PSYCHOLOGY

Graduate Program Head
Melvin M. Mark

Program Code
PSY

Campus(es)
University Park (Ph.D., M.S.)

Degrees Conferred
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)
Master of Science (M.S.)
Dual-Title Ph.D. in Psychology and Language Science
Dual-Title Ph.D. and M.S. in Psychology and Women's Studies

The Graduate Faculty
View (https://secure.gradsch.psu.edu/gpms/index.cfm?searchType=fac&prog=PSYCH)

The graduate Psychology program is characterized by highly individualized study leading to the Ph.D. degree. Emphasis is placed on research, teaching, and professional career development. Each student is associated with one of the six program areas offered in the department: Clinical (including Child Clinical), Cognitive, Developmental, Psychobiology, Industrial/Organizational, Social.

An individual's particular pattern of interests dictates in part the course of study followed. Within all areas, research is an integral part of study; usually, the research is empirical in focus, but it may be applied or basic, depending on the problem of interest.

The department has laboratories, computer facilities, darkroom, and shop, and students have access to the large resources of the University, which include excellent computation facilities and a large open-stack library. Opportunities for practicum experience are available; e.g., clinical students find practicum in local mental health centers, while industrial students find placement in appropriate business or industrial settings.

Other Relevant Information
The Department of Psychology makes every effort to recruit and train minority psychologists. Support for minority students is coordinated by the department, the Graduate School Minority Graduate Scholars Award Program, and the American Psychological Association Minority Fellowship Program. In addition, the department often has funded minority students through minority training programs and special minority research programs.

Admission Requirements
Applicants apply for admission to the program via the Graduate School application for admission (http://gradschool.psu.edu/prospective-students/how-to-apply). Requirements listed here are in addition to Graduate Council policies listed under GCAC-300 Admissions (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies).

Scores from the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) verbal and quantitative portions are required; scores from the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) are optional. All applicants who were psychology majors as undergraduates should provide scores from the advanced psychology (subject) GRE test. Applicants with superior undergraduate (particularly junior and senior years) or graduate grade-point averages will be considered for admission. Although a major in psychology is not required, applicants should have a broad undergraduate background that includes 12 credits in psychology. Undergraduate study in psychology should include a course in statistics and a psychological methodology course.

The language of instruction at Penn State is English. English proficiency test scores (TOEFL/IELTS) may be required for international applicants. See GCAC-305 Admission Requirements for International Students (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-300/gcac-305-admission-requirements-international-students) for more information.

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

The psychology department does not have a graduate program designed for students seeking only the master's degree. A master's thesis, or the department's equivalent (an acceptable published journal article), is required for the Ph.D. degree in Psychology. Usually, but not always, the master's thesis centers on an empirical research topic. The typical thesis involves:

- a literature review,
- data collection,
- analysis, and
- discussion.

A master's degree is not awarded unless a thesis is submitted to the Graduate School. Students must successfully propose a thesis study by the end of the second year and have successfully defended a thesis by the end of their third year in the program.

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

All students in their first year of residency must satisfactorily complete the department's English proficiency requirement (PSY 501).

Students must complete (within their first 60 graduate credits for students without previous graduate credit) 6 departmentally approved graduate credits in statistics with a grade of B or better. Students must complete 18 credits in a suitably selected major area; majors usually are defined by one of the six program areas. In addition to the major area credits, students must complete a minimum of 12 credits outside the major area. Two options exist for completing these 12 credits:

- completing four courses in APA-recommended breadth areas, or
- completing course work in a particular area of expertise outside the major.

Some areas may have additional recommended or required courses as well. The Ph.D. comprehensive examination must be taken by the time 70 graduate credits are earned, or prior to the student's fourth year.
in residence, whichever comes first. The department has no foreign language requirement.

**Applied Linguistics Option**

The program offers an option in Applied Linguistics which includes 18 credits in APLNG/LING offered in the Linguistics and Applied Language Studies program. Underpinning the option is the synthesis of knowledge related to how language is acquired, understood, and spoken by children and adults who use one or more languages.

**Dual-Titles**

**Dual-Title Ph.D. in Psychology and Language Science**

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-208 Dual-Title Graduate Degree Programs (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-208-dual-title-graduate-degree-programs).

Graduate students with research and educational interests in Psychology and Language Science may apply to Psychology and Language Science Ph.D. Graduate Program. The goal of the dual-title degree Psychology and Language Science is to enable graduate students from Psychology to acquire the knowledge and skills of their major area of specialization in Psychology, while at the same time gaining the perspective and methods of the Language Sciences.

**Admission Requirements**

To pursue a dual-title degree under this program, the student must first apply to the Graduate School and be admitted to the Psychology graduate program. Upon admission to the Psychology program and with a recommendation from a Language Science program faculty member in the Department of Psychology, the student’s application will be forwarded to a committee that will include:

- the Director of the Linguistics program,
- one of the Co-Directors of the Center for Language Science, and
- a third elected faculty member within the Center for Language Science.

All three committee members will be affiliated with the program in Linguistics. Upon the recommendation of this committee, the student will be admitted to the dual-title degree program in Language Science. Refer to the Admission Requirements section of the Language Science Bulletin page (http://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/language-science). Doctoral students must be admitted into the dual-title degree program in Language Science prior to taking the qualifying examination in their primary graduate program.

**Degree Requirements**

- Two Language Science proseminar courses (LING 521 and LING 522; 6 credits).
- One 3 credit research internship with a Language Science faculty mentor from an outside area. The 3 credit internship required by the Psychology program may satisfy both the Psychology requirement and the Language Science requirement (for 6 total credits of internship to be completed with two faculty members from the Language Science program).
- Students will choose one course among the following: CSD 596, GER 596, LING 596, PSY 596, SPAN 596.

To qualify for the dual-title degree, students must satisfy the degree requirements for the degree they are enrolled in Psychology. In addition, students must complete the degree requirements for the dual-title in Language Science, listed on the Language Science Bulletin page (http://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/language-science). Final course selection is determined by the student in consultation with their dual-title program advisers and their major program advisers. Students who already hold a master’s degree from another institution may petition to have equivalent course credits accepted.

The qualifying examination committee for the dual-title Ph.D. degree will be composed of Graduate Faculty from Psychology and must include at least one Graduate Faculty member from the Language Science program. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs’ Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. There will be a single qualifying examination, containing elements of both Psychology and Language Science. Dual-title graduate degree students may require an additional semester to fulfill requirements for both areas of study and, therefore, the qualifying examination may be delayed one semester beyond the normal period allowable.

In addition to the general Graduate Council requirements for dissertation committees (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/phd-dissertation-committee-formation), the dissertation committee of a Psychology and Language Science dual-title Ph.D. student must include at least one member of the Language Science Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs’ Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. If the chair of the dissertation committee is not also a member of the Graduate Faculty in Language Science, the member of the committee representing Language Science must be appointed as co-chair. The Language Science representative on the student’s dissertation committee will develop questions for and participate in the evaluation of the comprehensive examination.

Students in the dual-title program are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that is approved in advance by their dissertation committee and reflects their original research and education in Psychology and Language Science. Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense) to earn the Ph.D. degree. The dissertation must be accepted by the dissertation committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.

**Dual-Title M.S. and Ph.D. in Psychology and Women’s Studies**

Requirements listed here are in addition to requirements listed in GCAC-208 Dual-Title Graduate Degree Programs (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-200/gcac-208-dual-title-graduate-degree-programs).

**Admission Requirements**

Students must apply and be admitted to the graduate program in Psychology and The Graduate School before they can apply for admission to the dual-title degree program. After admission to their primary program, students must apply for admission to and meet the admissions requirements of the Women’s Studies dual-title program. Refer to the Admission Requirements section of the Women’s Studies Bulletin page (http://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/womens-studies). Doctoral students must be admitted into the dual-title degree program in Women’s Studies prior to taking the qualifying examination in their primary graduate program.

**Degree Requirements**

To qualify for the dual-title degree, students must satisfy the degree requirements for the degree they are enrolled in Psychology. In addition,
students must complete the degree requirements for the dual-title in Women's Studies, listed on the Women's Studies Bulletin page (http://bulletins.psu.edu/graduate/programs/majors/womens-studies).

The qualifying examination committee for the dual-title Ph.D. degree will be composed of Graduate Faculty from Psychology and must include at least one Graduate Faculty member from the Women’s Studies program. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs’ Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. There will be a single qualifying examination, containing elements of both Psychology and Women's Studies. Dual-title graduate degree students may require an additional semester to fulfill requirements for both areas of study and, therefore, the qualifying examination may be delayed one semester beyond the normal period allowable.

In addition to the general Graduate Council requirements for dissertation committees (http://gradschool.psu.edu/graduate-education-policies/gcac/gcac-600/phd-dissertation-committee-formation), the dissertation committee of a Psychology and Women's Studies dual-title Ph.D. student must include at least two members of the Women’s Studies Graduate Faculty. Faculty members who hold appointments in both programs’ Graduate Faculty may serve in a combined role. If the chair of the dissertation committee is not also a member of the Graduate Faculty in Women's Studies, the member of the committee representing Women’s Studies must be appointed as co-chair. The Women’s Studies representative on the student’s dissertation committee will develop questions for and participate in the evaluation of the comprehensive examination.

Students in the dual-title program are required to write and orally defend a dissertation on a topic that is approved in advance by their dissertation committee and reflects their original research and education in Psychology and Women's Studies. Upon completion of the doctoral dissertation, the candidate must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense) to earn the Ph.D. degree. The dissertation must be accepted by the dissertation committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.

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.

Psychology (PSY) Course List (https://bulletins.psu.edu/university-course-descriptions/graduate/psy)

Learning Outcomes

1. **Scientific Knowledge.** Students will demonstrate (a) integrated understanding of major psychological concepts, theories, and scientific foundations across multiple disciplines of psychology and (b) the ability to apply psychological theories and methods in their research and/or practice.

2. **Critical Thinking.** Students will demonstrate (a) critical thinking skills in the evaluation and critique of empirical and theoretical research (in their specific area of specialization) (b) the ability to identify questions and solve issues in scholarly and professional environments (c) competence in formulating one's own scholarly opinions based on the integration of knowledge from diverse psychological findings.

3. **Communication.** Students will demonstrate the ability to (a) communicate (verbal and written format) effectively in scholarly and professional environments (b) defend their ideas to others in research and practice (c) disseminate their knowledge and skills to enhance psychological awareness to the general population.

4. **Research Skills.** Students will demonstrate the ability to (a) critically analyze and integrate diverse research findings. (b) systematically identify and frame research questions, design a research study, analyze the resulting qualitative/quantitative data, and draw appropriate conclusions using scientific methodology and statistical analysis (c) organize their findings in written format, and/or present the findings in academic presentations or professional meetings.

5. **Diversity and Ethical Considerations.** Students will demonstrate (a) awareness of, and ability to work professionally with diverse individuals, groups, and communities, who represent various cultural and personal backgrounds and characteristics (b) knowledge and application of ethical principles related to the responsible conduct of research, as well as to scientific and professional activities with individuals, groups, and organizations.

Contact

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<th>Campus</th>
<th>University Park</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Graduate Program Head</td>
<td>Melvin Michael Mark</td>
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<tr>
<td>Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) or Professor-in-Charge (PIC)</td>
<td>Alicia Ann Grandey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Contact</td>
<td>Sherrilee B Gilliland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>125A Bruce V. Moore Building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>University Park PA 16802</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:sbg4@psu.edu">sbg4@psu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(814) 863-1721</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Website</td>
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