



The Hamilton College — NECC Educational Consortium

The New England Center for Children is an award-winning program serving about 200 students from 18 months through young adulthood, who have been diagnosed with autism or other developmental disorders. NECC provides a variety of services, ranging from individualized instruction focusing on social and basic skills to traditional elementary and secondary school classes. Instructional techniques are firmly based on empirical research on conditioning and learning.

Instructors are carefully supervised as they learn to collect data to describe each student's behavior so that progress can be documented and analyzed, and learn to apply the principles of instrumental conditioning in this newly-renovated, state-of-the-art instructional setting.

Not only a school for children with autism, NECC is also an internationally recognized center for professional training in psychology and special education. It is a primary site for the Masters in Applied Behavior Analysis students from Northeastern University's Department of Counseling Psychology. Simmons College students in the graduate program in Intensive Special Needs also receive coursework and supervised teaching experience at NECC. All courses are offered on-site by the psychologists at the Center, all of whom have extensive background in applied behavior analysis.

Finally, NECC supports many ongoing research projects focused on the education of children with autism. The director of research has a joint appointment with the Shriver Mental Retardation Research Center, and all of the PhD psychologists have active research programs.

The Hamilton/NECC Program

Students from Hamilton and associated colleges who are interested in applied psychology and the education of students with special needs have the opportunity to spend either the fall or spring semester at the New England Center for Children, in Southborough, MA, just 20 miles from downtown Boston.

NECC offers courses in Applied Behavior Analysis and provides supervised experience working with children with autism. Interested students should consult with Jonathan Vaughan in the Department of Psychology. Applications should be directed to Prof. Vaughan in September and February for spring- and fall-semester participation, respectively.

Students admitted to the program pay 80% of Hamilton tuition and full room and board. In Southborough they live in houses or apartments provided by NECC, taking lunches at the Center and receiving a stipend for their other meals. Many juniors combine the fall or spring semester at NECC with foreign study during the other semester.

Because of the intensity of the training and the close supervision involved in this program, up to five students (typically juniors) will be selected to participate each semester. Finalists will have a telephone interview with a member of the Center staff as part of the selection process.

Interested students are encouraged to visit the Center (the Psychology Department takes a field trip to NECC each year) to meet with NECC representatives at on-campus information sessions, and to view a videotape about the NECC program.

For further information, see <http://www.hamilton.edu/academics/abroad/necc/index.html>, or contact Jonathan Vaughan, Hamilton Psychology Department, at (315) 859-4719 or jvaughan@hamilton.edu.

The Program and Course Descriptions

Students earn 4 Hamilton course credits by electing the following course for two credits:

EDU 395N **Clinical Teaching Intensive Special Needs**

and two of the following six courses:

PSY 295N **Analysis of Behavior: Principles and Classroom Applications**

PSY 296N **Programmed Learning**

PSY 327N **Behavior Assessment**

PSY 328N **Research Methods and Design in Applied Behavior Analysis**

PSY 331N **Advanced Learning**

PSY 348N **Community-Based Treatment**

PSY 396N **Systematic Inquiry in Applied Research**

PSY 295N Analysis of Behavior: Principles and Classroom Applications. Introduction to behavior modification and operant techniques, including clarification of more commonly used terms, with specific reference to application in the classroom. Overview of procedures and practices that have been successful in schools, communities and work settings. Field work required.

PSY 296N Programmed Learning. Reviews the history and theoretical and experimental bases of programmed instruction and errorless learning. Emphasizes the detailed analysis of stimulus control—its measurement and ways to produce it.

PSY 327N Behavior Assessment. Provides an in-depth review of observation and measurement techniques in applied behavior analysis. Introduces key elements of behavioral assessment including systematic assessment of preference, and assessment of behavior function through indirect methods, direct methods, and systematic manipulations.

PSY 328N Research Methods and Design in Applied Behavior Analysis. Intensive study of single-subject designs in operant conditioning and applied behavior analysis research.

PSY 331N Advanced Learning. Covers theoretical underpinnings of operant and respondent conditioning, with emphasis on relating principles of behavior to problems of reinforcement, motivation, comparative psychophysics, and physiological psychology.

PSY 348N Community-Based Treatment. An overview of clinical and research studies related to community-based treatment, with an emphasis on the development of criteria for program evaluation. Students will participate in site visits of treatment delivery sites.

PSY 396N Systematic Inquiry in Applied Research. Requires each student to collect a comprehensive bibliography on a significant topic in applied behavior research and to complete a thorough review via written and oral presentations. Emphasizes the integration and analysis of experimental findings and theoretical foundations of the research area, the critical evaluation of current research and the identification of potentially fruitful future work.

EDUC 395N Clinical Teaching Intensive Special Needs Each student is assigned full-time teaching responsibilities, under supervision, in a setting with learners with intensive special needs. Includes extensive practicum experience with a focus on teaching and case management. Papers and attendance at weekly seminars required. Course available to students enrolled in the cooperative program at the New England Center for Children; earns two course credits with only one course credit counting toward requirements for the minor in education studies. Evaluated Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory.

Note: These courses are offered only at the New England Center for Children as part of the Cooperative Education Program; not all courses are offered every semester. Students will be assigned to courses when they arrive at NECC. For Hamilton Psychology concentrators, all PSY courses count as electives for the concentration; EDU395 counts for college credit but not toward the Psychology concentration. EDU395 counts as one credit toward the Education Studies minor.