

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

This two semester program is designed to help students gain research experience in a clinical research setting. Each week students will be required to complete ten hours of work and attend weekly professional development seminars to review research articles and assist students in preparing for graduate school, medical school, or post-baccalaureate careers.

DUTIES

Past students have assisted with the following activities:

- Data entry
- Reviewing research articles
- Data cleaning
- Observing diagnostic assessments
- Screening participants
- Assisting in grant applications

REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must be currently enrolled at Baylor University or Tarleton State University-Waco and about to enter their Junior or Senior years

Go to your university's online application portal to apply. Submit these documents with your application:

- Professional Resume or CV
- College Transcripts
- Application Form

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Visit us at our website:

<http://www.mirecc.va.gov/visn17/training.asp>

Contact our Program Support Coordinator, Lisa Boynton
lisa.boynton@va.gov



VA VISN 17 Center of Excellence for Research on Returning War Veterans



Two-Semester Undergraduate Research Internship

The VISN 17 Center of Excellence for Research on Returning War Veterans is accepting applications for a two-semester Research Internship for students in their Junior or Senior years. The internship class begins in the Fall semester and requires a 10-hour per week commitment, eight hours of which is spent gaining hands-on research experience, another hour dedicated to attending didactic trainings, and another hour devoted to reading and writing activities.

VA



U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs

VA CENTER OF EXCELLENCE RESEARCH PROGRAM (VA-CERP)

ABOUT THE CENTER

The VISN 17 Center of Excellence for Research on Returning War Veterans (CoE) is a unified scientific and administrative center of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs designed to foster state-of-the-art, broad spectrum inquiry into the mental health problems associated with combat exposure.

The CoE tracks emerging trends in post-deployment responses to foster the best possible research and service development, to train the next generation of scientists-practitioners, and to guide the VA regarding evidence-based practice. The CoE utilizes shared resources of the Central Texas Veterans Health Care System and the Heart of Texas Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN 17), as well as faculty of Texas A&M Health Science Center, Texas A&M University, University of Texas, and Baylor University. The COE collaborates nationally with many other researchers, academic institutions, and VA systems.

CURRENT PROJECTS

Here is a sample of some of the current projects accepting research interns:

Project SERVE (Study Evaluating Returning Veterans Experiences)

This longitudinal research aims to evaluate trajectories of patient's symptoms over time, to identify areas for treatment to be most effective in shifting trajectories that indicate severe symptoms that may be persistent or intractable without intervention.

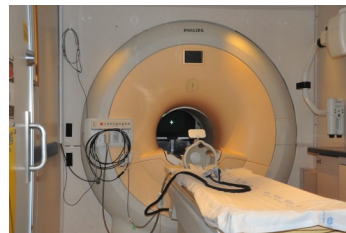


Moral Injury Project

Moral Injury is a new way to look at Combat Trauma, focusing on actions taken in combat that challenge notions of right and wrong. We are developing instruments to assess moral injury and are studying the syndrome in Veterans and Soldiers with the goal of developing innovative treatments

Brain connectivity and TBI

Military veterans commonly suffer lasting effects of blast-related mild traumatic brain injuries (mTBIs), which damage the brain's white matter pathways and so disrupt communication across large networks of the brain. Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) techniques can be used to study how such disrupted brain networks can result in chronic physical and cognitive symptoms. Through these techniques, it is possible to examine how disruptions of specific brain areas that are critical to integrating information in the brain network, called brain network "hubs", may induce particularly widespread and disabling TBI symptoms.

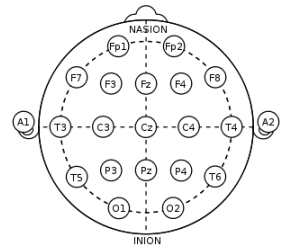


SHE Study (Safe and Healthy Experiences)

Women Veterans with a history of sexual trauma are at higher risk for several behavioral and mental health challenges. Despite their high risk profile, only 38% of sexual trauma survivors used mental health services within the past year. This study aims to develop and assess the efficacy of a brief web-based intervention tailored toward reducing health risks and promoting healthy behaviors in women Veterans with history of sexual trauma, PTSD, Intimate partner abuse, and/or alcohol misuse. If proven effective, SHE represents an innovative method for early identification and intervention of risks related to sexual trauma for women in VA primary care.

Treatment of TBI symptoms using EEG Neurofeedback

Traumatic brain injuries (TBI) are a common problem among Veterans who have been exposed to explosive blasts or other high impact to the head. This can lead to many other investigating ways of using the brain's electrophysiology to treat traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. This study investigates whether teaching people to change the brain's electrical fields has a lasting effect on the way that neurons are connected to each other, and, ultimately, whether this leads to a better quality of life.



EPIC (Effective Psychotherapy in Integrated Care) Study

Only a small proportion of Veterans who could benefit from evidence-based psychotherapy actually receive it in the VA. Integrating such treatments into the primary care setting is one promising solution. The EPIC study aims to understand how and under what circumstances some primary care clinics are effectively delivering high-quality psychotherapy for depression while others are not. This study uses patient electronic health records and information from primary care providers and program leaders across the country to identify how, for whom, and under what circumstances evidence-based psychotherapy is delivered at some primary care clinics. Our eventual goal is to disseminate best practices for primary care/mental health integration.

Treatment of PTSD using TMS

Transcranial magnetic stimulation (TMS) has been proven effective in the treatment of depression and has the potential to be an effective, non-invasive, and safe treatment for post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD affects between 20% and 30% of returning war Veterans, and many of these Veterans either will not participate in current evidence-based treatments or fail to improve following treatment. This study will investigate the use of TMS as a possible alternative or adjunct to existing psychotherapeutic interventions for PTSD.

