

PSYCHOLOGY, MA (CHSS)

Banner Code: LA-MA-PSYC

Academic Advising

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The MA in psychology is distinguished by its emphasis on basic research and the application of research to solve practical problems in families, industry, government, and health care settings. Because of the program's proximity to Washington D.C., students have access to many employment and continuing education opportunities in research, academia, and consulting within government, public, and private settings.

The psychology MA offers the following concentrations:

- applied developmental psychology
- clinical psychology
- cognitive and behavioral neuroscience
- human factors/applied cognition
- industrial/organizational psychology

While the department does not offer a master's degree in clinical or counseling psychology, a master's degree in psychology with a concentration in clinical psychology is available for students who have been admitted to the doctoral program concentration in clinical psychology.

Admissions & Policies

Admissions

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate-policies/>). For information specific to the MA in psychology, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (<http://psychology.gmu.edu/programs/LA-MA-PSYC/application/>).

Provisional Admission

Students who are admitted provisionally are required to take 12 credits in psychology and earn a minimum GPA of 3.25 in those courses to qualify for removal of the provisional qualifier. Programs may add other conditions to provisional admission. Individualized study courses cannot be used toward the 12 credits.

Policies

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see Graduate Policies (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/>).

In addition to satisfying the requirements for all master's degrees, students pursuing a master's degree in psychology must successfully

complete 30-32 credits of required coursework. They complete this coursework in one of five concentrations.

A maximum of 6 credits of thesis proposal and thesis research (PSYC 798 Thesis Proposal, PSYC 799 Master's Thesis) may be applied to the master's degree. A maximum of 9 credits of thesis courses (PSYC 798 Thesis Proposal, PSYC 799 Master's Thesis), Directed Reading and Research (PSYC 597 Directed Reading and Research), and Practicum (PSYC 792 Psychology Practicum) may be applied to the degree.

Requirements

Degree Requirements

Total credits: 30-32

Students should be aware of the specific policies associated with this program, located on the Admissions & Policies tab.

Choose one concentration and complete the requirements therein.

For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6 Graduate Policies (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/>).

Concentration in Applied Developmental Psychology (APD)

The concentration in applied developmental psychology focuses on child development. It provides basic knowledge about normal development, skills for assessing developmental level, and techniques for planning and evaluating programs that foster optimal development. Graduates are prepared for employment at agencies concerned with educational and health programs for children, enrichment programs for infants and preschoolers, and education programs for parents.

Core Courses

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 704	Life-Span Development	3
Select one course from the following:		3
PSYC 701	Cognitive Bases of Behavior	
PSYC 702	Biological Bases of Human Behavior	
PSYC 703	Social Bases of Behavior	
PSYC 707	Emotional Bases of Behavior	
Total Credits		6

Quantitative Methods

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 642	General Linear Modeling I	4
PSYC 643	General Linear Modeling II	4
Total Credits		8

Developmental Specialized Content

Code	Title	Credits
Select two courses from the following:		6
PSYC 566	Cognitive and Perceptual Development	
PSYC 615	Language Development	
PSYC 648	Developmental Psychopathology	
PSYC 669	Social and Emotional Development	

PSYC 780	Applied Developmental Psychology
PSYC 592	Special Topics ¹
Other developmental courses chosen with advisor approval	
Total Credits	6

¹ When topic is Adolescent Development, Autism Spectrum Disorders, Child Development and Social Policy, Executive Function(s) Development, or developmental in content with advisor approval.

Thesis or Practicum/Research Experience

Choose either a thesis or practicum/research experience (4 credits)

Thesis Option

The thesis includes a combination of PSYC 798 Thesis Proposal/PSYC 799 Master's Thesis. Per the University Catalog, at least 3 hours must be PSYC 799 Master's Thesis; these 3 hours must be taken the first semester in which PSYC 799 Master's Thesis is registered. Thus, this is generally a combination of 1 credit of PSYC 798 Thesis Proposal and 3 of PSYC 799 Master's Thesis.

Students should be aware of the policies governing theses. They must follow the thesis enrollment policy of the university and once enrolled in PSYC 799 Master's Thesis, maintain continuous enrollment. See Academic Policies.

Code	Title	Credits
Select 4 credits from the following:		4
PSYC 798	Thesis Proposal	
PSYC 799	Master's Thesis (minimum of 3 credits)	
Total Credits		4

Practicum Option

Code	Title	Credits
Select 4 credits from the following:		4
PSYC 792	Psychology Practicum (take 3 credits)	
PSYC 597	Directed Reading and Research (take 1 credit)	
Total Credits		4

Professional Seminar

Code	Title	Credits
Two credits of ¹		2
PSYC 890	Seminar in Professional Psychology	
Total Credits		2

¹ Students should take 1 credit in fall and 1 credit in spring of their first year.

Electives

Code	Title	Credits
Select 4 credits in consultation with your advisor		4
Total Credits		4

Students complete the 30 credits required for this degree through additional coursework, including courses not listed above, within or outside the department, with prior approval of the graduate advisor.

Concentration in Clinical Psychology (CLN)

The clinical psychology concentration trains students to have flexibility to fill the evolving functions of clinical psychologists, including research, direct provision of clinical services, supervision, program development and evaluation, and consultation.

The clinical psychology MA concentration is not a terminal degree. Students who have been admitted to the doctoral program with a concentration in clinical psychology may apply to receive the MA in psychology on completion of 31 credits of coursework. Students must also be in good standing in the program, as determined by the director of clinical training.

Foundation Courses

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 810	Psychological Assessment I	4
PSYC 811	Psychological Assessment II	4
PSYC 822	Scientific Foundations of Clinical Psychology I	3
PSYC 864	Foundations of Evidence-Based Psychotherapy	3
Total Credits		14

Practicum Courses

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 861	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Youth	3
PSYC 862	Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Adults	3
Total Credits		6

Advanced Statistics and Research Methods

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 644	Methods for Social Research	3
PSYC 642	General Linear Modeling I	4
PSYC 643	General Linear Modeling II	4
Total Credits		11

Concentration in Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience (CBNR)

The concentration in cognitive and behavioral neuroscience focuses on studying biological substrates of behavior. Core and affiliated faculty study areas as diverse as neural control of behavioral development; animal models of learning and memory and their disorders (such as Alzheimer's); human brain systems involved in cognition, perception, human error, decision making, and movement; the relation of neural activity to human performance; and cognitive aging. A focus of the program is on translational neuroscience-complementary study of neural systems in humans and animals, including application of animal research to human behavior.

Specialized Content

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 531	Mammalian Neurobiology	3
or NEUR 603	Mammalian Neuroanatomy	
PSYC 558	Neuronal Bases of Learning and Memory	3
or PSYC 685	Cognitive Neuroscience	
Total Credits		6

Additional Course

Code	Title	Credits
Select one course from the following:		3
PSYC 555	Neuroimaging	
PSYC 559	Behavioral Chemistry	
Total Credits		3

Quantitative Methods

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 642	General Linear Modeling I	4
PSYC 643	General Linear Modeling II	4
Total Credits		8

Electives

Students complete the 30 credits required for the degree through additional credits of coursework, including courses not listed above within or outside the department, with prior approval of the graduate advisor.

Some options for fulfilling this requirement:

PSYC 592 Special Topics
 PSYC 892 Special Topics in Psychology
 NEUR 602 Cellular Neuroscience
 NEUR 689 Topics in Neuroscience
 BIOL 585 Eukaryotic Cell Biology Lecture/Laboratory
 BIOS 740 Laboratory Methods in Functional Genomics and Biotechnology

Practicum, Research or Thesis

Students may choose to do either a 6 credit Psychology Practicum, a 6 credit research experience or a thesis. All options require at least 6 credits total. Students should be aware of the policies governing theses. They must follow the thesis enrollment policy of the university and once enrolled in PSYC 799 Master's Thesis, maintain continuous enrollment. See Academic Policies.

Psychology Practicum Option

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 792	Psychology Practicum	6

Psychology Research Option

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 597	Directed Reading and Research	6
or PSYC 897	Directed Reading and Research	

Thesis Option

Code	Title	Credits
Select 6 credits from the following:		6
PSYC 798	Thesis Proposal	
PSYC 799	Master's Thesis (minimum of 3 credits)	

Concentration in Human Factors/Applied Cognition (HF)

The human factors/applied cognition concentration trains students in the application of cognitive science to real-world problems. Students gain expertise in such areas as human/computer interaction, cognitive system engineering, cognitive ergonomics, and transportation. Faculty members help place students who do not have real-world experience in a part- or full-time practicum before completing the degree.

Core Course

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 737	Psychology of Human-Technology Interaction	3
Total Credits		3

Quantitative Methods

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 642	General Linear Modeling I	4
PSYC 643	General Linear Modeling II	4
Total Credits		8

Specialized Content

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 530	Cognitive Engineering: Cognitive Science Applied to Human Factors	3
PSYC 645	Research Methods in Human Factors and Applied Cognition	3
Total Credits		6

Additional Courses

Code	Title	Credits
Select two courses from the following: ¹		6
PSYC 734	Seminar in Human Factors and Applied Cognition	
Topics may include: Python for Psychologists, Eye Tracking, Usability & Product Design, Other topics introduced by the program		
PSYC 768	Advanced Topics in Cognitive Science	
Topics may include: Cognitive Neuroscience of Attention, Individual Differences in Cognition and Performance, Ergonomics, Human-Systems Interaction, Affect and Performance, Technology, Stress, and Work, Other topics introduced by the program		
Total Credits		6

¹ These courses may be repeated.

Electives

Code	Title	Credits
Students complete the 30 credits required for this degree through additional coursework, including courses not listed above, within or outside the department, with prior approval of the graduate advisor.		0-7
Total Credits		0-7

Optional Practicum

Students need an advisor's approval to register for practicum.

Code	Title	Credits
Six credits of		6
PSYC 730	Practicum in Applied Psychology	
Total Credits		6

Optional Thesis

Students need the chair's approval to register for thesis. Students should be aware of the policies governing theses. They must follow the

thesis enrollment policy of the university and once enrolled in PSYC 799 Master's Thesis, maintain continuous enrollment. See Academic Policies.

Code	Title	Credits
Select 6 credits from the following:		6
PSYC 798	Thesis Proposal	
PSYC 799	Master's Thesis	

Total Credits	6
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Concentration in Industrial/Organizational Psychology (IO)

The industrial/organizational psychology concentration trains students in the conduct and application of psychological research in work settings. Expertise can be developed in a variety of areas, including personnel selection, training, leadership, motivation, and human performance assessment.

Statistics

Code	Title	Credits
Select at least 11 credits of the following:		11
PSYC 642	General Linear Modeling I	
PSYC 643	General Linear Modeling II	
PSYC 557 or PSYC 633	Psychometric Methods Evaluative Research in Psychology	
Total Credits		11

Survey of Content

Code	Title	Credits
PSYC 636	Survey of Industrial-Organizational Psychology	3
Total Credits		3

Specialized Content and Optional Thesis

Code	Title	Credits
Complete 15 credits from the following:		15
PSYC 626	Organizational Change and Development	
PSYC 631	Industrial and Personnel Testing and Evaluation	
PSYC 638	Training: Psychological Contributions to Theory, Design, and Evaluation	
PSYC 640	Techniques in Industrial/Organizational Psychology	
PSYC 667	Behavior in Small Groups and Teams	
PSYC 668	Personality: Theoretical and Empirical Approaches	
PSYC 703	Social Bases of Behavior	
PSYC 733	Issues in Personnel Psychology	
PSYC 741	Psychology of Work Motivation	
PSYC 742	Careers	
PSYC 743	Behavior and Performance at Work	
PSYC 738	IO Psychology and Legal Issues in Employment Discrimination	
PSYC 739	Seminar in Industrial/Organizational Psychology	

Other graduate courses with permission of I/O faculty

Optional Thesis

An optional thesis of 6 credits can be used toward the specialized content requirement.

Students need the chair's approval to register for thesis. Students should be aware of the policies governing theses. They must follow the thesis enrollment policy of the university and once enrolled in PSYC 799 Master's Thesis, maintain continuous enrollment. See Academic Policies.

PSYC 798	Thesis Proposal	
PSYC 799	Master's Thesis (at least 3 credits required)	
Total Credits		15

Professional Development

Code	Title	Credits
Select at least 3 credits from the following:		3
PSYC 730	Practicum in Applied Psychology	
PSYC 892	Special Topics in Psychology	
Total Credits		3

Accelerated Master's

Psychology, BA or BS/Psychology, Accelerated MA (Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience Concentration)

Overview

Highly qualified undergraduates may be admitted to the bachelor's/accelerated master's program and obtain a BA/BS in Psychology and an MA in Psychology, with a concentration in cognitive and behavioral neuroscience, in an accelerated time-frame after satisfactory completion of a minimum of 138 credits.

See AP.6.7 Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degrees (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-7>) for policies related to this program.

Students in an accelerated degree program must fulfill all university requirements for the master's degree. For policies governing all graduate degrees, see AP.6. Graduate Policies (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/>).

BAM Pathway Admission Requirements

Applicants to all graduate programs at George Mason University must meet the admission standards and application requirements for graduate study as specified in Graduate Admissions (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate-policies/>) Policies (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/admissions/graduate-policies/>) and Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degree policies (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-7>). For information specific to this accelerated master's program, see Application Requirements and Deadlines (<https://psychology.gmu.edu/programs/la-ma-acel-psyc/overview/>).

Students will be considered for admission into the BAM Pathway after completion of a minimum of 60 credits, and completion of 12 hours of psychology coursework including one of the following combinations of courses:

PSYC 300 Statistics in Psychology

PSYC 372 Biopsychology

OR

PSYC 300 Statistics in Psychology

PSYC 375 Brain and Sensory Processes and PSYC 376 Brain and Behavior

Students are strongly encouraged to have obtained previous research lab experience and to have one reference letter from the faculty member who will serve as their advisor.

Students who are accepted into the BAM Pathway will be allowed to register for graduate level courses after successful completion of a minimum of 75 undergraduate credits.

Accelerated Master's Admission Requirements

Students already admitted in the BAM Pathway will be admitted to the MA program, if they have met the following criteria, as verified on the Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Transition form:

- Minimum overall GPA of 3.25
- Successfully meeting Mason's requirements for undergraduate degree conferral (graduation) and completing the application for graduation.

Accelerated Pathway Requirements

To maintain the integrity and quality of both the undergraduate and graduate degree programs, undergraduate students interested in taking graduate courses must choose from the following:

Code	Title	Credits
Advanced Standing courses (up to 12 credits)		
PSYC 531 or NEUR 603	Mammalian Neurobiology Mammalian Neuroanatomy	3
PSYC 558 or PSYC 685	Neuronal Bases of Learning and Memory Cognitive Neuroscience	3
PSYC 555	Neuroimaging	3
PSYC 559	Behavioral Chemistry	3
PSYC 592	Special Topics ¹	1-6
Reserve Graduate Credit courses (up to 6 credits) taken while an undergraduate and will only count for the graduate degree program		
PSYC 531 or NEUR 603	Mammalian Neurobiology Mammalian Neuroanatomy	3
PSYC 558 or PSYC 685	Neuronal Bases of Learning and Memory Cognitive Neuroscience	3
PSYC 555	Neuroimaging	3
PSYC 559	Behavioral Chemistry	3
PSYC 592	Special Topics ¹	1-6
PSYC 642	General Linear Modeling I	4

¹ When topic is Animal Behavior, Biological Bases of Alzheimer's Disease, Human Brain Stimulation, Cognitive Electrophysiology or Comparative Cognition. Can be repeated if topic differs.

For more detailed information on coursework and timeline requirements, see AP6.7.Bachelor's/Accelerated Master's Degree policies (<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/graduate-policies/#ap-6-7>).

Program Outcomes

Program Outcomes

1. Students will be able to summarize and critically evaluate theoretical and empirical literature within a relevant domain of psychology.
2. Students will be able to effectively analyze a set of data to answer questions relevant to solving important practical problems in science, policy, and/or practice.
3. Students will be able to communicate psychological knowledge in their area of specialization to a variety of audiences.
4. Students will understand ethical principles of discipline and act in an ethical manner with respect to research and practice.