

VA MIRECC Postdoctoral Fellowship in Addiction Research

The San Francisco VA Medical Center offers two-year psychology postdoctoral advanced research fellowships in addiction research. This fellowship program is associated with the Sierra Pacific Mental Illness Research Education and Clinical Center (MIRECC; VISN 21) ^[1] and affiliated with the University of California, San Francisco. It is funded by the Office of Academic Affiliations (OAA), Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

For the 2019-2021 training cycle, we are recruiting for one position. Psychologists and physicians (psychiatrist or other board-certified/board eligible physician) are eligible. The primary goal of this fellowship program is to train psychologists, other allied health professionals, and MDs to become leading clinical researchers in high priority areas of mental health and addiction research. Over the course of the two-year program, fellows are trained in academic and health systems research, advanced clinical care service delivery, and program administration in an interdisciplinary setting. The fellowship combines individual mentored research and clinical training with state-of-the-art educational experiences.

One highly successful aspect of training has been the video conference seminar series. Twice a month, a leading expert in the field presents to fellows at all MIRECC sites through the video conferencing system. The didactics emphasize two main areas. One includes presentations on all aspects of career development from grant and manuscript preparation to the role of mentorship. The second emphasis is on the most recent advances in conducting specific components of clinical research in mental health, from genetics to designing the best interventions. There is also a strong emphasis on state-of-the-art methodological approaches to mental health research and practice. Seminar topics last year included VA career development, funding and resources, behavioral genetics, health informatics, and designing clinical trials of behavioral therapies. Ongoing multi-site workshops on manuscript and grant preparation are also provided to the fellows in addition to ongoing weekly biostatistical consultation through the coordinating center.

Fellows devote 75 percent of their time to research and educational activities, and 25 percent to clinical, educational, and administrative activities. In collaboration with their mentors, fellows will develop and implement a research project, publish and present findings, participate in grant writing, and utilize the latest technology for educational activities and clinical service delivery.

Our faculty have extensive and varied research interests, including:

- Process analysis of motivational interviewing and other in-session processes, including the fidelity of motivational interventions and how in-session therapist and client behaviors are linked to subsequent behavior change.
- Marijuana use in veteran population. Specifically, the fellow would have the opportunity

to collaborate on analyzing longitudinal data from a recently completed study with OIF/OEF/OND veterans.

- Ongoing research on pharmacologic treatment of substance use disorders with particular focus on AUD. Faculty members are conducting human lab and clinical trials testing a number of pharmacologic treatments for alcohol and other substance use disorders with an emphasis on the treatment of patients with co-occurring mild traumatic brain injury and posttraumatic stress disorder.
- Development, implementation, and evaluation of cognitive neuroscience-informed technology-based interventions (virtual reality working memory retraining, virtual reality mindfulness training, alcohol approach bias modification, and digital health technologies) to remediate cognitive dysfunction associated with alcohol, tobacco and opioid use disorders.
- Development and evaluation of web- and smartphone-based mobile health (mHealth) interventions for veterans and other populations addressing a variety of addictive behaviors. Includes iterative development of novel technology products using human-centered design techniques and mixed methods. Qualitative data coding and analytic techniques using ATLAS.ti are incorporated into digital health product design.
- Ongoing research involving focused neurocognitive assessment, multimodal neuroimaging (functional MRI, structural MRI, proton magnetic resonance spectroscopy, and diffusion tensor imaging), and electroencephalography (EEG) to investigate the neurobiological substrates of various pharmaco- and behavioral therapies for alcohol use disorders and common comorbidities.
- Development, implementation, and evaluation of brief interventions for addictive behaviors, particularly those that incorporate motivational interviewing and personalized feedback.

Responsibilities for the position include but are not limited to:

- recruitment of research participants, primarily treatment seeking substance users, as well as tracking/locating participants for follow-up assessments throughout the San Francisco Bay Area
- administering study batteries to participants at off site locations
- data management and analysis
- preparation of study materials (e.g., assessments, correspondence with Institutional Review Board)

Training in fMRI data acquisition and analysis is also available. Experience/skills in data management, consenting and running research participants, working with individuals from diverse backgrounds, communicating effectively both orally and in writing, and working in a team setting is preferred.

Clinical training will focus on assessment and treatment of Veterans with substance use disorders in our clinics at the San Francisco VA Medical Center. Research training will include hands-on conduct of experiments, cognitive assessment, neuroimaging acquisition and analysis, brief motivational-based intervention, duties will also include manuscript preparation, and oversight of research coordinator activities. Fellow will participate actively in ongoing research and grant submissions, will participate in pilot projects, will have opportunities for first-author publications and presentation of findings at conferences using new and existing datasets, and will have an opportunity to prepare independent research grants.

For more information about this fellowship program please contact Brian Borsari, PhD (brian.borsari@va.gov ^[2]).

Core faculty members

- Brian Borsari, PhD ^[3], fellowship director
- Steven Batki, MD ^[4]
- David Pennington, PhD ^[5]
- Ellen Herbst, MD ^[6]
- Jennifer Manuel, PhD ^[7]
- Tessa Rife, PharmD ^[8]
- Christopher Galloway, PhD ^[9]
- Stephanie Cardoos, PhD ^[10]
- Samuel Wan, PhD ^[11]
- Tauheed Zaman, MD ^[12]
- Michael Hoefler, MD ^[13]

Application information

To apply for one of this postdoctoral research fellowship, please submit the below application materials. Applicants are to submit their materials to brian.borsari@va.gov ^[2].

The application deadline is December 15, 2018, but applications submitted after that date may be considered until the position is filled. Please do not mail any materials in hard copy form.

1. Letter of interest, including a brief summary of educational, research, and clinical research experiences relevant to the fellowship, a summary of your training needs and goals, and a statement of your career goals.
2. Current Curriculum Vitae
3. Three letters of recommendation
4. A letter of support from your dissertation chairperson describing your dissertation status and timeline if you have not completed your graduate degree. Dissertations must be complete before the postdoctoral fellowship begins. Please note we will be monitoring dissertation progress and status on a routine basis. All requirements for the doctoral degree must be completed prior to the start of the fellowship year.
5. A letter of support from your current internship training director indicating that you are in good standing to successfully complete your predoctoral internship, including the expected completion date. If internship already completed, you can mail a copy of your predoctoral internship certificate.

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UCSF Webmail
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<https://psychiatry.ucsf.edu/research/fellowships/addiction>

Links

- [1] <https://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn21/>
- [2] <mailto:brian.borsari@va.gov>
- [3] <https://profiles.ucsf.edu/brian.borsari>
- [4] <https://profiles.ucsf.edu/steven.batki>
- [5] <https://profiles.ucsf.edu/david.pennington>
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