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Reading in Graduate School: A Survey of Doctoral Students in Clinical Psychology

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To what extent do graduate students in clinical psychology complete assigned readings? A total of 744 graduate students in American Psychological Association-accredited doctoral programs completed an online survey regarding reading in graduate school (67% response rate, of those viewing the survey). The reported amount of assigned reading varied widely, with an average of 330 pages per week. Compliance ratings suggested that about half the assigned reading is completed thoroughly and that thorough reading is more common than skimming or not reading assigned material. Motivating and hindering factors for reading are reported, and implications for faculty are considered.

Keywords: training in professional psychology, reading assignments, reading compliance

If a potential graduate student in professional psychology were to go to the American Psychological Association (APA) Web site and look for the experiences of those currently in graduate school, she or he would likely come across some provocative quotes, such as, “For me it has been giving up 3 years of my social life,” “It’s crazy. It feels like there is never a spare moment,” and, “It’s a special kind of hell” (Gillespie, Aten, Reyes, & Barber, 2009). These words illustrate the workload challenges that many graduate students in professional psychology face, including practicum training, research expectations, classroom time, and assigned reading that is to be completed outside of classroom time. Some facets of students’ workload are relatively easy to monitor—such as completing practicum training hours, fulfilling research assign-

ments, and attending class—whereas reading behaviors outside of the classroom are more difficult to assess.

Assigning reading can also be challenging for faculty members. Each year, hundreds of new and important books are published, whereas most of the standard classics in the field remain relevant. Journals are proliferating, and electronic access to journals makes it easier than ever for professors to stay current with recent studies, many of which find their way into required reading packets for graduate students. We find ourselves in the midst of the golden age of information access. This is something we anticipated wistfully in decades past, but all change brings challenge. Faculty members must decide which reading requirements to continue assigning each year and how to balance this workload with new and ever-expanding literature. Furthermore, which readings are essential for a graduate-level course in professional psychology, and which ones add an undue burden on students?

Reading and Competence

Reading in graduate school is of utmost importance—both in providing students with foundational knowledge in the discipline and in helping students learn the methods of acquiring information to remain competent throughout their careers. Completing assigned reading is related to participation in classroom discussions, which many professors view as an important part of students’ professional training (Burchfield & Sappington, 2000). Moreover, in keeping with the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (APA, 2002), psychologists must practice within the boundaries of competence, a large part of which is based on one’s education and studies. Ethical Standard 2.01a clearly articulates that psychologists provide services only in those areas where they have sufficient education and training (APA, 2002). This has implications for both students and faculty; students are to prepare themselves adequately during graduate school to face the rigors of professional work, and faculty are to design training programs sufficient to ensure competency in their graduates. Reading is a major component of this graduate-level preparation for competent professional work.

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Reading in Relation to Practicum Requirements and Training Models

Finding time to read may be more difficult for today's graduate students in professional psychology than in decades past. A substantial change in professional psychology programs has been the increased number of supervised professional training hours that students receive during their doctoral program (Williams-Nickelson, 2004). A recent self-study of member schools of the National Council of Schools and Programs in Professional Psychology (NCSPP) revealed that the average program requires a minimum of 1,174 hr in practicum (Frincke, Wicherski, Finno, & Kohout, 2006). This stands in sharp contrast to the former APA accreditation requirement of 400 hr in practicum that pertained in much of the 1970s and 1980s.

Various training models have emerged in professional psychology, with some emphasizing relatively more research training and others emphasizing more practicum training. The scientist-practitioner model, first articulated at the 1949 Boulder Conference on Graduate Education in Psychology (Raimy, 1950), emphasizes excellence in research while simultaneously affirming the importance of professional interventions that emerge from research findings. Although the Boulder model has remained prominent (Belar & Perry, 1992), a 1973 conference in Vail, Colorado, promoted an alternative training model, known as the practitioner-scholar model, that emphasized professional training based on established scientific findings (Korman, 1974). Subsequent training conferences, and the founding of the NCSPP, helped establish the nuances of a practitioner-scholar model of training, including competencies for effective psychologists (Peterson, Peterson, Abrams, & Stricker, 1997). Historically, some NCSPP programs identify themselves as practitioner programs, whereas others consider themselves practitioner-scholar programs, although the terms appear to be used interchangeably. Both practitioner and practitioner-scholar programs emphasize service delivery in a scientifically responsible way more than science itself. More recently, a clinical science model of training has emerged among clinical and health psychology training programs. The model was established as a result of a 1994 conference, "Clinical Science in the 21st Century" (Academy of Psychological Clinical Science, n.d.). Clinical science model programs train students to produce scientific research and apply research in a professional context. Consistent with the intent of various training models, Cherry, Messenger, and Jacoby (2000) found that out of these training models, clinical scientist faculty published the most and obtained research grants most often, followed by scientist-practitioner and then practitioner-scholar faculty. Similarly, faculty members in practitioner-scholar programs were the most likely to engage in professional practice, followed by faculty in practitioner-scholar programs and then clinical science programs.

As scientist-practitioner, practitioner-scholar, and clinical science models have coexisted among doctoral training models in professional psychology, it is likely that each has influenced the other. Scientist-practitioner and clinical science programs have caused research standards to remain high, whereas practitioner-scholar programs have promoted extensive supervised professional training among professional psychology doctoral programs. In today's professional training climate, it would be difficult to imag-

ine an accredited doctoral program without substantial research training and extensive professional preparation.

The trend of increasing practicum training was one of the driving forces behind the APA Council of Representatives's 2006 Resolution on Admission to Licensure. Before the 2006 resolution, the expectation was that professional psychology students would obtain 1 year of full-time supervised experience before the doctorate and 1 year of postdoctoral supervised training. The 2006 resolution allows for the equivalent of 2 years of supervised training to be obtained either before or after the doctorate (Farberman, 2006). If state regulatory bodies respond accordingly, this means that professional psychologists may be licensable upon receipt of the doctoral degree. These changes recognize, in part, that professional psychology students receive more predoctoral supervised training than in past years, making the postdoctoral year less necessary than it once was.

However, allocating time is a zero-sum endeavor, of course, meaning that adding time to practicum training requires that time be taken from some other part of a student's schedule—either from other academic work or from time that would otherwise be devoted to personal, family, and social commitments. Because reading must be fit into unscheduled times in students' lives, it might also be among the first things to be compromised when students have too much to do and not enough time to go around. The extent to which this happens is unknown because, to date, no published research has looked at graduate students' reading behavior in professional psychology.

Currently, the research on reading in psychology education is limited to undergraduate reading behaviors (e.g., Burchfield & Sappington, 2000; Carkenord, 1994; Clump, Bauer, & Bradley, 2004; Marchant, 2002; Sappington, Kinsey, & Munsayac, 2002; Sikorski et al., 2002; Steuer, 1996) and one study on students in a master's-level forensic psychology graduate program (Clump & Doll, 2007). Investigating doctoral students' reading behavior in professional psychology is necessary to shed light on the issues involved in the training of future psychologists. The purpose of this research, then, was to explore reading behaviors among doctoral students in clinical psychology.

Method

Participants

Those who participated in the study were current students in APA-accredited, clinical psychology graduate programs across the United States. A total of 1,117 doctoral students visited the survey site, and 744 completed the online questionnaire, resulting in a 67% completion rate. The most recent data reported by the APA Center for Workforce Studies indicate that 2,464 doctoral degrees in clinical psychology were granted in 2005–2006 (APA Center for Workforce Studies, 2007). Assuming a relatively even distribution over 5 years of graduate school, this suggests approximately 12,000 graduate students are studying clinical psychology in APA-accredited doctoral programs. This is somewhat higher than the 7,252 students that Pate (2001) reported for 1999–2000 enrollments, but the number of accredited programs has grown from 131 to 228 in the intervening time. Thus, our best estimate is that our sample of 744 respondents is approximately 6% of the total number of graduate students in APA-accredited clinical psychology doctoral programs.

Of the 744 respondents in this study, 67% were enrolled in PhD programs, 31% in PsyD programs, and 1% in EdD programs. Most respondents (80%) were female, which reflects the national trend for most graduate students in clinical psychology to be women. Also reflecting national trends, most respondents (82%) were European American. Others were African American (4%), Asian American (4%), Hispanic/Latino (6%), Native American (2%), or international non-Americans (2%). Participants ranged in age from 20 to 60 years old, with an average of 27 years. Just over half (52%) of the participants were in either their first (28%) or second year (24%) in a clinical psychology program. The remaining participants were in their third (19%), fourth (15%), or fifth (8%) year, with 5% indicating that they were in their sixth year or more. When asked about the training model used in their program, 60% reported being trained in a scientist–practitioner model, 31% reported training in a practitioner–scholar or practitioner model, and 9% reported training in a clinical scientist model.

Instrument

An online questionnaire was developed for gathering information from participants about their reading in graduate school. Through this questionnaire, demographic information was gathered including type of graduate degree (PhD, PsyD, EdD) pursued, training model used in the program, years in the program, grade point average, age, gender, ethnicity, relational status, and living situation. Participants were asked how much they enjoyed reading for leisure, and then various questions were asked about reading assigned for classes, including several opinion items about the amount of reading assigned in their classes, an estimate of how many pages they are assigned in a typical week during the current semester, the percentage of reading they complete, and how thoroughly they read their assigned readings. Participants were also asked to rate how much of the assigned reading they completed and how much was completed by most of their peers in the same doctoral program, with both items being rated on a Likert-type rating scale ranging from 1 (*none*) to 7 (*all*). Also queried was the amount of time spent weekly on reading and other educational activities that may compete for time. Using Likert-type rating scales, we also asked participants to rate various items that motivate and hinder the completion of assigned readings. (Likely motivating and hindering factors were determined in conversations with doctoral students at two different APA-accredited doctoral programs in clinical psychology). Participants were also given an opportunity to provide qualitative feedback regarding these issues. (A copy of the questionnaire may be obtained by e-mailing Mark R. McMinn at mmmminn@georgefox.edu.)

Procedure

In October of 2007, we compiled a list of the 228 APA-accredited doctoral programs in clinical psychology from the APA Web site. We then conducted an Internet search and were able to identify the program directors' names and e-mail addresses for 204 programs. Of the 204 e-mails we sent, 14 were returned because the e-mail addresses were no longer valid, leaving a pool of 190 program directors. We contacted the training directors through e-mail, requesting that they forward the e-mail on to their students. The e-mail contained a link to the online questionnaire.

Results

Assigned Readings

Respondents were asked how much reading they are assigned in a typical week during the current semester, in all of their classes combined. The answer options to this question were grouped into 100-page units (e.g., 0–100 pages, 101–200 pages, etc., up to 1,401–1,500 pages). We used the midpoint of each category to estimate an average response of 330 pages per week, with a strikingly high standard deviation of 227 pages. Respondents provided a wide range of responses, with 11% selecting the lowest amount of weekly reading (0–100 pages) and 0.4% indicating the highest amount of weekly reading (1,401–1,500 pages). The modal category selected was 201–300 pages per week (23% of respondents). Nearly one third of all respondents reported being assigned more than 400 pages per week.

Students in PsyD programs reported having more reading assigned (395 pages per week) than students in PhD programs (301 pages per week), $t(716) = 5.2, p < .001$. Similarly, differences emerged in the amount of reading assigned on the basis of the training model reported (scientist–practitioner, practitioner–scholar, clinical scientist), $F(2, 724) = 6.2, p < .005$. Post hoc Scheffé tests (with $\alpha = 0.05$) revealed a difference between students in scientist–practitioner programs (306 pages per week) and those in practitioner–scholar programs (370 pages per week). Students in clinical science programs reported reading an average of 353 pages per week, which did not differ significantly from those in scientist–practitioner or practitioner–scholar programs.

Year in training was also related to the amount of reading assigned $F(3, 722) = 8.1, p < .001$. Post hoc Scheffé tests (with $\alpha = 0.05$) revealed that first-year students reported more reading (384 pages per week) than third-year students (299 pages per week) and students who have been in their program 4 or more years (283 pages per week). Second-year students reported an average of 340 pages per week, which was not significantly different than other years in the post hoc comparison tests.

Students also responded to several opinion items regarding the nature of the reading assigned. When asked the extent to which their assigned reading in various classes helps them learn, respondents averaged a 3.6 ($SD = 0.8$) on a Likert-type rating scale ranging from 1 (*in none of my courses*) to 5 (*in all of my courses*). On the same rating scale, respondents averaged 3.7 ($SD = 0.7$) when asked if the assigned reading is of high quality, 3.4 ($SD = 1.0$) when asked if too much reading is assigned, and 1.2 ($SD = 0.5$) when asked if too little reading is assigned.

Completing Assigned Reading

Respondents were asked how much of the assigned reading they read word for word during an average week in the current semester, how much they skim, and how much they do not read at all. Each of these was rated on a Likert-type rating scale ranging from 1 (*none*) to 7 (*all*), with a midpoint of 4 (*about half*). The mean ratings were 3.7 ($SD = 1.6$) for reading word for word, 3.3 ($SD = 1.4$) for skimming, and 2.2 ($SD = 1.2$) for not looking at the assigned reading. Because there was an overall difference among these three ratings, Pillai–Bartlett $V(2, 715) = .354, p < .001$, this justified a series of post hoc paired-sample t tests that revealed that thorough reading was reported at a higher frequency than either

skimming, $t(725) = 4.2, p < .001$; or not reading, $t(717) = 16.2, p < .001$; and that skimming was reported at a higher frequency than not reading, $t(718) = 15.3, p < .001$. We also asked respondents how their own reading behaviors compared with others in their programs, using the same Likert-type rating scale. Not surprisingly, respondents showed a self-enhancement bias with the average person reporting a 4.9 on the 7-point rating scale for their own reading behaviors and a 4.5 for their peer's reading behaviors, $t(718) = 7.8, p < .001$.

The reported amount of reading assigned has a small but significant impact on reported reading behavior; those with more reading assigned were less likely to read it thoroughly ($r = -.11, p < .01$) and more likely to not read it at all ($r = .12, p < .01$). The amount of reading skimmed is unrelated to the amount assigned ($r = .025, ns$).

Students in PsyD and PhD programs did not differ on the reported amount of reading done thoroughly or the amount skimmed, although students in practitioner-scholar programs reported leaving assignments unread more often than students in scientist-practitioner programs, $t(708) = 2.9, p < .01$. Students in PsyD programs reported more time than PhD students devoted to class, $t(705) = 5.5, p < .001$; and practicum training, $t(682) = 3.3, p < .005$. PsyD students reported an average of 11.1 hr in class and 13.4 hr in practicum, compared with 9.0 and 10.9 hr, respectively, for PhD students.

Year in training is related to how students handle assigned readings. Students further along in their years of training tend to read less of the assigned reading thoroughly, $F(3, 724) = 9.5, p < .001$; skim more, $F(3, 722) = 7.0, p < .001$; and leave more assignments unread, $F(3, 714) = 4.6, p < .01$. Post hoc Scheffé tests (with $\alpha = 0.05$) revealed that first-year students read assignments thoroughly more often and skim less often than third- or fourth-year students.

To assess a general inclination to read, we asked respondents how much they enjoyed reading for leisure, using Likert-type items ranging from 1 (*I hate it*) to 5 (*I love it*). Those who enjoy reading for leisure are slightly more likely to complete their assigned readings thoroughly ($r = .09, p < .05$) and less likely to leave assignments unread ($r = -.10, p < .01$). However, both correlations are so weak that they account for little shared variance.

We conducted a multiple regression analysis to determine whether we could account for the percentage of reading done thoroughly on the basis of the following predictor variables: year in program, total pages assigned, gender of respondent, age of respondent, number of adults currently living with the respondent, number of children currently living with the respondent, amount of time spent in class per week, amount of time spent in practicum placements per week, amount of time spent in employment per week, and type of program (PhD or PsyD). The four significant predictor variables are listed in Table 1. Three predictors—amount of time spent in practicum placements, total pages assigned, and year in program—had a significant negative relationship with the percentage of reading done thoroughly. The fourth significant predictor—age of student—was positively related to the percentage of reading done thoroughly. Other predictor variables were not significantly related to the amount of reading done thoroughly. Overall, the amount of variance accounted for with the regression equation is only a modest 8%.

Table 1
Multiple Regression Results Predicting Amount of Reading Done Thoroughly

Predictor variable	β	t	
Year	-0.20	3.8	<.001
Total no. of pages assigned	-0.15	3.4	<.01
Gender	-0.04	1.0	<i>ns</i>
Age	0.10	2.4	<.05
No. of adults living with student	-0.02	0.5	<i>ns</i>
No. of children living with student	-0.08	1.8	<i>ns</i>
Time in class per week	-0.06	1.1	<i>ns</i>
Time in practicum per week	-0.15	3.1	<.01
Time in outside employment per week	-0.01	0.2	<i>ns</i>
Degree type (PhD or PsyD)	0.00	0.1	<i>ns</i>

Note. $N = 608$ after listwise deletion of participants with missing data. β weights are presented as standardized coefficients. *ns* = not a significant predictor.

Motivating and Inhibiting Factors

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which various factors motivate them to complete their assigned reading, ranging from 1 (*not a motivator*) to 5 (*motivates me a great deal*) on a Likert-type rating scale. Participants were also given the opportunity to write additional motivating factors. Ratings on the various motivating factors are shown in Table 2, ordered from most highly endorsed to the least highly endorsed. A repeated-measures multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) revealed overall differences in the endorsement of the 10 motivating factors, Wilks's $\lambda(9, 716) = 0.244, p < .001$. Profile analyses, using paired-sample t tests with a conservative α of 0.01, were used to determine differences among adjacent means. As shown in Table 2, seven of the nine adjacent means were significantly lower than the preceding mean.

A similar procedure was used with the questionnaire item asking respondents what hinders them from completing readings. The seven hindering items are listed in Table 3, ordered from most highly endorsed to least highly endorsed. A repeated-measures MANOVA revealed overall differences in the endorsement of the seven hindering factors, Wilks's $\lambda(6, 726) = 0.247, p < .001$. Profile analyses revealed that four of the six adjacent means were significantly lower than the preceding mean. On a separate item, we asked respondents if their class attendance is affected by whether they have completed the reading assigned for the class. Generally, they reported no, with an average rating of 1.5 on a Likert-type item ranging from 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*a great deal*).

A total of 317 individuals provided qualitative feedback about additional factors that affected their reading behaviors. Students expanded on the factors they had already rated, such as if they felt the reading was important in their professional work or they had an interest in the subject. Respondents also said they were motivated to read if the reading was current and accurate and if the writing style was clear and easy to comprehend. Regarding obstacles, various responsibilities of being a doctoral psychology student were identified as getting in the way of reading; students felt there was not enough time to complete all of the reading in addition to the various expectations of their programs. Also, respondents thought it was impossible to stay caught up on the reading when

Table 2
Motivating Factors for Completing Assigned Readings

Motivating factor	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
When you are interested in the subject	741	4.6	0.7
When you must write a paper based on the reading*	741	4.4	0.8
When quizzes or tests are based on the reading material	738	4.4	0.9
When the assignment is a reasonable length*	742	4.1	0.9
When it seems relevant to the work of professional psychologists*	743	4.0	1.0
When the ideas are new to you*	743	3.9	0.9
When class discussions will be based on the reading material	742	3.8	1.0
When you will be asked if you read the material*	740	3.4	1.2
When you have a good relationship with the professor*	740	3.0	1.2
When I know my peers are reading the material*	740	2.8	1.2

Note. Each item was scored on a Likert-type rating scale ranging from 1 (*not a motivator*) to 5 (*motivates me a great deal*). An asterisk indicates that the item is rated significantly lower than preceding item ($p < .01$).

assignments for several classes were due in the same week. Students were unmotivated to read if the assignments were repetitive, such as if the material was presented in class already or through previous reading or if they were already familiar with the topic. Fatigue was also described as a barrier to completing reading assignments. Even if students have time at the end of the day to devote to reading, they tend to feel mentally exhausted. Although a student may have the intention of following through on reading, being worn out after a long day of professional work makes it difficult to focus on rigorous reading assignments and to stay awake to complete the assignment.

Discussion

Although this is the first study of its kind with graduate students in clinical psychology, the results bear similarities to other related studies. Clump and Doll (2007) found that graduate students in forensic psychology read approximately half the material before class. Similarly, students in the present study reported reading about half of their assigned reading in a thorough manner. As might be expected on the basis of selective admissions to graduate school, the doctoral students in this study report reading somewhat more than undergraduates, as reported in previous studies. Connor-Greene (2000) reported that 72% of undergraduates in a standard classroom context did not read assignments by the assigned due date, and Clump et al. (2004) reported that students read just over a quarter of the assigned readings before class. Perhaps most troubling is the historical trend reported by Burchfield and Sappington (2000), who found sharp declines in reading rates between 1981 to 1997 for undergraduate and graduate students.

Practicum responsibilities typically increase over the years of training in graduate programs in professional psychology. This requires students in early years of training to master a large amount of material before being placed in professional settings where they are providing services to clients and patients. Our results suggest that students in early years of graduate training are assigned

more—and read a greater percentage of what they are assigned—than those in later years of training. Students in practitioner–scholar programs report being assigned more reading and leaving more of it unread than those in scientist–practitioner programs. There is a small but significant relationship between the amount of reading assigned and how much is read, with a greater amount of reading being related to a smaller percentage of reading being completed. Factors that are reported to motivate students to complete reading include being interested in the subject, being required to write a paper based on the reading, and having quizzes or tests based on the reading. Factors reported to inhibit reading include having too many other academic assignments when the assigned reading is perceived as too long and having too many responsibilities outside of academics.

Competency is a central focus of professional psychology training. In addition to being an ethical standard for psychologists (APA, 2002), specific dimensions and assessment of competence are being articulated by various organizations involved in professional psychology, including the APA (APA Task Force on the Assessment of Competence in Professional Psychology, 2006), the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (2003), the NCSPP (NCSPP, 2007), and the Association of Directors of Psychology Training Clinics (Hatcher & Lassiter, 2007). As affirmed by prevailing models of training—including scientist–practitioner, practitioner–scholar, and clinical science models—an essential step toward competence is being exposed to the prevailing scientific standards of practice through academic reading. However, the demands on students' time can be substantial, especially with the current number of practicum training hours included in predoctoral training.

The tension of obtaining and maintaining competence while facing demands on one's schedule does not end with graduate school; many professional psychologists experience the same challenges of keeping up with reading as they also engage in their various professional and personal obligations. Effective professional psychologists exercise self-care and find ways to maintain personal health even in the midst of high work demands. It appears that many graduate students learn to do the same, even if it means skimming or not reading some of the material assigned. It is not clear from this research whether this should be celebrated as evidence of self-care among highly stressed graduate students or

Table 3
Hindering Factors for Completing Assigned Readings

Hindering factor	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
When you have too many other academic assignments	743	4.4	0.9
When the assigned reading is too long*	742	3.9	1.0
When you have too many responsibilities outside of academics	741	3.8	1.2
When the same material will be presented in lecture*	743	3.6	1.3
When the reading material does not interest you	742	3.5	1.1
When the reading material is not relevant to professional psychology*	741	3.3	1.2
When you have a poor relationship with the professor*	738	2.1	1.1

Note. Each item was scored on a Likert-type rating scale ranging from 1 (*does not hinder me*) to 5 (*hinders me a great deal*). An asterisk indicates that the item is rated significantly lower than preceding item ($p < .01$).

grieved as evidence that tomorrow's psychologists may not be trained as well as today's educators might hope.

Recommendations

Although this research cannot resolve the apparent tensions between competence, academic excellence, and self-care, several recommendations for students and professors can be offered. First, honest dialogue among students and professors about reading expectations can be a helpful starting point. For example, at the beginning of a class, a professor might acknowledge that students face choices regarding their reading assignments, just as professional psychologists choose which journals they will read word for word and which ones they will skim. Making expectations explicit and reasonable may encourage student reading compliance. If the average graduate student in professional psychology is reading only half the assigned material thoroughly, it may behoove professors to offer some guidance about which readings are essential and which are recommended. It may also be useful for students to learn principles for effective skimming. Most professional psychologists have become very good at skimming—it is a professional survival skill. Why not offer this skill to students?

Second, dialogue among professors about the amount of reading assigned might also be helpful. Although it is rarely acknowledged as such, professors actually compete with one another for their students' time; the primary hindering factor in students' reading is having too many other academic assignments (see Table 3). If one professor assigns an unreasonably high amount of reading and ensures that the reading is completed by assigning papers or exams on the material, then students may not complete the reading required in other classes. When professors perceive that students are taking their classes too lightly, they may respond by increasing the assigned reading. This then adds to the overall dilemma facing students and may contribute to students' reading even less thoroughly or not reading at all. It is analogous to the dilemma facing several Eastern European countries shortly after the fall of communism, when citizens could not afford to pay taxes and the governments responded to the lack of revenue by increasing the tax rates.

Third, when reading is deemed essential, there appear to be ways to increase compliance. Interest in the material is a strong motivator for students (see Table 2), which suggests that excellent teaching and enthusiasm about the assigned reading is likely to promote reading outside the classroom. Carkenord (1994) reported success with having undergraduate students complete a summary and critique of assigned readings on an index card. Professors can also assign papers and exams related to the reading to enhance compliance. Respondents in our study identified quizzes and exams to be motivating factors in completing readings (see Table 2), which is consistent with research findings among undergraduate students (Burchfield & Sappington, 2000; Connor-Greene, 2000; Sappington et al., 2002). Finally, professors can work to keep reading assignments to a reasonable length. A pithy reading list may actually promote greater learning than an exhaustive list that promotes helplessness in students.

Fourth, professors can help students identify technologies to help them master course material. For example, those who commute to practicum training placements can use audio books as they drive. Podcasts and other technologies are increasingly available to

give students and professionals alternatives to reading printed books.

Fifth, faculty in practitioner-scholar programs will want to consider the finding that their students report more assigned reading than those students in scientist-practitioner programs. This may be reasonable given the vast amount of information that clinicians must keep up with to remain current. Practitioner-scholar programs attempt to teach students a wide array of scientific findings in psychology while also preparing them to provide professional services (Murray, 2000). This puts students in practitioner-scholar programs in a difficult situation as they report having more reading assigned than students in scientist-practitioner programs and may have more practicum hours assigned as well. Faculty in practitioner-scholar programs might want to discuss ways to coordinate training to be as efficient as possible, recognizing that their students may carry a heavier workload than students in scientist-practitioner program. Though it is unlikely to be a popular option among students, faculty might also consider an additional semester or year of predoctoral training for students in practitioner-scholar programs. As practicum hours have increased, the training has become more intensive and compressed for students. This is recognized by the recent APA Council's resolution that would allow 2 years of predoctoral professional training to count toward licensure, but compressing the professional training within the predoctoral years must certainly come at a cost to students and faculty with regard to time for other academic priorities.

Limitations

Various limitations to this study should be noted. First, although the response rate was quite high among those who viewed the questionnaire, there is no way to know how many training directors sent the e-mail invitation to their students. Thus, a precise response rate cannot be computed, and the possibility of response bias must be considered. Second, the Likert-type rating scales provided a convenient and quick way for students to report their reading behaviors as well as perceived obstacles and motivators, but the rating scales compromised some precision (i.e., reducing ratio data such as number of pages read word for word to ordinal or interval data such as a Likert-type rating). Third, it is impossible to know how the reported behaviors of our respondents correspond to their actual behaviors. Graduate students in this study report reading approximately half of their assigned readings in a thorough word-for-word manner. However, these findings should be tempered with an awareness that people tend to overreport their virtues and underreport their shortcomings. Sappington et al. (2002) found actual reading to be much less than self-reported reading among a large sample of undergraduate students. Thus, the actual reading rates of graduate students may be lower than reported in this study.

Conclusion

It is useful to ask students and faculty alike, to what sort of psychologist would they send their mother or father. Typically, the conversation quickly moves to issues of competence—one who knows about empirically validated treatments and who stays current in the literature. In other words, reading behaviors in graduate school really do matter both as a way of mastering a body of

material and as habit formation for a life of professional competence; but then the conversation invariably turns toward more personal matters of balance and self-care. The psychologist deemed fit to see one's parent also is a person who sets boundaries while modeling and maintaining personal health. Here we see the virtue of temperance, of knowing when to work harder and when to put work aside. These are also the lessons of graduate school. Finding balance is one of the great challenges facing professors and students alike and one that deserves continued conversations in our training of professional psychologists.

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