

**Networking with Professionals Night:
Psychology**

Wednesday, February 3, 2010

Coordinated by the Career Centre, University of Toronto Mississauga
in partnership with the Department of Psychology and the
Psychology Association of Undergraduate Students of Erindale

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I. Getting the Most Out of a Psychology Degree:

An undergraduate Psychology degree, on its own, can prepare students for a wide variety of careers. Combining the skills gained from studying Psychology with work opportunities while in school, and extracurricular activities, can help students find career areas suitable for them.

A. Careers for Psychology graduates:

Below is a sample of possible careers for Psychology graduates.

Counsellor/Therapist:

- Addictions Counsellor
- Art/ Music Therapist
- Athletic Therapist
- Immigration Officer
- Recreation Therapist
- Rehabilitation Counsellor
- Child Life Specialist

Human Resources:

- Corporate Trainer
- Human Resources Specialist
- Human Resources Worker
- Recruiter
- Mediator
- Trainer/Training Specialist

Residential Care

- Child And Youth Worker
- Community Worker
- Gerontologist
- Health Care Administrator
- Home Care Worker
- Hospital Service Worker
- Psychiatric Aide

Academic and Teaching-Related:

- ESL Teacher
- Researcher
- Library Technician

Social and Human Services:

- Child And Youth Worker
- Child Life Specialist
- Community Worker
- Communications Specialist
- Correctional Officer
- Health Care Administrator
- Hospital Service Worker
- Probation Or Parole Officer
- Religious Worker
- Social Worker
- Volunteer Coordinator

Business-Related and Other:

- Account Manager (Banking)
- Advertising Copywriter
- Advertising Account Executive
- Entrepreneur
- Event Planner
- Foreign Services Officer
- Fundraiser
- Management Consultant
- Market Research Analyst
- Media Buyer
- Planner
- Public Policy Analyst
- Public Relations Specialist
- Writer

*Note: while Psychology graduates can obtain entry level positions in the careers listed above, some also require the completion of additional specific training, licensing exams or certification.

B. Skills Gained From a Psychology Undergraduate Degree:

- communication skills (written and verbal, including the creation and defence of research positions)
- Information gathering, comprehension, analysis, organization, summary and interpretation
- data analysis, categorization and assessment
- mathematical and logical reasoning
- complex problem analysis, dissection and identification of potential solutions
- creative thinking
- sensitivity to cultural and ethnic diversity
- comprehension of human behaviour determinants (physiological, emotional, cognitive and social)
- Ability to understand and explain psychology research
- conduct research in psychology
- critical thinking and abstract reasoning

II. Next Steps

With an understanding of the skills that Psychology graduates may bring to a potential employer, and knowledge of the wide variety of career options, exploration can begin as to next steps - further research, gaining experience and/or targeting a particular career area.

A. Exploring Careers in Psychology:

The following services and resources are available through the **UTM Career Centre (Room 3094, South Building; 905-828-5451; or at www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers)**

Career Counsellors: UofT students can meet with a career counsellor to discuss their interests and skills, explore career options and plan next steps. Appointments can be booked by phone or in person at the UTM Career Centre.

Events: The UTM Career Centre hosts fairs, workshops and other events that provide students with information on specific career areas and gaining experience. As well, there are opportunities to meet employers and company representatives.

2009-10 Fairs hosted by the UTM Career Centre include:

- Get Experience Fair
- Professional Schools Fair
- Career Expo
- Summer Job Fair

2009-10 Workshops hosted by the UTM Career Centre include:

- Your BSc Under the Microscope: What Can You Really Do With a Career in Science?
- Finding Internships and Summer Jobs Workshop
- Jumpstart Your Job Search (work search for graduating students)

For more details see the UTM Career Centre Events Calendar at <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/career/calendar.html>

Alumni Career Connections: Talk to an industry professional! UTM alumni (Psychology and other) have provided their stories regarding where they are today and what experiences led them to their career. Some of these alumni are also available for students to connect with. For more details, see <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/career/connect.html>

Extern Job Shadowing Program: This unique program offers UofT students an opportunity to meet with individuals in a career area of interest and find out what their day to day routine is like. Examples of past Extern sponsors include:

- Director, Centre Serving Mentally Challenged Individuals, Under the Banyan Tree
- Addictions Counselling, Bellwood Health Services Inc.

For more details, see <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/career/extern.html>

Professional Associations and Journals: Professional associations for certain careers/industries offer students the opportunity to learn about a career and connect with individuals working in that field. A student's affiliation with a professional association can be stated on their resume. Examples of professional associations in the field of Psychology include:

- Canadian Psychological Association
Includes links to other Canadian Psychological associations.
- Ontario Psychological Association
- Canadian Counselling Association
Includes links to associations in various types of therapy, counselling, social work and more.
- Interesting Careers in Psychology, APA, 2004
Read interesting profiles of scientifically-trained psychologists who work in industries outside of academia.
- Canadian Association of Child Life Leaders (CACLL) Learn more about Child Life Specialists, their role in health care and the steps to becoming one.

For more details, see http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/career/prof_assoc.html

UTM Career Centre Library Resources (hard copy materials):

- Great Jobs for Psychology Majors
- Careers for Persuasive Types
- Careers for Talkative People and Others With the Gift of Gab

- Careers for High Energy People and Careers for Born Leaders and Other Decisive Types
- What Can I Do With A Degree in Psychology (Career Centre video resource)
- Career Paths in Psychology
- And many more!

Alumni Binder: a resource listing UofT graduates that can be contacted for information on transitioning into the workforce after graduation, steps taken to reach success, and opportunities to look for while in school. Examples: Probation and Parole Officer; Human Resources Manager; Clinical Social Worker; Remedial Program Manager; Systems Analyst. This binder can be found at the UTM Career Centre's library in SE 3094.

Panel Packages (hard copies available in the UTM Career Centre Library, some available on the UTM Career Centre web site – www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers):

- Careers in Human Resources
- Careers in Government
- Diversity Matters: A Wealth of Career Opportunities
- Beyond the Stethoscope: Careers in Health Care
- Careers with a Conscience: Making a Difference While Making a Living
- Careers in Counselling
- Pharmaceutical and Related Careers: Tap Into A Booming Industry that Saves Lives!

B. Building experience while at University

Start gaining experience early: There are many opportunities (part-time, summer, or volunteer work) relevant to a Psychology undergraduate degree. Relevant experience gained from these opportunities show interest, knowledge and skills gained in the field to a potential employer. Experience can also help students expand or begin their network of contacts with individuals working in areas of interest to them.

On-Campus Opportunities

UTM Courses:

PSY299Y5: Research Opportunity Program (ROP)

The ROP allows students to earn a course credit while participating in research with a faculty member. Project titles from 2008 – 2009 include: Brain systems related to maternal behavior in rats; Emotional norming of words related to speech intelligibility tests; and Dissociating emotional and traditional Stroop effects in people who stutter (PWS). For more details, see <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/rop>

PSY442Y5: Practicum in Exceptionality in Human Learning

This practicum gives the opportunity for students to learn more about people with disabilities and careers in the field. Presentations are made by disabled individuals and professionals in this field. Students also take part in a field placement within the community to get hands on experience.

For more details see,

http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/fileadmin/w3psy/Fall_2009/PSY442.pdf

Work and Volunteer Opportunities:

Work-Study Program The Work-Study program provides eligible Uo T students an opportunity to work on campus during the academic year and gain valuable academic/career related experience. Previous postings have included:

- Research Assistant, U of T Dept. of Psychology
- Research Assistant, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- Data Compiler, Rotman School of Management
- Project Assistant, U of T Dept. of Occupational Therapy
- Coordinator, Big Brother/Big Sister Mentorship Program
- Psychosocial Research Assistant, Toronto General Research Institute

For more details, see http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/career/work_study.html

Volunteer Opportunities in UTM

- **AccessAbility Resource Centre:** Assist students with disabilities on campus to succeed in their courses and getting around school.
For more details, see <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/access/>
- **Community on Campus:** Enhance the life of a student with an intellectual disability by working with them on various activities on campus such as: Literacy tutoring, Fitness and sports, Access to computers and the internet, Audit classes, Work experiences, Social activities, Join clubs.
For more details, see <http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/851.0.html>
- **Research Assistant, U of T Dept. of Psychology:** Help professors conduct research projects, gain skills working with psychology computer programs, equipment, and interpersonal skills as well as valuable writing and analytical skills.
For more details, see http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/psy_jobs_assts.0.html

Off-Campus Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities Part-Time & Summer Work Positions: Below is a brief list of examples of off-campus opportunities related to Psychology.

- Volunteer Visitor for Mental Health, VON Peel
- Volunteer, Humber River Regional Hospital
- Support Worker, National Eating Disorder Information Centre

- Crisis Line Volunteer, Telecare Distress Centre Brampton
- Research Assistant, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health
- Human Resources Researcher, RL Media
- Speech Language Pathology Volunteer, Child Development Centre of Oakville
- Business Researcher, HR Club
- Research Assistant, Hospital for Sick Children
- Junior Facilitator, Behaviour Institute
- Community Outreach Assistant, Parkdale Community Information Centre
- Academic Program Instructor, Learning Disabilities Association of Mississauga
- Therapist, Home Program Established by Autism Partnership
- Resource Information Specialist, Operation Springboard
- Assistant Camp Director, Moorelands Community Services
- Junior Therapist, Applied Behavioural Consulting Services Group
- Support Worker, Family Service Association of Toronto

For more volunteer positions in the Greater Toronto Area and general tips, see <http://www.volunteertoronto.ca>

Find out about careers in mental health and placements available in Ontario at <http://www.workinginmentalhealth.ca>

For a list of online postings for volunteer, work study, part time or summer work, UofT students can log onto their Career Centre account via the 'work opportunities' section.

III. What Can Happen After Graduation

A. College Post-Grad Programs

A B.Sc. in Psychology can lead to many entry-level opportunities as well as full careers. However, some require additional certification for career advancement or even entry into the career. College Post-Graduate Programs (Post-Diploma) are for students who have completed their bachelor's degree and are looking for intensive training for a specific skill or career area and are looking to gain practical experience in a field. A Post-Diploma can offer individuals an edge over other applicants. Students may also obtain employment from their placement in the program.

For more details, see http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/career/post_grad.html

Looking for information about applying to graduate school? Visit: http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/gradschool_apply.html

B. UTM Psychology Alumni Profiles

Below are the stories of some UTM Psychology alumni who entered the workforce after completing their undergraduate degree.

Natalie Lamm (Pseudonym)

Position: Area Counsellor with Veterans Affairs Canada. With approximately 985 clients, she performs assessments, counsels about programs, makes referrals to other agencies, coordinates services, liaises with the community, and advocates for the rights of veterans.

Skills needed: intuition, integrity, honesty, empathy, open-mindedness, and a sense of humour

Additional Training: Diploma in counselling

Job Search Methods:

- Searched newspapers and online resources for a job after graduation
- Signed up with a few career websites to have them send her information about jobs that matched her preferences (led to current job).

Career Path:

- Worked as a swim instructor for a private swim school
- Offered a position as case manager (and subsequently coordinator) for young offenders in the Toronto area.

Tips for Students:

- Talk to students who have already graduated
- Talk to course professors and ask them questions
- Contact employers in field of interest and schedule a time to ask someone a few questions and consider volunteering there
- For those without experience, volunteering is a wonderful way to gain experience and to confirm whether or not that field matches one's interests.

Malena Hahn

Position: Human Resources and Training Officer for Merlin Entertainments Group where she is in charge of HR and personnel Europe-wide.

Skills needed: tact, discretion, diplomacy, empathy, speed, authority, and being a team player

Job Search Methods:

- searched for work online and applied to many different companies, highlighting her diverse cultural background

Career Path:

- found direction through the Career Centre's 'What to do with your major' program
- worked for a year and a half in HR Development at a company called AWD Holding

Tips for Students:

- the keys to success are perseverance, not being intimidated, trusting one's self, and not getting down when things don't work out right away.

Cathy Annetta

Position: Volunteer Resources Coordinator for the Peel Regional Cancer Centre at Credit Valley Hospital. She recruits, interviews, and trains volunteers. She also educates the staff and volunteers about the Society and tries to maintain a visible presence within the hospital

Skills needed: Interpersonal skills, empathy, self-awareness, organizational, oral and written communication skills, knowledge of the community services

Additional Training: Post-graduate certificate in Fundamentals in the Management of Volunteers.

Job Search Methods:

- Researched potential places to work on the Internet and called several places to set up informational interviews
- Volunteering for the Canadian Cancer Society was a factor in wanting to work for the Society
- Was willing to take a job that wasn't really what she wanted to do (administrative work) in order to get where she wanted to go

Career Path:

- felt her knowledge of Psychology and desire to interact with people via non-profit organization could be used by working with the CCS
- secretary for the Canadian Cancer Society
- administrative assistant of the Canadian Cancer Society
- community services coordinator with the Canadian Cancer Society

Tips for Students:

- Make more time for volunteering
- It's hard for students to keep up with classes, but it's also very important to get practical experience (via volunteering or working) and network

C. Looking for Work

Small Group Workshops

We offer a variety of workshops covering different phases in the career planning and work search process, including How to access job postings for graduating students, Networking, Effective Interviews, and others. Check the Career Centre events calendar for upcoming workshops. We also offer sessions with information about applying for graduate and professional school.

Networking

The importance of Networking cannot be stressed enough. Networking, put simply, is talking to other people. At any given time, only 20-25% of all available jobs are posted on job boards or in newspapers. The balance is filled through word of mouth and people known to the hiring managers through their network of contacts. This is referred to as the *'hidden job market'*. Spreading the word that you are looking for work increases your chances of hearing about these unadvertised positions. It also presents you with opportunities before they are advertised so your competition is greatly reduced! To get started and learn more about effective networking and the *"hidden job market"*, attend the Career Centre's Jump Start Your Job Search workshop or make an individual appointment with one of our Employment Advisors. The Career Centre also has

a networking binder and tipsheets about information interviews which will help you get started with your networking.

Employment Advisors

Our professional staff are available to assist you, whether in pre-booked one-to-one resume critiques or practice interviews. Drop by SE3094 or call 905-828-5451 for more information and to learn how we can help you get started.

Employment Services

The Career Centre offers online job postings for current students and for up to two years after graduation. Programs for students seeking full-time work include the Graduating Students Employment Service (September to March in your final year of studies) and the Recent Graduates Employment Service (from mid-March in your final year and for up to two years following graduation).

For access to postings for current students, simply visit www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers and register online. Those seeking access to full-time listings (graduating year or recent graduates) must attend an orientation session prior to accessing listings. Please ask the Career Centre for details.

The following are samples of opportunities that have previously been listed on the Career Centre Online, that might be of interest to Psychology grads:

- Research Coordinator – Food Banks Canada
- Youth Development Counsellor – Hillcrest Educational Centres
- Women’s Counsellors/Advocates – Interval House
- Job Accomodation Specialist –Canadian Council on Rehabilitation & Work
- Research Assistant – Hospital for Sick Children
- University Graduate Development Program – Empire Life
- Foreign Language Intelligence Analyst – Communications Security Establishment
- Psychology Assistant – Cancelliere Psychology Professional Corporation
- Outreach Coordinator – Free the Children
- Instructor/Therapist – Brookfield Programs
- New Media Officer – St. Michael’s Hospital
- Settlement Worker – Peel Adult Learning Centre
- Community Services Coordinator – Canadian Red Cross Society
- Addictions Therapist – Seaton House

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