

FACULTY INTEREST SHEET: D. G. Finkelman

A. Psychology and the Law

There are numerous points of intersection between the fields of psychology and law. Past SMP's I have supervised in this area have included the following: An analysis of sex offender legislation; a comparison of the effects of various types of child custody arrangements; issues involving juvenile transfer (transferring juveniles charged with serious crimes to the adult criminal court system); and the use of crisis negotiation by police departments.

Most projects have involved a combination of library research and surveys or interviews, but other methods could be employed as well.

B Topics in abnormal and clinical psychology

A variety of projects can be undertaken under this heading. Examples of past projects include: Comparing the parenting styles of parents of children with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) with parents of non-ADHD children; the psychology of domestic violence; and cross-cultural perspectives on mental disorder. As above, a variety of methods or approaches could be used.

C. History of Psychology

"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it," in the famous words of the philosopher George Santayana. SMP topics can emerge from consideration of questions like the following: How has contemporary thinking and research in psychology been shaped by historical forces? What are the links between contemporary and historical approaches to psychological problems and issues? What lessons can we learn from the successes and failures of the past? These and related questions are the kind that might be addressed in a historically-oriented SMP.