Psychology

MASTER OF ARTS

Program Description
The Master of Arts in Psychology program is a 42-43 semester hour program designed to develop mastery of the scientific principles and methods of psychology and their application. Students may elect to take a Clinical Psychology Track or a General Psychology Track. All students are required to take a sequence of core curriculum coursework that emphasizes major academic areas within the discipline of psychology. In addition, students take specialized coursework to either prepare them for the professional application of psychological principles (Clinical Track) or to conduct psychological research (General Psychology Track).

Upon admission, each student will meet with the Graduate Academic Advisor to develop a degree plan, and will then be assigned a faculty advisor who will assist with academic decisions during the course of the degree program.

Student Learning Outcomes

- Graduates of the MA in Psychology program (both Clinical and General Psychology Track) will demonstrate knowledge of developmental, empirical, physiological and social psychology principals.
- Graduates of the Clinical Track will demonstrate mastery of the basic principles of clinical assessment and their therapeutic application as well as the ethical use of these principles.
- Graduates of the General Psychology Track (and Clinical Track Thesis participants) will be able to conduct independent research of psychological phenomenon as evidenced by the results of experiments and projects and successful completion and defense of their thesis in accordance with departmental guidelines.

Clinical and General Psychology Track Options

The primary education and training mission of the master’s program is to provide a program of study with an applied clinical emphasis to prepare students for the practice of psychology or counseling at the master’s level of licensure.

Students who elect the Clinical Track Option will complete the required core curriculum, specialized clinical preparation courses, and will receive supervised clinical practicum experience as part of their training. Upon completion of the program, Clinical Track graduates will meet the necessary qualifications to take the Texas State Board of Examiners of Psychologists examination for certification as a Licensed Psychological Associate. With additional coursework and experience, graduates may elect to take the Licensed Professional Counselor, Marriage and Family Therapist, or Licensed Specialist in School Psychology (LSSP) examinations. Following licensure, graduates typically work under the supervision of a licensed psychologist, or as independent practitioners in a variety of public agency and private settings.

Students who complete the Clinical Track may also elect to do an empirical master’s thesis in addition to their required clinical coursework. This option may be best suited to...
those students who wish to pursue advanced clinical training at the doctoral level. In general, students who complete both the Clinical Track with a thesis option can expect to take longer to complete the required program of coursework.

The purpose of the **General Psychology Track** is to provide a program of study with a research emphasis. In addition to the required course work, students will conduct an empirical master’s thesis under the direction and supervision of the student’s thesis committee. Graduates who complete the General Psychology Track typically go on to apply to research-oriented doctoral programs or work at various non-clinical positions within private industry. The General Psychology Track option does not include supervised clinical experience and thus does not prepare the student for any form of clinical licensure.

**Admission Requirements**

In addition to the university admission requirements outlined for all graduate programs, the MA in Psychology program requires:

- A bachelor’s degree in psychology, or a bachelor’s degree with 15 semester hours of undergraduate coursework in psychology for unconditional admission. This foundational undergraduate coursework must include general psychology, statistics, experimental psychology, and six hours of upper division psychology electives. [Students may be conditionally accepted into the program contingent upon completion of the required undergraduate courses. Applicants must receive a grade of “B” or better in each of the specified courses.]
- A cumulative grade point average (G.P.A.) of no less than 3.0 on a 4-point scale.
- Graduate Record Exam (G.R.E.) scores taken within the last five years from the application date.
- Two letters of evaluation from individuals such as professors and employers who can attest to the applicant’s potential for success in a graduate program of study. Letters of evaluation should specifically address the applicant’s potential for a successful career and motivation for graduate study.
- A personal essay. Applicants must submit a 500-1000 word essay describing personal and professional reasons for pursuing graduate study in psychology at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. This statement should include information regarding work experience, educational goals, professional goals, languages spoken and any other material relevant to admission decisions.

**Deadlines for Applications**

The Psychology admissions committee will review applications for both the fall and spring semesters. However, please note that the program is designed in a manner that supports fall admissions. As a result, space is more limited for those attempting to enter the program in the spring and spring admission may result in a longer course of study, depending on the availability of specific coursework.

For full consideration, completed applications must be received by the psychology department by the following deadlines:

- For fall admission, all materials must be received by March 1st.
- For spring admission, all materials must be received by October 1st.

The Psychology Department may elect to review late applications on a case by case basis, providing there is space available in the program.

**Admission to the Program**

Upon receipt of all admission materials, the Psychology Master’s Degree Admissions Committee will meet to review the application materials. Only complete applications are evaluated. The committee may choose to unconditionally admit, conditionally admit, or deny admission, based on the information contained in the admission materials.

For unconditional admission, applicants must be a graduate of a regionally accredited
university or, if an international student, have the equivalent of an U.S. accredited degree as determined by the Dean of Graduate Studies. Applicants must have completed 15 hours of undergraduate psychology and possess an overall grade point average (G.P.A.) no less than 3.0 on a 4-point scale. Applicants with less than a 3.0 G.P.A. may be unconditionally admitted to the program if the graduate admissions committee determines that the student’s G.R.E. combined verbal and quantitative scores and other application materials compensate for the deficient G.P.A.

Applicants admitted into the program must meet with the Graduate Academic Advisor to develop an initial degree plan. The degree plan indicates whether foundational coursework is required and outlines the prescribed graduate coursework, examinations, and other requirements needed to complete the MA in Psychology degree.

**Degree Requirements**

Course Requirements (42-43 semester hours)

**CORE COURSES** (15 semester hours)

The 5 core courses (see below) must be taken within the first 24 hours of graduate study.

- **PSYC 5301** Research Methods I (Fall Semester)
  (prerequisites: PSYC 1342 and PSYC 3411 or permission of instructor)
- **PSYC 5302** Research Methods II (Spring Semester)
  (prerequisite: PSYC 5301)
- **PSYC 5321** Advanced Physiological Psychology
- **PSYC 5323** Advanced Social Psychology
- **PSYC 5324** Advanced Developmental Psychology

**CLINICAL TRACK OPTION** (Core Curriculum + 28 semester hours)

In addition to the core courses, students choosing the clinical track option shall take the following:

- **SPECIALIZED PREPARATION** (16 semester hours)
  - **PSYC 5322** Advanced Personality Theories
  - **PSYC 5341** Advanced Abnormal Psychology
  - **PSYC 5443** Intellectual Assessment
  - **PSYC 5344** Personality Assessment
  - **PSYC 5350** Introduction to Psychotherapy

- **SUPPORTING COURSE WORK/ELECTIVES** (6 semester hours, approved by the student’s faculty advisor)
  - **PRACTICUM** (6 semester hours)
  - **PSYC 5398** Clinical Practicum

Recommended/Required Course Sequence for the Clinical Track:

1. **PSYC 5322** Advanced Personality Theories should be taken before **PSYC 5341** Advanced Abnormal Psychology.
2. **PSYC 5341** Advanced Abnormal Psychology should be taken before or concurrent with **PSYC 5350** Introduction to Psychotherapy.
3. **PSYC 5443** Intellectual Assessment and **PSYC 5344** Personality Assessment should be taken before or concurrent with **PSYC 5398** Clinical Practicum.
4. **PSYC 5350** Introduction to Psychotherapy should be taken before or concurrent with **PSYC 5398** Clinical Practicum and toward the end of the student’s program.
GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY TRACK (CORE CURRICULUM + 27 SEMESTER HOURS)

Additional Required Courses:
PSYC 5325 Advanced Cognitive Psychology
PSYC 5341 Advanced Abnormal Psychology or 5322 Personality Theories
PSYC ELECTIVES (15 hours)

Seminars, PSYC 5395 Individual Study (9 hours), and other electives approved by the student’s faculty advisor (6 hours).

PSYC 5390 Thesis (6 semester hours)

Note: 3 hours of thesis credit should be taken during the development of the thesis proposal.

Written Comprehensive Examination

Each student admitted to the program is required to pass a written comprehensive examination covering material presented in three of the five core curriculum courses (Developmental, Physiological, and Social). The Written Comprehensive Examination will be offered once a year during the spring semester, and should be taken at the end of the first year when the student has completed or is in the process of completing all core curriculum coursework. The written comprehensive examination must be completed within the first 24 hours of graduate study, and successful completion is a prerequisite for enrolling in practicum training. Students who fail the examination (failing one or more sections of exam with a score of less than 3 on a 5-point scale) will be allowed to retake the examination in its entirety twice. At the discretion of the department, retakes of the comprehensive examination will be offered during the fall semester. Three failures of the comprehensive exam will result in termination from the program. Details about the grading procedure are available from the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator.

Practicum

Students who complete the Clinical Track will participate in two practicum placements as part of their clinical training. In order to register for practicum, a student must successfully pass the written comprehensive examination. Faculty responsible for the practicum will arrange assignment of the student to a practicum training facility during those semesters the student registers for practicum. The practicum faculty member will have overall responsibility for supervising and evaluating the student’s performance.

General Psychology Track/Thesis

Students electing the General Psychology Track, or Clinical Track students who elect to complete a thesis in addition to their clinical coursework are encouraged to begin thesis work as soon as possible after being admitted to the program. In consultation with their assigned advisor, the student will select a thesis committee consisting of a chair (primary thesis advisor) and two additional university faculty. The chair and one of the members must be full time graduate faculty members within the psychology department. The student is expected to work closely with the committee chair when selecting appropriate course work and designing and executing the thesis research project (See coursework requirements for the General Psychology Track). In lieu of specialized and supporting clinical course work, the student should take courses related to the implementation of his/her thesis research including Directed Individual Study credits, and psychology or other graduate courses that are relevant to the thesis topic.

In consultation with the thesis committee, the student will develop a thesis research proposal. Once the proposal is approved by the chair of the thesis committee, a proposal defense meeting will be scheduled. The student should distribute copies of the proposal to the committee members at least one week prior to the time of the proposal defense meeting. Upon successful completion of the thesis proposal meeting, the student will obtain permission (if applicable) of the institutional review board (IRB) to begin collecting data. When permission is granted, the student will collect data and complete the final thesis manuscript.
Once the manuscript is complete, a final thesis defense meeting will be scheduled. The chair of the thesis committee is responsible for scheduling and administering the thesis proposal and final oral defense. The final thesis defense is graded “pass” or “fail.” The student may retake the final oral examination once, with a second failure resulting in termination from the program. When the final version of the thesis is completed and all committee members have “signed off” (approved the document), the student is required to submit three bound copies (with original signatures) of the completed thesis to the Graduate Coordinator at least two weeks prior to the date of graduation.

Exit Requirement for General Psychology Track and/or Students Completing a Thesis

A final oral thesis defense will be required of all students completing the General Psychology Track and/or a thesis. Upon successful completion of the thesis defense, the student will submit three bound copies of the completed thesis, including thesis committee signatures, to Psychology Graduate Coordinator.

Exit Requirement for Clinical Track

For clinical track students, an oral examination will be given toward the end of the program over a therapy and testing case conducted during their practicum placement. Students are required to prepare a comprehensive written analysis of the case which will be presented during the oral examination with the faculty. Development of this presentation will be under the direction of the practicum faculty supervisor and the final draft of the paper must be approved before the oral exam. The practicum faculty supervisor is responsible for scheduling and administering the oral examination. The oral examination is graded “pass” or “fail.” If deficiencies are identified during the exam, additional requirements may be added for successful completion of this requirement. The student may retake the oral examination once, with a second failure resulting in termination from the program.

Grade-Point Average

A minimum grade-point average of 3.0 (“B”) on a 4 point scale in all graduate-level work taken at this university is required for graduation. In addition, a minimum grade-point average of 3.0 (“B”) is required in all psychology courses (PSYC prefix) taken at the graduate level. No grade of less than “C” and no more than two “C’s” earned at this university will be accepted as credit for any master’s program (please see graduate academic and degree requirements in the graduate catalog). Students receiving more than two grades of “C” in their coursework will be terminated from the program.

Registration Restrictions

Students who have not been accepted into the MA Psychology program (Non Degree Students or students enrolled in other programs) may enroll in PSYC 5301, PSYC 5302, PSYC 5321, PSYC 5322, PSYC 5323, or PSYC 5324. Students who enroll in these courses must satisfy the course prerequisites (see course descriptions). Permission of the instructor is required for enrollment in any other graduate course in Psychology.

For Additional Information

Web site: http://psychology.tamucc.edu
Campus address: Bay Hall Room 308; phone: (361) 825-6040
Mailing address: Department of Psychology, Mailstop 5827
College of Liberal Arts, Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
6300 Ocean Drive, Corpus Christi, Texas 78412-5827
E-mail: sharon.holman@mail.tamucc.edu
GRADUATE COURSES

PSYC 5301. * 3 sem. hrs.
RESEARCH METHODS I
The purpose and design of this course is to cover the research methodology and statistics used in performing psychological experiments. The course is designed to take students from generation of a research topic through design, data collection, statistical analysis, data interpretation, and the final write-up of a research report.

PSYC 5302. * 3 sem. hrs.
RESEARCH METHODS II
This course is designed as a follow-up to PSYC 5301. It will introduce students both to the theory and practice of selected qualitative methods and multivariate quantitative methods. The knowledge of experimental design including issues of reliability and validity from PSYC 5301 will be assumed. Practice of qualitative methods will focus on discourse and narrative analysis while topics in multivariate statistics encompass correlation and multiple regression, multivariate analysis of variance and covariance, and factor analysis.

PSYC 5321.* 3 sem. hrs.
ADVANCED PHYSIOLOGICAL PSYCHOLOGY
The study of the anatomy and physiology of the human nervous system including neural transmission, motor systems, speech and higher cortical functions with special emphasis on the physiological changes associated with pathological conditions and their impact on human behavior.

PSYC 5322. 3 sem. hrs.
ADVANCED PERSONALITY THEORIES
A survey of the major approaches to the study of personality. Psychoanalytic, trait, behavioral and humanistic paradigms will be studied with respect to theory, research, and therapeutic application.

PSYC 5323.* 3 sem. hrs.
ADVANCED SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY
A survey of social psychological theory and research. Topics include attitudes, cognition, interpersonal relationships, social influence, prejudice, and group behavior.

PSYC 5324.* 3 sem. hrs.
ADVANCED DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY
A review of research and theories on normal physical, cognitive, emotional, and social development from infancy to adolescence.

PSYC 5325. 3 sem. hrs.
ADVANCED COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY
The study of mental processes and activities used in perceiving, remembering, thinking and understanding. Topics include perception, attention, memory, language, problem solving and decision making with emphasis on the application of these topics to clinical populations and diagnosis.

PSYC 5341. 3 sem. hrs.
ADVANCED ABNORMAL PSYCHOLOGY
Theories, processes and issues related to the development, evaluation, and classification of deviant behaviors.

PSYC 5344. 3 sem. hrs.
PERSONALITY ASSESSMENT
Personality assessment and interpretation using standard instruments such as MMPI, CPI, TAT, and Rorschach.

PSYC 5345. 3 sem. hrs.
FAMILY THEORY, PRACTICE AND THERAPY
Provides an introductory survey of the major theories and theorists in the area of the psychological formulation of family theory. This course will cover various theories of family therapy as well as assessment of family dynamics, and the implications for the application of family theory in practice. A review of the research done in the area and the applicability of the research findings in practice.

PSYC 5348. 3 sem. hrs.
PROJECTIVE TECHNIQUES
An in-depth study of projective techniques for personality assessment. The main instrument studied is the Rorschach Inkblot Test using the Beck system. Also covered are the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), House-Tree-Person Projective Technique, and Draw-a-Person Techniques.

PSYC 5350. 3 sem. hrs.
INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOTHERAPY
The study of professional ethics and individual psychotherapy techniques.

PSYC 5351. 3 sem. hrs.
CHILD PSYCHOPATHOLOGY
The course will take a developmental approach in explaining child psychopathology. The course will include a consideration of diagnostic, epidemiological, developmental, and psychophysiological determinants of behavior. Prerequisites: PSYC 5324 and PSYC 5341 or permission of instructor.

PSYC 5355. 3 sem. hrs.
GROUP PSYCHOTHERAPY
This course is designed to introduce the graduate student to the theoretical and applied issues related to the practice of group psychotherapy. Examines a variety of therapeutic groups as well as the issues related to the practice of group psychotherapy with special populations. Prerequisites: PSYC 5350 or permission of the instructor.

PSYC 5360. 3 sem. hrs.
SEMINAR IN PSYCHOLOGY
In depth study of various topics within psychology such as those related to history, clinical, social, experimental and business and industrial. May be repeated when topics vary.

PSYC 5390. 3 sem. hrs.
THESIS
Independent research under the direction of a faculty member. May be repeated to a total of six semester hours. (This course is graded “credit” or “no credit.”) By permission only.

PSYC 5396. 3 sem. hrs.
INDIVIDUAL STUDY
Individual study, reading or research with faculty direction and evaluation. Offered on application to and approval of the program coordinator. No more than 6 hours will be counted towards the degree.
Public Administration

MASTER OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Program Description

The Master of Public Administration (MPA) program is designed to prepare students for managerial careers in the public and not-for-profit sectors of the economy. The MPA has been designed to meet the needs of full-time employees wishing to earn their degree through part-time study. Students in the program will take a core of eight courses in order to increase their understanding of administrative theory, policy making, data analysis, public budgeting and finance, and human resource management.

Additionally, each student will select one of five program tracks, which specify the remaining course work in their program. The student may choose from specialized tracks in public management, non-profit management, criminal justice, health care administration, and environmental science.

Graduates of the Master of Public Administration program will be able to:

• demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the underlying concepts and principles of public administration and the ability to evaluate and interpret them in the context of the Texas Coastal Bend community, the state and the nation.
• demonstrate the ability to interpret, evaluate and present qualitative and quantitative data, develop lines of argument and make sound judgments in accordance with theories and concepts of public administration.
• evaluate the appropriateness of policy and management options related to the public sectors and communicate results accurately, reliably and with structured coherent arguments.
• carry out budgeting operations, policy and program analysis.
• be sufficiently prepared for further training and to develop new skills within a public management environment.

Admission Requirements

In addition to the admission requirements outlined for graduate programs, the MPA program requires the following:

• Transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate work undertaken from regionally accredited universities.
• Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores taken within the last five years from the application date.
• Two letters of evaluation from individuals such as professors and employers attesting to the applicant’s potential for success in a graduate program of study. Letters of evaluation should specifically address the applicant’s potential for a successful career and motivation for graduate study.