



Students in the Somatic Studies Specialization are supported to develop as scholars—to become skilled in the teaching, research, and community service that engaged scholarship demands, and to take those skills into the world in a meaningful way. Beginning in the first year of study, the fieldwork component offers an important opportunity to practice these skills and to become more deeply immersed in the issues and communities that the student feels called to serve. Through a process of engaged mentorship, students work in small groups alongside a faculty member who provides both formal and informal advising. Examples of fieldwork projects include embodied self-care strategies for community service workers exposed to trauma, creating mandalas with children involved in the legal system, and developing somatic and holistic approaches to cancer support. These fieldwork projects may then evolve into dissertation research at the doctoral level.

M.A./Ph.D. in Depth Psychology

with Specialization in Somatic Studies

The Somatic Studies Specialization is uniquely grounded in the tradition of depth psychology with its emphasis on the unconscious, imagery, archetypes, and dreams. From that ground, students in the program explore the intersections between body and psyche, connect image to sensation through active imagination, and follow the dance of their dreams. They study the body's role in the process of individuation and consider how physical symptoms may speak for the soul.

From a somatic perspective, body experience is always understood holistically, as part of a larger context in which that experience becomes meaningful. For example, a particular sensation or body movement may be considered in relation to psychological issues, physical health, interpersonal relationships, social and cultural contexts, spirituality, and the environment. The program incorporates an interdisciplinary range of practices and perspectives, including neuroscience, cultural studies, somatic education, and the expressive arts. Students are drawn from similarly diverse backgrounds, including counseling, education, health care, and bodywork.

Graduates of the Somatic Studies Specialization work at an advanced level in their chosen field; for example, becoming trainers or supervisors in education, social services, or health care. Other students publish books, start community non-profits, or develop consulting practices. Graduates may also choose to pursue academic careers, teaching in higher education or engaging in post-doctoral research. Each in their own way, students bring a highly developed understanding of the body/psyche intersection to the work they choose to pursue.

The program includes a series of research courses that develop students' literacy and skill in research methods, including those forms of inquiry most commonly used in somatic depth psychology. Courses in scholarly writing and dissertation development support students to engage in the task of developing a research question, conducting an original study, and writing a doctoral dissertation.

By infusing depth psychology with a somatic perspective, students learn to work deeply and skillfully at the intersection of body and soul across a range of professions. The interdisciplinary focus of the Somatic Studies Specialization is grounded in embodied learning, fieldwork practice, and original research that illuminates for each student how the felt experience and understanding of the body can inform their work.



~ RAE JOHNSON, Specialization Chair

ACADEMIC FORMAT

Students in the Somatic Studies Specialization come to campus nine times each year for three years. Each campus session consists of three days every month during the fall, winter, and spring quarters. During residential sessions, students attend lectures and seminars, engage in experiential and embodied learning, and have time for reflection and research in the Pacifica Library and Opus Archives. Students engage in off-campus fieldwork in the summer quarters of their first and second years of study.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

FIRST YEAR

Fall

Introduction to Depth Psychology – DPS 730, 2 Units
Introduction to Somatic Studies – DPS 725, 2 Units
Somatic Dreamwork – DPS 770, 2 Units
Integrative Seminar I – DPS 791, 2/3 Unit

Winter

Foundations in Fieldwork – DPS 900, 2 Units
Marion Woodman and the Jungian Tradition – DPS 761, 2 Units
Embodied Depth Group Work – DPS 712, 2 Units
Integrative Seminar II – DPS 792, 2/3 Unit

Spring

Scholarly Writing and Publication – DPS 812, 2 Units
Neuroscience and Somatic Depth Psychology I – DPS 720, 2 Units
Freud, Reich, and the Psychoanalytic Tradition – DPS 760, 2 Units
Integrative Seminar III – DPS 793, 2/3 Unit

Summer

Summer Fieldwork I – DPS 905, 4 Units
Depth Transformational Practices – DPS 997a, 2.5 Units

SECOND YEAR

Fall

Foundations for Research in Somatic Depth Psychology – DPS 782, 2 Units
Ecopsychology: The Body on the Earth – DPS 732, 2 Units
Presenting the Fieldwork Experience – DPS 880, 2 Units
Integrative Seminar IV – DPS 794, 2/3 Unit

Winter

Embodied Alchemy – DPS 750, 2 Units
Quantitative Research Methods – DPS 883, 2 Units
Archetypal Psychology – DPS 762, 2 Units
Integrative Seminar V – DPS 795, 2/3 Unit

Spring

Body and Soul in the Expressive Arts – DPS 753, 2 Units
Qualitative Research Methods – DPS 884, 2 Units
Trauma and Resilience – DPS 850, 2 Units
Integrative Seminar VI – DPS 796, 2/3 Unit
Written Comprehensive Examination – DPS 892, 0 Units

Summer

Summer Fieldwork II – DPS 906, 4 Units
Depth Transformational Practices – DPS 997b, 2.5 Units

THIRD YEAR

Fall

Relational Embodiment – DPS 851, 2 Units
Neuroscience and Somatic Depth Psychology II – DPS 721, 2 Units
Human Sexuality – DPS 925, 2 Units
Integrative Seminar VII – DPS 797, 2/3 Unit
Dissertation Development A – DPS 932A, 2/3 Unit

Winter

The Body in Literature – DPS 950, 2 Units
Non-Western and Indigenous Healing Practices – DPS 952, 2 Units
Depth Psychology and the Sacred – DPS 920, 2 Units
Dissertation Development B – DPS 932B, 2/3 Unit
Integrative Seminar VIII – DPS 798, 2/3 Unit

Spring

Body, Soul, and Social Justice – DPS 754, 2 Units
Frontiers of Somatic Depth Psychology – DPS 955, 2 Units
Integration of Theory, Practice, and Teaching (Oral Comprehensive Examination) – DPS 992, 2 Units
Dissertation Development C – DPS 932C, 2/3 Unit
Integrative Seminar IX – DPS 799, 2/3 Unit

Continuing

Dissertation Writing – DPS 980, 15 Units

This curriculum may vary depending upon evolving academic needs. The required fourth and fifth years of study focus on reading, research, and dissertation writing.

*The body is a multilingual being.
It speaks through its color and its temperature, the
flush of recognition, the glow of love, the ash of pain,
the heat of arousal, the coldness of nonconviction...
It speaks through the leaping of the heart,
the falling of the spirits, the pit at the center,
and rising hope.*

~Clarissa Pinkola Estés

This degree program is accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC).
For gainful employment information, visit pacifica.edu/gainfulemployment

M.A./Ph.D. in Depth Psychology

with Specialization in Somatic Studies

The term “somatic” was coined by Thomas Hanna, an existential phenomenological philosopher, in the early 1970s. Although many of the approaches now considered “somatic” predate this term by hundreds of years, they share a common focus: working with the lived, subjective experience of the body. “Somatic studies” is an umbrella term that includes somatic psychology (working with the experience of the body to support mental health), somatic movement therapy (working with the experience of the body to promote improved movement functioning), and many forms of health and wellness. A somatic perspective also flourishes

within the fields of education, philosophy, sociology, anthropology, and performance studies.

Our research-based program offers students the opportunity to work within this broad interdisciplinary umbrella while retaining a clear focus on depth psychology. In some ways, this program is more tightly focused than other graduate programs (for example, those in somatic counseling psychology), in that it works within a single approach to psychological inquiry. In other ways, it is broader; the somatic studies emphasis allows us to draw from a range of ideas and practices not typically addressed in clinical somatic psychology programs.



The body says what words cannot.

~Martha Graham

STUDENTS IN THE SOMATIC STUDIES SPECIALIZATION:

Read, interpret, and critically reflect upon the theories and traditions of depth psychology, remembering the body and recalling its voice.

Develop the capacity and skill to maintain awareness of and connection to the unconscious.

Learn techniques and practices of dream work, body movement, and active imagination as transformative practices.

Develop literacy in the emerging domain of neuroscience as it applies to depth psychology and the mind/body connection.

Develop skills in research and writing that articulate and promote new theoretical directions and practical applications.

Participate with like-minded scholars and practitioners in an emerging field.

Create a professional portfolio to enhance existing career skills.

Engage in transformative practices and fieldwork projects.

There is deep wisdom within our very flesh, if we can only come to our senses and feel it.

~Elizabeth A. Behnke

The emerging paradigm for the 21st century requires individuals who can think across professional and disciplinary boundaries, fully embody a holistic and integrative perspective in their area of interest, and know how to harness their vision and energy to tackle real-world problems. In particular, we believe that leaders in this new paradigm will have the capacity to work through the body to tend the soul of the world. This program positions students to create and fulfill these leadership roles by:

Providing them with foundational knowledge in depth psychology and interdisciplinary somatic studies.

Engaging them in transformative practice and fieldwork projects specifically tailored to their interests and expertise.

Teaching skills that strengthen their professional effectiveness, and helping them to identify and research issues with the potential to change how we live in the world.



The program is mentally challenging and personally transformative. It's really a gift to be able to be here between the ocean and the mountains with the most incredible teachers and curriculum.

NADINE MACALUSO, PH.D.

Depth Psychology Graduate



The neuroscience, which I had almost been intimidated by, was presented in such a way that it became exciting, I was really able to embrace it and engage with it, and have been able to embody it and bring it into my own life.

ELAINE CLARK, PH.D.

Depth Psychology Graduate