Richard Rogers, Ph.D., ABPP  
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Teaching Philosophy

I am fortunate that my graduate teaching efforts have been recognized. In 2004, The University of North Texas Graduate School named me the Toulouse Scholar for outstanding teaching and scholarly achievement. My teaching philosophy embraces three core values: (a) commitment to excellence and originality, (b) a true integration of science and practice, and (c) respect for the individuals and their diversity. I will provide a brief summary about each of these values as it relates to scholarship.

Commitment to Excellence and Originality

I continue to challenge myself and my students to perform at the highest level academically. While fostering a spirit of support for the research team, department, and UNT community, our shared goal is to promote excellence that will be recognized nationally. My teaching philosophy is best captured by the phrase primus inter pares or to be first among our peers. As one objective benchmark, I want each student’s research to be published in competitive, peer-reviewed journals. As a model to my students, I became only the third psychologist in 2011 in the history of the American Psychology Association to receive their highest national awards in both applied research and public policy. Under my mentorship, three former students have also achieved national awards.

I also stress originality rather than popular trends in seeking to advance psychological knowledge. Originality is sometimes observed in highly innovative methods that rigorously test competing hypotheses. Several projects are now focused on more nuanced approaches to culture and language.

Integration of Science and Practice

Clinical psychology is often viewed in the United States as a scientist-practitioner model, yet these two foundations for scientific knowledge and professional practice are often taught and considered separately. Our team’s efforts are integrative. How can our empirical research inform psychological assessment? Complementarily, how can clinical needs of patients inform the direction and development of research methods?

The team’s integration goes beyond psychology per se and addresses legal issues facing the criminal justice system. As an example, based on conservative estimates, 300,000 to 400,000 defendants suffer from some compromised abilities, when they waive their Miranda rights and confess. We are challenged to work at even gradual improvements in addressing the 5th Amendment rights for custodial arrestees.

Respect for Individuals and their Diversity

Doctoral students on my research team are clearly unified by their interests in forensic research and practice. Beyond their abilities and passion for research, each
member brings their own unique characteristics, strengths, and weaknesses to the table. As an integral part of the professional development, each person must learn how they can contribute meaningfully to the team effort, which is incredibly important to their academic and professional success.

In our increasingly global community, our research program continues to be informed by cultural and transnational concerns. From our perspective, psychological knowledge can only be understood in relationship to diversity. It embodies and respects heterogeneity across persons, cultures, and even ideas.

Prospective Students

Doctoral students typically apply to work with Rogers team for one or both of the reasons outlined below:

Clinical Forensic Psychology

A small number of doctoral students in clinical psychology work closely with Dr. Rogers and other graduate faculty in developing expertise in forensic psychology. These students through coursework, practica, and forensic research develop knowledge and experience with forensic psychology, especially as applied to criminal populations. Students have been successful in achieving top internships and the premier postdoctoral fellowships in forensic psychology. To be highly competitive, they are typically involved at least several peer-reviewed publications.

Academic Career

Dr. Rogers is especially interested in working with students who aspire for a tenure-track career. The goal is strong and coherent research program. In stressing scholarship, first authorship and co-authorship of 8 or more refereed articles in respected journals is needed to become competitive for academic positions.