WCU
WEST CHESTER
UNIVERSITY

HANDBOOK
for the
GRADUATE PROGRAMS
in
PSYCHOLOGY
2019-2020

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PREFACE

Welcome to the Department of Psychology at West Chester University! The department offers M.A. programs in two concentrations: Industrial/Organizational, and General. The department also offers a PsyD program in Clinical Mental Health in preparation for counseling licensure.

The department has a rich mixture of faculty with both theoretical and applied research interests. Early in your program you should talk with a variety of faculty to learn their research interests, particularly if you plan to conduct a thesis or pursue doctoral work. Many faculty welcome graduate students as research collaborators.

Unfortunately, only a limited number of graduate assistantships are available, so the department cannot financially support all students who are interested in conducting research. However, research experience of any kind (e.g., volunteer, PSY510 Research in Psychology, thesis work) will teach you more about your field of study, can be valuable to future employers, and will constitute an important component of your application credentials should you pursue more advanced study.

West Chester M.A. recipients have pursued doctoral work at many fine universities including: Yale, Penn State, The New School for Social Research, Virginia Tech, University of Pennsylvania, Temple University, University of Delaware, Western Michigan University, Widener University, Kent State University, Bowling Green University, Immaculata College, Bryn Mawr, C.U.N.Y., Louisiana State University, Washington State University, Ohio University, University of Virginia, Loyola University, Wright State, Pepperdine University, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, PCOM, and University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

In addition, department alumni are employed in numerous area agencies, businesses, hospitals, industries, and universities including Merck, WAWA, DuPont, QVC, BP Oil, SAP, Astra Zeneca, Sallie Mae, Deloitte, Penske, GE, DeLage Landen, Amazon, and TD Bank.

The faculty of the Department of Psychology wish you a productive career at West Chester University. Do not hesitate to contact your advisor, the Graduate Coordinator, or the Department Chair if you have any questions about the Department.

INTRODUCTION

The following is a description of the Graduate Programs offered by the Department of Psychology. It represents current admissions policies and requirements in the Department. You should review these and the University policies which are published in the Graduate Catalog, available from the Graduate Studies Office, or on the WCU Grad Office web page. ***It is the student's responsibility to learn and follow the policies of the Department of Psychology and West Chester University.***

PROGRAMS OF STUDY

INDUSTRIAL/ORGANIZATIONAL
39-42 semester hours[1]

The goal of the M.A. program in Industrial/Organizational Psychology is to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary for many of several possible applied I/O careers. The program also prepares students for continued graduate study at the doctoral level. The curriculum is designed to expose students to core I/O content areas including Industrial Psychology and Organizational Psychology, as well as statistics, research methods, and psychometrics. Students also gain applied experience via the required internship. The program provides necessary research skills through the required research report, optional thesis, and the opportunity to work with individual faculty members on particular research projects.

COURSE WORK

The I/O program includes 27 semester hours of required course work: PSY 601, 602, 524, 560, 562, 566, 569, 600, & 630. In addition, 12-15 semester hours[1] of elective courses must be completed. Common electives include: PSY510, 546, 567, 571, 572, and 590. Students may take up to 6 elective graduate hours outside of Psychology (e.g., Human Resource Management courses). Electives must be approved by the advisor.

CORE COURSES

Students are expected to complete the I/O core courses (PSY 601, 602, 560, & 562) with a minimum GPA of at least 3.25. Failure to do so will result in the student being required to pass the "candidacy exam" as mentioned in the "Degree Candidacy" section.

DEGREE CANDIDACY

Students must file for Degree Candidacy after 12 hours in the program, and upon completion of the I/O core. This typically occurs at the end of the first academic year. Forms are available from the IO/General Graduate Coordinator, the Graduate Studies Office, or the WCU Grad Office web page (www.wcupa.edu/_admissions/sch_dgr/forms.asp) *Students who do not achieve a 3.25 GPA in the I/O core courses must take and pass a written candidacy exam immediately upon completion of the core courses. Continuation in the program will be dependent upon passing the exam*.

CONCENTRATIONS

With careful selection of electives, internship placement and research focus, students can develop personal concentrations in areas such as performance analysis and organizational behavior management, training, personnel evaluation and placement, and group and organizational processes.

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[1] Those students electing to do a thesis must complete 15 credit hours of electives (of which the thesis counts for 3 credits). Those not choosing to do a thesis must complete 12 credit hours of electives.

GENERAL
36 semester hours

The M.A. program in General Psychology is designed primarily for those students who seek to improve their knowledge, skills and research experience in psychology in order to strengthen their educational background for application to doctoral programs. A strong focus on student research experience helps to prepare students for continuing graduate study at the doctoral level. The program may also prepare students for a range of occupations in business, government, and other non-academic research settings, as students learn critical thinking and data analysis skills that are attractive to both public and private research firms.

Course work for the General Psychology program is designed around a core curriculum of statistics, research design, substantive areas of psychology, and a research-based thesis. Students enrolled in this program are expected to develop an understanding of the fundamental areas of psychology, to acquire a high level of sophistication in statistics, experimental design, data analysis, psychological measurement, and quantitative methods, and to conduct research in a specialized area of study. The General Psychology M.A. program does not, however, provide clinical preparation. Students interested in a career that includes clinical preparation should consider the Clinical Psychology PsyD program.

COURSE WORK

The General program includes 15 semester hours of required course work (Foundations in Research): PSY 510, 601, 602, 524, and 600. Students will choose 9 semester hours of Core Foundations in Psychology courses from the following: PSY 506, 512, 540, 562, 568, 604, 605, 607, 608, 609, 680, 700, 701, or 470. In addition, 12 semester hours of electives must be taken. Core Foundations Courses and electives must be chosen in consultation with the advisor. Electives may include courses outside of Psychology. Completing a thesis (PSY610) is optional in the General Psychology MA program.

DEGREE CANDIDACY

Students must file for Degree Candidacy after completing 12 hours of the required course work (Foundations in Research and/or Core Foundations in Psychology courses). This typically occurs after the first academic year of study. Students must have at least a 3.2 GPA in the required courses. Students falling below the 3.2 GPA may repeat up to 9 hours. Failure to achieve a GPA of 3.2 after repeating 9 hours will result in termination from the program. Forms to apply for Degree Candidacy are available from the IO/General Graduate Coordinator, from the Graduate Studies Office, or on the WCU Grad Office webpage (www.wcupa.edu/grad)

ADMISSION PROCEDURES

Applications for admission are available from the Office of Graduate Studies, McKelvie Hall, West Chester University, West Chester, PA 19383. Phone: 610-436-2943. Applications can also be obtained online from the Graduate Studies web page: www.wcupa.edu/grad

Admission Requirements for the Degree Programs

The minimum requirements for *consideration* for admission in Psychology are:
1. An undergraduate overall GPA of 3.0, and a GPA of 3.25 in Psychology.
2. GRE General test scores of 153 on the Verbal test and 144 on the Quantitative test.
3. Three letters of recommendation
4. A personal goals statement
5. Other requirements, as published in the Graduate Catalog of West Chester University.

In addition, applicants who were not Psychology majors may be required to complete undergraduate Psychology courses as a condition of admission to a program or as a condition for approval to Degree Candidacy.

Admission Information

- Admissions to the degree programs are made for Fall only, with **March 1** as the deadline for initial review. Applications received after March 1 will be reviewed only on a space-available basis. Admissions to the Post-Master's letter of completion program continue throughout the year.
- Students may not change programs of study in Psychology without approval of the Graduate Committee.
- ***Students admitted on a Provisional basis*** must petition to be admitted to Full status when they have successfully met the provisions specified at the time of their admission, or prior to applying for degree candidacy.

Course work may also be taken on a **non-degree basis.** Courses taken may count for degree credit if the student is subsequently admitted to a degree program. *Students admitted on a non-degree basis are only permitted to take up to 9 semester hours, upon completion of which they must be admitted to a degree program to continue taking graduate courses. Admission into any particular course is dependent upon the permission of the Graduate Coordinator and course instructor. Approval to take courses on a non-degree basis does not obligate the Department to admit the student to a degree program.*

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

1. Students must achieve satisfactory academic progress by maintaining the minimum GPAs for the program and core courses and Degree Candidacy sections of this Handbook and the related sections of the Graduate Catalog of West Chester University.
2. Degree students must repeat required courses for which they received a grade of less than C+. Students may repeat courses to improve their grades, but only two courses may be repeated, and no course may be repeated more than once. A form for reporting repeated courses is available from the Office of Graduate Studies or the Registrar, and must be filed with the Registrar at the time of registration for the repeated course. A graduate student earning an 'F' in any course will be dismissed from the university, as will a graduate student whose GPA falls below a 3.0.
3. Admission and degree candidacy in the graduate program may be rescinded for reasons other than inadequate academic progress. If, in the judgment of the Graduate Committee, the best interests of the student and/or profession require that the student select a different program or withdraw from the graduate program entirely, the student shall be so informed by the Graduate Coordinator. Every effort will be made to make such a decision at the earlier point in the student's tenure. A written summary of the Graduate committee's reasons for requiring a change in student status will be provided to the student.

INTERNSHIP

I/O Program

I/O students meet with the I/O internship coordinator, who maintains a list of I/O internship sites, but it is the student's responsibility to secure internship employment. Upon approval by the I/O internship coordinator, the student begins the internship, which requires 300 clock hours of work, distributed over a minimum of 12 weeks for a minimum of 20 hours per week. Bi-weekly evaluations should be submitted to the site supervisor and forwarded to the I/O internship coordinator. The intern completes an internship evaluation paper at the completion of the internship. Failure to submit evaluations or the final paper will prevent awarding of a grade for the internship.

GUIDELINES FOR RESEARCH REPORT AND THESIS

Research Report (PSY 600)

The student must be a degree candidate to register for the Research Report. The research report course can be used for writing an integrated review paper on a special topic or for developing a thesis proposal. Research reports are generally to be modeled after literature reviews published in professional journals in Psychology. The most recent APA Style manual must be used in preparing the paper.

Most students enroll in PSY600 during the Spring semester of their 2nd year. However, students electing to complete a thesis (PSY610) should enroll in PSY600 during their first year. It is expected that students will complete the Research Report in one semester. A more detailed Guide to Graduate Research Report Writing is available on the department's website: http://www.wcupa.edu/_ACADEMICS/sch_cas.psy/guidetorr.asp.

Thesis (PSY 610)

      The following guidelines are meant to provide the thesis student and his/her committee with concrete procedures for the initiation and completion of a Master's thesis.

The Thesis Student

1. The student must be a degree candidate to register for the thesis (PSY 610).

2. The student must: (a) select a research topic; (b) select a thesis committee; and (c) write a comprehensive thesis proposal to be approved by the committee.

3. The student should select a primary thesis advisor as chair of the thesis committee whose expertise is close to the chosen thesis topic.

4. The thesis should be completed during no more than two semesters, and can be taken for no more than 6 credits. Students usually develop thesis topics from the Research Report (PSY 600). *The student should sign up for PSY 610 only after committee approval of the thesis proposal.*

5. The thesis proposal should at least address the following three areas: (a) a comprehensive review of the literature; (b) a statement of the problem (including objectives and/or hypotheses); and (c) a methodology section. The proposal must be approved by the thesis committee and the Department Research Review committee or University Human Subjects Subcommittee before the student can begin data collection. A proposal written in APA format will save much time during the final write up.

6. After data collection, analysis and write up, the student will defend the thesis in an oral examination, open to all who wish to attend. A date for the oral exam will be established by the student and thesis committee. The exam date will be published two weeks prior to the exam, with notices going to the Graduate Dean, the Dean of Arts and Sciences, the Provost, and Psychology faculty. Unanimous approval of the thesis by the thesis committee is necessary for a successful defense.

7. Additional information regarding thesis requirements can be obtained from the Graduate Coordinator. The completed thesis, including the signed approval sheet, must be delivered to the library prior to graduation and before a grade is given for the course (PSY 610).

8. **Additional information regarding University requirements for the thesis is given in the** ***GUIDE TO THE PREPARATION OF THE MASTER'S THESIS***. **This guide is available from the Graduate Studies Office and is "a must" for all thesis students.**

The Thesis Committee

1. The thesis committee consists of at least three members, two of whom must be from the Department of Psychology.

2. The third member of the committee may be chosen from the faculty of the University, or from outside the University, and should have some expertise/knowledge about the thesis topic. The third member must be approved by the two Psychology members.

3. Thesis committees must be approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies prior to beginning the thesis. Approval of Thesis Committee Forms can be obtained from the thesis advisor, the Graduate Coordinator, or the Office of Graduate Studies.

4. The thesis advisor serves as the committee chairperson, and is expected to have major responsibility for guiding the student, including helping select committee members. The chairperson must be a member of the Department of Psychology.

5. The grade for the thesis should be determined by the committee, and recorded by the advisor.

6. Any exceptions to the above points must be approved by the Graduate Committee.

GRADUATION

Students must apply for graduation during the semester they intend to graduate. The following are deadline dates for applying to graduate: May graduation -- February 1; August graduation -- June 1; December graduation -- Oct. 1. Graduation applications can be obtained at the Office of Graduate Studies, or from the WCU Grad Office web page (www.wcupa.edu/grad). **In the event the student does not graduate the semester they applied, the student must re-apply for graduation.**

OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT

The Psychology Department is currently engaged in a project to assess students' general level of achievement as psychology graduate students. As part of this project, all degree students will be required to complete both an Exit Survey and a learning outcomes assessment measure near the end of their program. Results from this assessment procedure are crucial in helping the Psychology Department identify strengths and weaknesses in the ways in which our students are taught. Results will also help the Department to identify ways to improve the curriculum. While the assessment measure will be administered at the end of each semester, dates and times for the administration sessions will be announced at the beginning of each semester in order to allow for appropriate planning. Although performance on the assessment measures will not count toward any course grades, students must participate in good faith in order to be cleared for graduation.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Some graduate assistantships are usually available in the Department. Stipends and full tuition waivers are offered for full-time (20 hrs/wk obligation) appointments and stipends and partial tuition waivers are offered for half-time (10hrs/wk obligation) appointments. Graduate Assistants must schedule for the appropriate number of graduate credits (9-15 full-time; 6 credits half-time) throughout the semester, and are not permitted to withdraw from graduate course work after the semester begins, without the approval of the Dean of Graduate Studies. Graduate Assistants must maintain a 3.0 cumulative grade point average per semester.

Psychology graduate students also obtain employment and assistantships in other areas of the University. The Office of Research and Development, Office of Institutional Research, Academic Development Program, Frederick Douglass Institute, and Residence Life have all supported Psychology graduate students in the recent past.

Students interested in being considered for a graduate assistantship should contact the appropriate Psychology Department Graduate Coordinator.

West Chester participates in the National Defense Education Act of 1958 under which long-term loans may be obtained at a low interest rate. The University also participates in the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Act (PHEAA) of 1963 which provides for student loans for Pennsylvania residents through participating banks. Students who wish to apply for either of these loans may obtain application forms and additional information on financial assistance from the Director of Financial Aid at 25 University Avenue, Suite #30.

RESIDENCE REQUIREMENTS

In order to be eligible for some types of financial assistance, students may have to satisfy a Pennsylvania residency requirement or take a minimum number of credit hours during a semester.

Students who wish to apply for a PHEAA loan must reside in Pennsylvania for 30 days immediately prior to the date of filing a loan guarantee application.

Students who have problems or questions concerning the residence requirements should contact the University Graduate Studies Office (www.wcupa.edu/grad).

ADVISEMENT

Students will be assigned an academic advisor in their program of study when they are admitted. The advisor's name will appear on the letter of admission. It is the student's responsibility to consult his/her advisor about course selection, program progress, internship possibilities and other related issues. Students are permitted to change advisors at any point in their program, with the permission of the appropriate Graduate Coordinator.

COURSE REGISTRATION

Midway through the semester, registration for the next semester will occur. Students *must* consult their advisor before registration. Students can register through the online myWCU system (my.wcupa.edu). ***NOTE: Registration for courses outside of the psychology department must be approved by the appropriate Graduate Coordinator prior to registration.***

Continuous Enrollment Policy

Students have a maximum of six years for degree completion. During that time students are expected to maintain continuous enrollment during fall and spring semesters. Failure to maintain continuous enrollment may affect degree completion due to course availability. Before a semester of nonenrollment, students are encouraged to contact their graduate coordinator, graduate studies, financial aid office (if applicable), and international programs (if applicable) to discuss implications of nonenrollment. A maximum of two semesters of nonenrollment are permitted before a student must enroll or request a leave of absence. Students who fail to reenroll or request a leave of absence are subject to readmission. The Leave of Absence form can be found on the Office of Graduate Studies website

THE GRADUATE COMMITTEE

The Graduate Committee consists of six voting members: the two Graduate Coordinators, three faculty members, and one graduate student representative (with one graduate student alternate).   The committee recommends policies regarding the graduate programs to the Department of Psychology, oversees departmental policies, and serves to mediate individual issues regarding graduate policy.

RESEARCH FACILITIES

The department maintains facilities for student and faculty research with both human and animal subjects. Department facilities in the Peoples Building include rooms for human participant's research, testing rooms and temporary housing for small animal research, computer labs, and small seminar rooms. In addition, Psychology has space/equipment available for physiological research, including surgical procedures. West Chester University's Academic Computing Center supports all academic departments with a wide range of statistical packages, available through numerous sites in the department and around campus.

RESEARCH FUNDS

Funds for travel to professional conferences are available through the Graduate Dean's Professional Development Fund. Further information can be obtained at this link: https://www.wcupa.edu/_admissions/SCH_DGR/conferencefunding.aspx. The Graduate Dean's Professional Development Award provides funding to current graduate students to attend conferences that are beneficial to professional development and degree advancement. To be eligible, graduate students must be actively enrolled in classes at WCU, and the professional

conference must take place while the graduate student is actively enrolled. Students who are presenting at a conference are eligible for an award up to $500 for domestic travel or up to $1,000 for international travel. Students who are attending a conference domestically are eligible for an award up to $250 or up to $750 for international conferences. Students may apply for the award once per academic year.

Applications are reviewed four times per year. Students are encouraged to submit an application for the award as early as possible in the semester to increase the likelihood of funding.

ORGANIZATIONS

PSI CHI. The department sponsors a chapter of Psi Chi, the National Honor Society in Psychology. Membership is by invitation and is determined by demonstrated excellence in scholarship and citizenship.

PI GAMMA MU. Graduate students may apply for this National Honor Society in the Social Sciences. Membership depends upon high academic standing and the completion of specific courses in the social sciences. Information is available from the Department of Political Science.

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (APA). To become a student affiliate of APA, simply fill out their application form and return it for approval. Forms are generally available in the department from APA members. The APA membership division may also be reached through electronic mail at membership@apa.org or by calling 1-800-374-2721. The Graduate Division of the APA can be reached at APAGS@apa.org or by calling 1-202-336-6093. APA dues also purchase a subscription to the *APA Monitor* and the *American Psychologist.*

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY (APS). Some students may wish to join this group, which consists primarily of academic and research psychologists. Forms are available from APS or from department members of APS. Student membership includes a subscription to the journal *Psychological Science* and receipt of the *APS Observer*.

SOCIETY FOR INDUSTRIAL & ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY (SIOP). I/O students are **strongly** encouraged to join SIOP. SIOP is Division 14 of APA and an organizational affiliate of APS. To join, visit SIOP's homepage (www.siop.org.) Benefits of membership include reduced conference fees, a subscription to The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist (TIP), and endless networking opportunities.