COMMUNITY PSYCHOLOGY
AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Graduate Program Head
Holly Angelique
Program Code
CPSC
Campus(es)
Harrisburg (M.A.)
Degrees Conferred
Master of Arts (M.A.)
The Graduate Faculty
View (https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/index.cfm?searchType=fac&prog=CPSC)

The graduate program in Community Psychology emphasizes planned social change, and is based on both sociology and psychology. The program equips students with skills useful in coping with the multifaceted problems facing communities. Students learn:

a. to assess problems at the level of communities or organizations,
b. to plan and implement possible solutions to these problems, and
c. to evaluate the effectiveness of the solutions.

Learning takes place both in courses and in a master's project that entails fieldwork and the writing of a master's paper.

To act as a change agent, the student must be aware of contemporary community needs, along with the impact of the community structure upon its individual members and the techniques best suited to initiate productive changes. After completing this interdisciplinary program, the graduate should be able to approach problems with a more integrated point of view and work cooperatively with community individuals and agencies toward practical solutions. Problems related to crime, education, child and family development, employment, the lack of effective social power, and other factors affecting psychological well being are approached from bases in community service agencies or informal community groups. The majority of students work full-time in agencies or governmental units. To accommodate these working students, 500-level graduate courses are scheduled in the evening.

Degree Requirements

Master of Arts (M.A.)

Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-600 Research Degree Requirements. (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies)

An important part of this degree is a master's project, made up a total of 9 credits, comprising from 3 to 6 credits of Practicum CMPSY 522, and from 3 to 6 credits of Research CMPSY 594. The project is planned in the context of the course CMPSY 521; it is supervised by a master's committee of Graduate Faculty. The particular mix of practicum and research is worked out by the student in consultation with the faculty. The variable mix of practicum and of research credits results in the student's being able to choose course work that emphasizes study in the area in which she or he needs most skill-development. In the usual case, a student with a strong background in fieldwork would be asked to emphasize research in her or his master's project, and a student with a strong research background, but with limited fieldwork, would be asked to emphasize the practicum. The output of CMPSY 522 is a practicum; the output of the research course CMPSY 594 is a required master's paper of at least 3 credits. The master's paper may be based on the field experience. Students often choose to structure their master's paper around a specific community research problem.
Part-time students who are able to take two courses at a time can complete the degree in seven to eight semesters. Since the processes of designing a master’s project and of writing a master’s paper are labor-intensive and frequently take more time than the student expects, even full-time students will often take six or more semesters to complete the degree.

To qualify for the degree, 36 credits are needed, 24 of which must be at the 500 level. There is a sequence of substantive courses, starting with CMPSY 500.

To be eligible, students must complete the coursework and requirements outlined in the following chart, and must also meet the remaining requirements specified by the Director of Graduate Studies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMPSY 500</td>
<td>Theories and Issues in Community Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMPSY 510</td>
<td>Change Processes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMPSY 511</td>
<td>Social Impacts on Psychological Functioning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMPSY 519</td>
<td>Research Methods I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMPSY 520</td>
<td>Research Methods II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMPSY 521</td>
<td>Roles and Methods in Community Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Electives**
Select 9 elective credits 9

**Culminating Experience**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CMPSY 522</td>
<td>Practicum</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CMPSY 594</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>3-6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 36

**Student Aid**
Graduate assistantships available to students in this program and other forms of student aid are described in the Tuition & Funding (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-funding) section of The Graduate School's website. Students on graduate assistantships must adhere to the course load limits (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gsad/gsad-500/gsad-501-credit-loads-graduate-assistants) set by The Graduate School.

**Courses**
Graduate courses carry numbers from 500 to 699 and 800 to 899. Advanced undergraduate courses numbered between 400 and 499 may be used to meet some graduate degree requirements when taken by graduate students. Courses below the 400 level may not. A graduate student may register for or audit these courses in order to make up deficiencies or to fill in gaps in previous education but not to meet requirements for an advanced degree.

Community Psychology (CMPSY) Course List (https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/cmpsy)

**Learning Outcomes**

1. **KNOW:** Graduates will be able to demonstrate conceptual understanding and proficiency in community psychology and social change at the level required to contribute to the discipline.
2. **APPLY/CREATE:** Graduates will be able to use disciplinary methods and techniques to apply knowledge or create new knowledge in order to answer significant questions having real-world applications to community psychology and social change.
3. **COMMUNICATE:** Graduates will be able to effectively communicate research and practice applicable to the field in formal presentations and in written works to scholars in the field.
4. **CRITICAL THINKING:** Graduates will be able to critically conceptualize and define the ecological aspects of a social problem.
5. **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE:** Graduates will demonstrate a commitment to active citizenship including engagement in professional service and society at large.

**Contact**

**Campus** Harrisburg
**Graduate Program Head** Holly L Angelique
**Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)** Kamini Grahame
**or Professor-in-Charge (PIC)**

**Program Contact** Rebecca K Altland
Penn State Harrisburg - Swatara Building
777 W. Harrisburg Pike
Middletown PA 17057-489
rka12@psu.edu
(717) 948-6034