we puzzle over and discuss the "zebras" in our midst.

## **Current Clinical Trials/Research Projects**

In addition to several funded initiatives regarding novel care for patients with memory disorders, we do cognitive and behavioral assessments of patients and caregivers as part of pharmaceutical clinical trials.

Current studies include:

- Medication trials aimed at improving cognitive and/or neuropsychiatric symptoms in patients with amnesic mild cognitive impairment, mild to moderate Alzheimer's disease, and Lewy body dementia
- Clinical trials assessing the safety and efficacy of new immunomodulatory treatments for MS
- A multicenter, long-term follow up investigating cognition in patients with low grade gliomas
- Assessment of post-operative outcomes following functional neurosurgery, including focused ultrasound lesioning in Parkinson's disease
- Assessment of the genetic risk factors for psychosis and dementia in Parkinson's disease
- Evaluation of the neurocognitive benefits of exercise in Parkinson's disease
- Evaluation of the relationship between basal forebrain cholinergic denervation and cognitive decline and neuropsychiatric symptoms in PD
- Assessment of the efficacy of Dementia Care Coordinators in improving access to care, outcomes, and relief of caregiver burden in dementia.

## Who We Are

Carol Manning, PhD, ABPP is the Director of the Behavioral Neuropsychology Lab, Vice Chair for Faculty Development in Neurology, as well as Director (and co-founder) of the Memory Aging and Care Clinic. Dr. Manning is the Harrison Distinguished Teaching Professor of Neurology, Vice Chair for Faculty Development in the Department of Neurology, Chair of the School of Medicine Committee on Women, a member of the Steering Committee of the School of Medicine Diversity Committee and is Co-Chair of the School of Medicine Faculty Senate. She has published work in the areas of aging, Alzheimer's disease, Huntington's disease, and Parkinson's disease. She oversees and coordinates the many opportunities for our postdoctoral fellows to become involved in research activities and neuroclinical trials. She is particularly interested in the impact of dementia on caregivers and families. Dr. Manning was appointed to the Alzheimer's and Related Disorders Commission advisory board by the Governor of Virginia. She is also the Chair of the Board of the Central and Western Virginia Alzheimer's Association. In addition, she teaches graduate courses on the biological bases of mental illness and on assessment. Dr. Manning is involved in multi-disciplinary treatment for individuals with Alzheimer's disease and their caregivers. She has grant funding for evidence-based interventions for caregivers and funding to implement a novel model of care coordination for dementia patients in the UVA Memory and Aging Care Clinic.

Kathleen Fuchs, PhD, ABPP is the current Director of Postdoctoral Training in Neuropsychology and is an Associate Professor of Clinical Neurology. She is the neuropsychologist for the James Q Miller MS Clinic and has been a member of that multidisciplinary clinic since its inception at UVA. She is active in clinical trials and ongoing collaborative research projects in MS. She was named to the National MS Society's Volunteer Hall of Fame due in part to her work on a rural outreach program to provide neuropsychological services to individuals with MS in underserved areas. She serves on the editorial board for the International Journal of MS Care. Dr. Fuchs also works closely with the UVA Neuro-Oncology group and is involved in a longitudinal study of individuals with low grade gliomas. She is affiliated with the Memory and Aging Care Clinic and sees a number of older adults for assessment and for psychotherapy. She serves on the Internal Review Board (IRB) for the medical center. Dr. Fuchs has presented continuing education courses for mental health professionals for the National MS Society and the American Brain Tumor Association. She has a particular interest in community education and has presented programs on brain health as well on cognitive changes associated with specific neurological conditions. Dr. Fuchs is currently an oral examiner for American Board of Clinical Neuropsychology (ABCN) and is the president-elect of ABCN.

Scott A. Sperling, PsyD is the Associate Director of Postdoctoral Training (slated to assume the role of director in 2020) and Assistant Professor of Clinical Neurology. Dr. Sperling staffs the Movement Disorders Clinic, Atypical Parkinson and Ataxia Clinic, and Functional Neurosurgery Clinic, completing assessments for patients with suspected non-motor deficits and for those undergoing evaluation for deep brain stimulation (DBS) or MR-guided focused ultrasound (FUS) lesioning. In addition, Dr. Sperling staffs the Memory and Aging Care Clinic (MACC), where he conducts evaluations and provides ongoing care to patients with neurodegenerative diseases, including Alzheimer's disease and frontotemporal dementia. Dr. Sperling's primary research interests are in the evaluation of the neurobiological and clinical predictors of neuropsychiatric symptoms cognitive decline in Parkinson's disease. He also studies post-operative non-motor outcomes following functional neurosurgery and serves as Co-Principle Investigator for several federally funded clinical research programs, aimed at reducing caregiver burden and improving dementia care across the state of Virginia. Dr. Sperling is the Chair of the Education Advisory Committee of the Society for Clinical Neuropsychology (APA Division 40), SCN's Early Career Neuropsychology State Representative for Virginia, and is the Practice Representative on APA's Committee on Early Career Psychologists (CECP). Dr. Sperling was the 2019 recipient of the SCN's Robert A. and Phyllis Levitt Early Career Award in Neuropsychology.

Laurie Brenner, PhD, ABPP is an Assistant Professor of Neurology who directs the pediatric neuropsychology program at UVA. She specializes in epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, stroke, central nervous system tumors, and neurodevelopmental outcomes of conditions originating in the perinatal period. Her research interests include cognitive endophenotypes in neurodevelopmental disorders, clinical indicators for quality improvement in healthcare, and risks and protective factors for children undergoing surgery for intractable epilepsy. Dr. Brenner contributes to training through participation in didactics, seminars, and other educational opportunities. She is available for clinical consultation and mentoring.

Joyce Suh, PhD is a pediatric neuropsychologist and Assistant Professor of Clinical Neurology. She specializes in neuropsychological assessment of children with a history of traumatic brain injury, epilepsy, brain tumor, stroke, in utero alcohol exposure, prematurity, and congenital/genetic disorders. She is also part of the multidisciplinary acute concussion clinic at UVA. She is interested in outcome research, including studying neurocognitive profiles to identify subgroups and factors that may be associated with more positive outcomes.

## **Our Goals for Your Fellowship**

Our job is to prepare you for independent practice and board certification in neuropsychology. You will see a large number of cases so that you can solidify interview, report-writing and feedback skills as well as gain experience with a variety of disorders. Fellows who are the most successful arrive with a solid academic foundation in brain and behavior relationships, good assessment skills, and a certain *je ne sais quois* that includes intellectual curiosity, maturity, initiative, flexibility, and a sense of humor. Our former fellows have been very successful at obtaining high level employment and board certification.

## **Diversity and Inclusion**

We respect, support, and celebrate diversity in our professional and local community. Our fellowship program complies with all applicable civil rights laws and does not discriminate, exclude or treat differently trainees, employees, or patients on the basis of race, age, color, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or gender expression.

## Additional Information

We are an APPCN member program and will be participating in the match. For additional information about the match, please go to: <http://appcn.org/FAQmatch.html>. Please note that there is another neuropsychology postdoctoral fellowship program at the University of Virginia. That program is within the Department of Psychiatry. They have a separate application process.

You can obtain more information about our department and the different specialty clinics via the webpage: <https://med.virginia.edu/neurology/subspecialty-divisions/memory-adult-neuropsychology/>

## To Apply

Candidates must have completed an APA or CPA accredited internship. Application materials may be sent electronically (preferred), by mail, or by fax. Please send (1) a copy of your cv, (2) a transcript of graduate work (can be a scanned copy for the application, but an official copy will be required prior to the start of fellowship), (3) a letter of intent/goals, (4) a sample report, and (5) three letters of recommendation to:

Kathleen Fuchs, PhD, ABPP  
Department of Neurology  
Box 800394  
Charlottesville, VA 22908-0394

[klf2n@virginia.edu](mailto:klf2n@virginia.edu)

Materials can be faxed to Dr. Fuchs at 434-982-1996 or sent by email to [klf2n@virginia.edu](mailto:klf2n@virginia.edu).

All application materials must be received by January 3rd. We will review applications as they as they arrive and contact candidates to arrange for interviews. Please let us know if you are interested in attending the Open House on January 10<sup>th</sup>. We look forward to reviewing your application materials.

## Living in Charlottesville

Our relatively small city often makes “best places to live” lists due to the beautiful surroundings, excellent restaurants, and vibrant music and arts community. We are a 2 plus hour drive from Washington DC at the foot of the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Shenandoah National Park is a 20-minute drive from town with excellent hiking (including many miles of the Appalachian Trail) and camping. Typically, our summers are hot and humid and our winters may (or may not) bring snow. Fall and spring are long and glorious with festivals of every sort, every weekend. The public schools are quite good and the cost of living is moderate.

