

## **3/6 Psi Chi General Body Meeting Minutes**

### **Ph.D vs Psy.D: What is the Difference?**

Guest Speakers: Dr. Saunders (Psy.D) and Dr. Chin (Ph.D)

#### **Grad School Training:**

##### Dr. Chin:

Originally, I didn't know what I wanted to study in college, I was undecided for a good portion of my undergraduate years. I started taking some psychology classes and realized that I found social psychology really interesting. An advisor told me that to get into grad school I needed to get involved in research and through that experience I found that I truly enjoyed research. After getting my B.A. in psychology, I obtained my Ph.D in social psychology from the University of California at Santa Barbara. My grad school experience focused mostly on statistics and was research oriented. After grad school, I ended up staying in academia and doing research through the universities I have worked at.

##### Saunders:

Similar to Dr. Chin, I didn't know what to study in college. During my undergrad years I worked as a youth director at my local church and discovered that I liked interacting with others in a positive way. After getting my bachelors in psychology, I went on to obtain my masters in counseling and psychological services. Personally, I choose to obtain a Psy.D instead of a Ph.D because I did not like research, but I liked the practicum aspect of being a psychologist. I was offered a job from the bureau of prisons through networking with people at an APA conference. Later on in my career I went into private practice and got a lecture job at UCF.

#### **What advice would you give to someone looking at clinical programs? Which program should they apply to?**

It depends on what you are interested in and if research is a big part of that program. Also look at masters program with a thesis aspect to determine which field is right for you. Not all PhD recipients go into academia and most end up in a job that requires little to no research.

#### **What would you suggest for someone who wants the Dr-patient interaction?**

Depending on the area of psychology, Dr-patient interaction can be obtained with either degree. The job you get after graduation determines the amount of Dr-patient interaction you will experience.

#### **How much does the label of a doctoral program (i.e. developmental, cognitive) really matter?**

If you want to work in a university setting then the label of the doctoral program matters because universities have to hire individuals within a certain department (ex. Have to hire someone with a Ph.D in developmental for a developmental position). If you don't want to work in a university

setting then the label of the doctoral program does not really matter. You should apply for programs that peak your interest.

**Is a masters degree required to get into doctoral programs?**

No, it is not necessary for an individual to obtain a masters degree before applying to doctoral programs. In fact, most doctoral programs prefer students to not have a masters degree and most schools will not accept the degree or transfer classes. It is common to obtain your masters degree while getting a Ph.D or Psy.D. Depending on your desired career path a doctoral degree might not be necessary. For instance, as a therapist only a masters is required. However, a doctoral degree has the opportunity to open more doors in terms of a career path.

**What advice would you give to students that did not get into a Psy.D or Ph.D program?**

The best advice is to continue to gain experience that will be beneficial to you and improve your CV. A lot of individuals take time off between graduation and grad school, it is important to use that time to strengthen your future application. An example would be getting involved in a research position or acquiring an internship.