Alliant University

California School of Professional Psychology

Fall Series 2026

Psychopharmacology Speaker Series Webinars

Clinical Psychopharmacology in Action: Science and Practice

Discover cutting-edge insights into mental health treatment as experts in the field of prescriptive authority and psychopharmacology take center stage in our exclusive webinar series.

Observational Methods, Prescribing Psychology, and Evidence-Based Practice

Phillip Hughes, PhD, MS

September 14 | 5:00 p.m. PT

Although the randomized controlled trial is considered the gold-standard research method for informing evidence-based practice, it is not always possible to conduct such a study. In the case of policy interventions, such as scope-of-practice changes, we instead rely on rigorous observational methods to inform evidence-based policy and practice. To that end, there is a growing body of evidence about the positive impact of prescribing psychologists on population mental health that relies on these complex observational methods. In this lecture, we will discuss some of the major research findings on prescribing psychologists and take a detailed look at the methods used to support these conclusions.

Dr. Phillip Hughes is an Assistant Professor in the Binghamton University School of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences, Affiliate Faculty with the Binghamton University Department of Psychology, and a Research Affiliate at the West Virginia University Knee Regulatory Research Center. His primary research interests center around mental health and substance use treatment services, with a focus on policies to improve access to those services, such as expansion of prescriptive authority. To that end, he has published over 40 peer-reviewed research articles, including one of the top-cited articles in the Journal of Rural Health 2021–2022. In recognition of his work, he has received the 2023 Patrick H. DeLeon Prize for Outstanding Student Contribution to the Advancement of Pharmacotherapy and the 2024 John D. Preston Award for Outstanding Contributions to Clinical Psychopharmacology from Division 55 of the American Psychological Association.

*1.0 Continuing Education Unit Available**

Register: alliantu.co/cspp091426

Psychopharmacology Training for Psychologists: History, Models of Training and Ways to Expand Your Psychology Practice

George M. Kapalka, PhD, MS

October 8 | 5:00 p.m. PT

Psychopharmacology training for psychologists has been taking place for more than 30 years. From the DoD PDP program for military psychologists to certificate programs like PPR to the development of the first MSCP at CSPP (now part of Alliant University) in 1998, various approaches to covering the material have been utilized. Today's MSCP programs follow APA's designation criteria and model curriculum but nevertheless differ in methods of delivery and course design. All offer strengths that work well for different types of students. Prospective students who understand these differences are better prepared to choose a program that best meets their needs. Psychopharmacology training benefits all psychologists by enhancing our skill set and provides opportunities to expand psychological practice and referral sources regardless of whether one obtains prescriptive privileges.

Dr. George M. Kapalka is a prescribing and clinical psychologist based in Albuquerque. He is board-certified in clinical psychology and is a Fellow of the American Psychological Association's Divisions 53 and 55. He has been a prescribing psychologist for nearly a decade and a practicing psychologist for over 35 years. His work primarily focuses on the psychological, pharmacological, and combined treatments of youth, as well as collaboration between medical and mental health professionals. He has developed and led graduate training programs, and currently is the Program Director of the MS in Clinical Psychopharmacology at Alliant University, where he holds the rank of Distinguished Professor. He is an author of six books and dozens of other publications and professional presentations. He has been interviewed for newspapers, Internet publications, and on television. He hosts the blog, "Kids and Psych Meds," on Psychology Today.

*1.0 Continuing Education Unit Available**

Register: alliantu.co/cspp100826

Psychotropic Medications During Pregnancy: Consult, Educate, Document

Ruth Roa-Navarrete, PhD, MS

November 18 | 5:00 p.m. PT

Pregnancy can be a time of great joy and great challenges for both patients and their providers. New onset of mental and medical illness, exacerbation of ongoing issues, and an increase in psychosocial stressors are just some of the challenges our clients can face. Since almost half of all pregnancies in the US are unplanned, this can leave prescribing providers feeling concerned about how to move forward. This presentation will discuss issues surrounding the use of psychotropic medications during pregnancy and address "safe" and effective strategies for managing this complex time. Each psychotropic drug class will be discussed, especially considering the FDA pregnancy guidelines. Participants will also understand when and how to taper patients off pharmacotherapy during pregnancy, and how to implement alternative management strategies for common mental health conditions faced by pregnant people.

Dr. Ruth Roa-Navarrete is a Clinical/Prescribing Psychologist and a retired Air Force Psychologist with 23 years of service. She currently performs compensation and pension exams for veterans with psychological injuries incurred during their military service. She is a graduate of Alliant's 3rd cohort as part of a formal Air Force post-doctoral fellowship program. She has been prescribing independently since 2010 in the context of multiple assignments in the United States and at overseas locations, including during two contingency deployments. Her areas of interest include Women's Mental Health, Military and Veterans Health, and Transcultural Psychopharmacology. She is an Adjunct Professor at Alliant's MSCP, and a faculty member/preceptor for psychology practicum students, interns and residents, social work fellows, psychiatry residents, and physician assistant and psychiatric nurse practitioner students.

*1.0 Continuing Education Unit Available**

Register: alliantu.co/cspp111826

The Skinny on GLPs: Information for Behavioral Health Professionals

David Shearer, PhD, MS

December 1 | 5:00 p.m. PT

The GLPs, glucagon-like peptides 1 and 2, are hormones that are now commonly prescribed for weight loss. These drugs have been revolutionary in weight loss and have been associated with other positive influences such as cardiovascular protection, kidney health, improvement in depression/anxiety, self-image, and potential improvements in brain function and inflammation reduction. In addition, there is a growing recognition of a role for GLP drugs in the treatment of substance use disorders. However, these drugs do not offer an unalloyed benefit and can have side effects for some patients. This presentation will briefly describe the actions of GLPs and the potential psychological and physiologic benefits as well as the risks of side effects or other adverse outcomes.

Since 2009, Dr. David Shearer has been a clinical and prescribing psychologist at Madigan Army Medical Center (MAMC) in Washington. He serves as a core faculty member and Director of Behavioral Sciences for the MAMC family medicine residency. He is board certified in Psychopharmacological Psychology (ABRxP, ABPP) and is a member of the Inaugural Board. He is a past President of APA Division 55 and past Editor-in-Chief of the division's newsletter, "The Tablet." Dr. Shearer co-chaired the Taskforce that published APA's Practice Guidelines Regarding Psychologists' Involvement in Pharmacological Issues in 2025. Dr. Shearer teaches as an adjunct faculty member at Alliant University's and New Mexico State University's MSCP programs. His research and professional interests include understanding and evaluating the combination of psychopharmacology and psychotherapy, prescribing in primary care settings, and the continued growth of prescribing psychology in the military. pain in the substance use disordered patient and the neuroscience of substance use disorders. Dr. Norton provides workshops to communities, educators, healthcare professionals, prevention specialists, treatment providers, and especially families, about the diseases of substance use disorders.

*1.0 Continuing Education Unit Available**

Register: alliantu.co/cspp120126

Psychopharmacology Information Sessions

Admissions counselors will lead a presentation about the MS in Clinical Psychopharmacology program at Alliant covering the admissions process, program structure, cost, and more. Q&A session included.

All Information Sessions start at 5:00 p.m. PT

September 14	**October 8**	**November 18**	**December 1**

About CSPP

Founded in 1969 as one of the nation's first free-standing schools of professional psychology, CSPP has educated thousands of students who are now working professionals in clinical psychology, couples and family therapy, and organizational psychology. Our degree programs prepare the next generation of mental health professionals and advocates to help improve access to quality mental health care in every community.

Why CSPP?

At CSPP, we offer you an education that is:

- APA-Accredited
- Focused on practical, real-world experience
- Connected with diverse faculty and alumni
- Aimed at the student experience

Learn more at alliantu.co/psychopharm

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*Alliant University is approved by the American Psychological Association (APA) to sponsor continuing education credits for psychologists. Provider approved by the California Board of Registered Nursing (BRN), provider #CEP17538, for 1.0 and 2.0 contact hours. Those seeking CE credits under the BRN must retain the certificate for a minimum of four years. Alliant maintains responsibility for the program and its content.

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