

# PSYCHOLOGY, MS

The Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences offers two graduate degrees: the PhD in Psychology and the MS in Psychology. Study is available in the following concentrations, which we refer to as programs.

## PhD in Psychology (includes earning the MS)

- Clinical Psychology program (accredited by the American Psychological Association)
- Health Psychology program
- Neuroscience program<sup>1</sup>

## MS in Psychology

- Terminal Health Psychology program.

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the Department of Biological Sciences and several other departments also offer opportunities for doctoral study in neuroscience.

All programs train students in the facts, methodologies, and theories of psychology, with special emphasis on developing research competence. The department has well-equipped laboratories and an on-campus training clinic. The city of Milwaukee provides additional opportunities for training at hospitals, social service agencies, and the Medical College of Wisconsin.

Note that all of the department's doctoral programs are actually combined MS/PhD programs, although students who already have a master's degree in psychology or neuroscience are also encouraged to apply. If admitted, they will not be required to earn the MS at UWM if their master's degree included an empirically based thesis.

Transfer from a PhD program to any another PhD program in our department requires reapplication.

Although it is possible for the academic portion of the doctoral program to be completed in four years, most students require five or more years. Doctoral students are expected to be enrolled full time and to earn their PhDs within seven years of initial enrollment, exclusive of the one-year internship required in the clinical program.

Students seeking only master's-level training may apply to the health psychology specialization. It is possible to complete requirements for the MS in two or three years of full-time study. Part-time study is allowable, as long as the MS is earned within seven years of enrolling.

The department refers students interested in Counseling Psychology or School Psychology to the Department of Educational Psychology.

## Admission Requirements

### Application Deadlines

Application deadlines vary by program, please review the application deadline chart (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/program-deadlines/>) for specific programs. Other important dates and deadlines can be found by using the One Stop calendars (<https://uwm.edu/onestop/dates-and-deadlines/>).

## Admission

Application must be made to the Graduate School.

Applicants are admitted only at the beginning of each academic year. Applications must be submitted by December 1. Important: It is essential to consult the department's website for important information, including the departmental admissions brochure (<http://uwm.edu/psychology/graduate/application/>).

An applicant must meet Graduate School (<http://uwm.edu/graduateschool/admission/>) requirements plus the following departmental requirements to be considered for admission to the program:

1. Completion of an undergraduate major in psychology (or neuroscience).
2. Receipt of positive recommendation by the Departmental Admissions Committee.

Admission is based on evaluation of an applicant's entire record. In evaluating each application, the Admissions Committee examines such factors as grades, research record (e.g., research apprenticeships, publications, presentations, and senior or honors theses), and letters of recommendation.

Students without an undergraduate major in psychology or neuroscience are welcome to apply, and will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. If they are offered admission, they will be informed about any additional courses that would need to be taken at UWM (in addition to the required graduate coursework) to fill gaps in training.

As part of their doctoral requirements, PhD students must earn a master's degree in psychology that includes a thesis derived from empirical research; they do this by fulfilling the requirements of the "General Psychology Track" for the MS degree while enrolled simultaneously in the PhD program. An exception is that students who already have earned a master's degree based on an empirical thesis in psychology or neuroscience from another college or university are exempt from the requirement of earning the MS in our department.

## Credits and Courses

### General Psychology Track

Students in the general psychology track must be simultaneously enrolled in the doctoral program. The minimum requirement for the MS is 30 graduate credits of psychology, 24 of which must be earned in formal coursework (excluding practica) and 6 of which must be earned through an acceptable thesis.

### Thesis

The student, under the direction of an advisor, must develop an acceptable thesis based on empirical research. The student must pass an oral examination in defense of the thesis.

### Time Limit

The student must complete all degree requirements within three years of initial enrollment.

### Specialization in Health Psychology

Health psychology is concerned with the psychological variables that influence physical health and illness. The MS program in health psychology offers training in research and theories relevant to health promotion. The program of study consists of core health psychology

coursework, research coursework, psychology breadth coursework, and an optional field placement. Current research topics include gender and health, cancer prevention and health education, reproductive health and STD prevention, patient advocacy and self-care behaviors, the effects of stress and mechanisms of coping with it, and child abuse prevention. Research is conducted in the laboratory as well as in clinical settings, and many members of the faculty have strong ties to the Milwaukee community.

### Course of Study

The course of study consists of at least 36 credits, distributed as follows:

| Code   | Title   | Credits   |
|--|---|-----------|
| <b>Core Health Psychology Courses (12 Credits)</b> |   |           |
| PSYCH 955  | Seminar in Social Psychology and Health   | 3         |
| Select three of the following:                     |   | 9         |
| PSYCH 578  | Psychology of Race, Ethnicity, and Health   |           |
| PSYCH 754  | Proseminar in Neuroscience  |           |
| PSYCH 756  | Psychophysiology  |           |
| PSYCH 711  | Current Topics in Psychology: (health-related topic)                                  |           |
| PSYCH 833  | Neuropsychology   |           |
| PSYCH 854  | Behavioral Neuroscience   |           |
| PSYCH 930  | Seminar in Social Psychology  |           |
| <b>Research Coursework (15 credits)</b>            |   |           |
| PSYCH 510  | Advanced Psychological Statistics (or an acceptable equivalent course)                | 3         |
| PSYCH 610  | Experimental Design (or an acceptable equivalent course)                              | 3         |
| PSYCH 790  | Masters Research  | 6         |
| PSYCH 890  | Graduate Research (or an acceptable equivalent course, as determined by area faculty) | 3         |
| <b>Breadth coursework (9 credits)</b>              |   |           |
| Select 9 credits in consultation with an advisor   |   | 9         |
| <b>Total Credits</b>                               |   | <b>36</b> |

The MS specialty in health psychology emphasizes the application of psychological theories to health-related issues. Although students are exposed to theories and applications in coursework, the field placement option offers a further opportunity to learn by doing. Students are encouraged to take at least 3 credits of PSYCH 812 in their area of interest.

## Additional Requirements

### Advising and the Major Professor

Graduate School and departmental regulations require students to have a major professor to direct their research activities. It is important for students to start their research early in their graduate studies. Admittees are assigned to a major professor they have chosen during the admissions process.

Before the end of the second semester, the student must form an advisory committee of three departmental faculty members, including the student's major professor. Students are free to change their major professor at any time. The Department also provides a Graduate Program

Coordinator, who advises about courses and program requirements and who approves programs of study. The Graduate Program Coordinator is also available to help students who wish to change their major professors to find new ones.

### Thesis or Project

The student, under the direction of an advisor, has the option of developing either an acceptable thesis based on empirical research or an acceptable project (a review or theoretical paper). In either case, students must demonstrate their ability to formulate a research idea and pursue independent and original investigation. The student must pass an oral examination in defense of the thesis, but no oral examination is required for a project.

### Time Limit

The student must complete all requirements within seven years of initial enrollment.

## Psychology MS and PhD Learning Outcomes

Students graduating from UWM's MS and PhD programs in Psychology will:

- Acquire a core research knowledge base and methodological skills to conceptualize, design, and conduct rigorous scientific studies to address relevant research questions, including successful execution of study protocols and acquisition of data.
- Demonstrate the ability to process, analyze, and interpret research data using appropriate quantitative/analytic techniques.
- Demonstrate a broad foundation of knowledge pertinent to the field of psychological science, and a strong knowledge base in the student's major program of study through coursework, preliminary exam, research products, and other relevant academic performance.
- Demonstrate skills in producing and comprehending oral and written communications that are accurate, informative, effective, and well-integrated (e.g., research/clinical presentations, publications, exams, etc.).
- Develop practical knowledge of ethical practice in actual research/clinical settings and demonstrate understanding and practice of relevant legal standards (e.g., IRB guidelines, HIPAA, APA practice guidelines, etc.).