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*Life in Discovery*

For Immediate Release:

## **New Clinical Counseling Program Offered at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science**

Until recently, students seeking to enter the mental health field as a practitioner rather than a researcher and practitioner had few educational choices. It usually meant spending six or more years undertaking doctoral studies that involved clinical work but also required them to spend considerable time conducting research.

Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science (RFUMS) has offered a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology program for more than 20 years, training students for careers in clinical and academic psychology. This course of study took about seven years to complete and required students to conduct their own, unique research projects for graduation.

In the fall of 2008, RFUMS began offering a new program, a Master of Science in Psychology: Clinical Counseling aimed at students seeking careers as counselors, students more interested in delivering direct service in clinical settings rather than in conducting research.

The two-year program accepted its first students into the program in August 2008 and has now begun the application process for students seeking to begin studies in August 2009.

“There are quite a few opportunities for people to enter the mental health field and practice with a master’s degree,” said Dr. Kenneth Kessler, an associate professor of psychology and director of the clinical counseling program. “Because of this, we have added the M.S. in clinical counseling curriculum to our department’s offerings which have included an American Psychological Association approved Ph.D. in psychology for more than twenty years.”

Kessler said the RFUMS department of psychology is a well-respected one, and has been producing well-qualified doctoral-level psychologists for more than two decades. The department of psychology emphasizes interprofessional education, small class sizes and individualized attention. “Our students enjoy learning in a university of health sciences – everyone at RFUMS is focused on understanding and improving human health and behavior. Our students also benefit from small class sizes, individualized attention and the opportunity to learn from professors who are well recognized in their fields,” said Kessler.

The masters program offers students who know they are interested in working as therapists rather than researchers or academicians a well-rounded, empirically supported educational path to a career. “This is a practice-oriented degree,” Kessler said. “This degree is for the person who wants to work in the mental health field as a counselor doing mental health assessments and therapy.”

Included in the master’s program is coursework designed to meet state licensing requirements for Clinical Counselors, along with a series of elective courses that allow students to explore special interests within the field. The program also includes 700 hours of supervised field training experience in the form of an internship.

Kessler said the goal of the Clinical Counseling program is produce clinicians who integrate the science of mental health research with practice. He said the university’s focus is to teach students to rely on evidence-based practice techniques.

“The service you deliver to the client has to be empirically-supported – that is whatever you are doing as a counselor has to be supported by research, good research, that says it will work,” Kessler said. “You can’t just shoot from the hip or do something with a client because it feels right.”

RFUMS is currently taking applications for the Master in Science in Psychology Clinical Counseling program. Students can study on a part-time or full-time basis. Applicants must have a bachelor’s degree and letters of reference. GRE scores are optional. The deadline for applications for August 2009 admission is April 1, 2009. All applicants must complete an interview in order to be considered for admission.

For more information about the program contact Kenneth H. Kessler, Ph.D. at (847) 578-8740 or visit the University’s website at <http://www.rosalindfranklin.edu>