

PSYCHOLOGY

Degree Requirements

Master of Science (M.S.)

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

The psychology department does not admit for the terminal master's degree. A minimum of 30 credits at the 400, 500, 600, or 800 level is required, with least 18 credits at the 500 and 600 level, combined. Core courses that must be completed are PSY 501 Seminar in General Psychology (1 cr.), PSY 507 Analysis of Psychological Data I (3 cr.), and PSY 508 Analysis of Psychological Data II (3 cr.). A master's thesis or a departmentally approved satisfactory scholarly paper is required and both usually involve original empirical research. Students who choose to complete a thesis must take a minimum of 6 credits of thesis research (PSY 600 or PSY 610). Students who choose to compete a scholarly paper must enroll in PSY 596 and must complete at least 18 credits in 500-level courses. Students should successfully propose a master's thesis or scholarly paper by the end of the first year and should successfully defend the thesis/paper by the end of their second year in the program. For students who choose to complete a thesis, the thesis must be accepted by the advisers and/or committee members, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School.

Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.)

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

All students must satisfactorily complete the department's English proficiency requirement as demonstrated by oral and written products in a section of PSY 501 (First-Year Orientation).

Students must complete, in the first 60 credits they accrue in the program, 6 credits in PSY 507 Analysis of Psychological Data I (3 cr.) and PSY 508 Analysis of Psychological Data II (3 cr.) 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 five program areas noted on the Overview tab. The courses that satisfy the major area requirement can be chosen from a list of approved courses maintained by the graduate program office. In addition to the major area credits, students must complete a minimum of 12 credits outside the major area. Three options exist for completing these 12 credits: (1) completing four courses in APA-recommended breadth areas, (2) completing course work in all four of the other areas outside the major area, or (3) completing course work and doing a project in a particular area of expertise (a "minor") outside the major. Some areas may have additional recommended or required courses as well. All students must be involved with research supervised by at least two different faculty members. Students must pass the Ph.D. comprehensive examination by the time they have earned 70 graduate credits, or prior to their fourth year in the program, whichever comes first. Finally, the doctoral dissertation should be proposed and defended by the end of the fifth year, or in the case of students needing to meet accreditation or dual-title Ph.D. requirements, by the end of the sixth year. The dissertation must be accepted by the Ph.D. committee, the head of the graduate program, and the Graduate School, and the student must pass a final oral examination (the dissertation defense).