

Graduate Study in Psychology and Related Fields: Focus on Applied Programs

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Areas within traditional Psychology Programs with academic career options

- Clinical
- Counseling
- Educational
- School
- Developmental
- Cognitive
- Behavioral Neuroscience/
Physiological
- Measurement
- Personality
- Social
- Experimental
- Industrial/Organizational/
Human Factors
- Health
- Sports
- Sensation/Perception

Associated Fields

- Psychiatry
 - Medical degree (M.D.) with advanced residency training (usually 4-year medical degree with 3+ year residency, and possibly fellowship)
 - Advantage: Higher pay
- Various Applied Master Degree Programs
 - In Psychology, Education, Biology, Social Work
 - All master's programs tend to be 2-3 years.
 - Some are squeezed into one year or are online.

Master's Degree Programs

- Main Types of Masters Programs in Applied Areas:
 - Masters within Education or Psychology Departments:
 - Programs in clinical, counseling, marriage and family therapy, community/school counseling, etc.
 - Certifications/licensing may vary by state
 - Social Work (MSW): Provides training in individual and group therapy, but also embodies a more sociocultural emphasis (e.g., may also be connecting clients to community resources, etc.)
 - An advantage of this degree is that, historically, there has been a national certification exam; thus your certification will go with you anywhere you live in the U.S.
 - Other Master's degrees found in medical schools, such as Genetic Counseling

Getting information about specific programs in Psychology

- "Graduate Study in Psychology"
 - <http://www.apa.org/gradstudy>
 - APA publication that provides information about programs in Psychology around the country
- Mayne, T.J., Norcross, J.C., & Sayette, M.A. (2006). *Insider's Guide to Graduate Programs in Clinical and Counseling Psychology*. NY: Guilford Press.
- APA (2005). *Getting In: A Step-by-Step Plan for Gaining Admission to Graduate School in Psychology*. Author: Washington, D.C.
- <http://www.apa.org/students/>

Should I apply to a master's or doctoral degree program?

- Think about:
 - Where you see yourself and what you want to be doing?
 - How much time and resources you would like to expend?
- Master's Programs
 - Traditional, full-time programs typically take two+ years
 - Expenses are often covered by you, and graduate tuition is usually more expensive than undergraduate tuition
- Doctoral Programs
 - Traditional, full-time can take 4+ years (usually more in certain areas, such as Neuroscience, Clinical or Counseling Psychology)
 - Often, tuition and expenses covered while you work as a Graduate Assistant

Master's vs. Doctoral Program?

- Ask yourself how much you like research?
- Doctoral Programs
 - Typically include a master's thesis and a dissertation (and usually comps or another project)
- Master's Programs
 - May include a thesis, but sometimes there is a comprehensive exam instead of a thesis AND/OR a field experience

Doctoral Programs in Clinical vs. Counseling Psychology

- Typically include 4-5 years of coursework (including thesis and dissertation) + one year of internship (which is typically full-time) + post-doctoral training (1-3 years)
- Often, the programs are quite similar
- Depending on the state, graduates from both programs are generally eligible for the same professional benefits (such as psychology licensure, independent practice, and insurance reimbursement)
- Clinical Psychology graduates are traditionally more focused on more serious mental illness, whereas counseling psychology graduates work with healthier, less pathological populations and conduct more career and vocational assessment

Doctoral Programs in Clinical vs. Counseling Psychology

- There are more Clinical Psychology doctoral programs than counseling psychology doctoral programs
 - In 1999, there were 194 APA-accredited doctoral programs in clinical psychology and 64 APA-accredited doctoral programs in counseling psychology.
 - Clinical psychology programs produce approximately 2,000 doctoral degrees per year (1,300 PhD and 600 to 700 PsyD), while counseling psychology programs graduate approximately 500 new psychologists per year.
- Clinical psychology graduate programs are almost exclusively housed in departments or schools of psychology, whereas counseling psychology graduate programs are located in a variety of departments and divisions.
- Counseling psychologists are more frequently employed in university counseling centers, whereas clinical psychologists are more frequently employed in hospital settings

What is the difference between a Ph.D. and a Psy.D.?

- The major difference between the Psy.D. and the Ph.D. is the emphasis on research.
- The Ph.D. degree prepares clinical psychologists to be researchers (as well as practitioners); whereas, the Psy.D. prepares clinicians to be consumers of research (as well as practitioners).

What is the difference between a Ph.D. and a Psy.D.?

Ph.D.

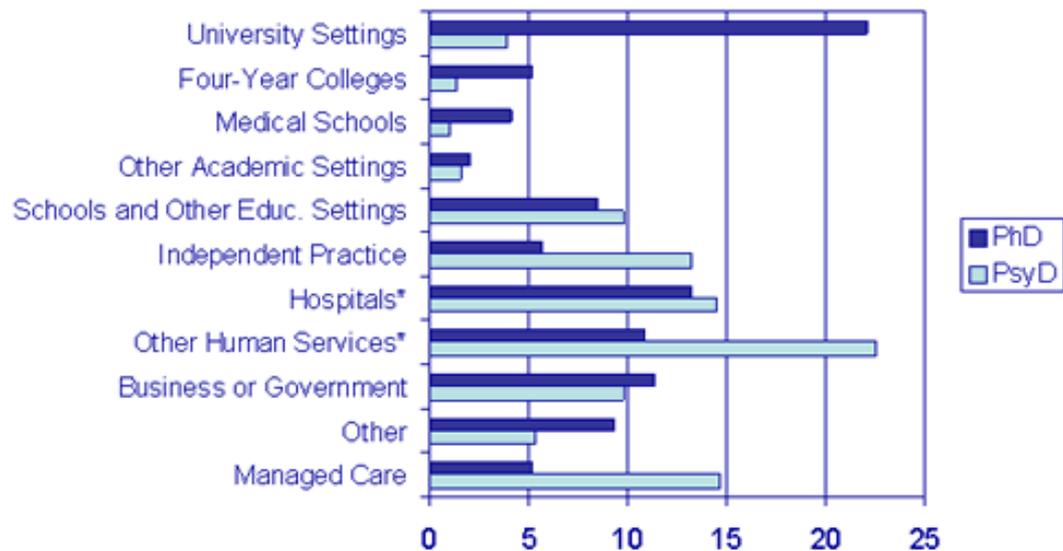
- Scientist-practitioner or clinical scientist
- Emphasis on both research and practice (varies by program)
- University
- Practice oriented programs: 17% acceptance
- Research oriented programs: 11% acceptance
- Equal emphasis: 57% fully funded
- Research-oriented: 84% fully funded
- \$22,000 debt
- 6.1 years
- 96-98% matched to internship

Psy.D.

- Scholar/professionals
- Focus on clinical service/less research
- University depts./university-affiliate school/free standing psychology school
- 3-4 times more students than Ph.D programs
- 41% acceptance rate
- 20% get full financial assistance (6% - 38%)
- \$53-\$60,000 debt
- 5.1 years
- 74% matched to internship

What is the difference between a Ph.D. and a Psy.D.?

Primary Employment Settings of 2001 PhD and PsyD Recipients in Psychology



*Disproportionately high percentages are represented in these categories as many recent graduates are still gaining experience in these organized settings prior to licensure.

Source: 2001 Doctorate Employment Survey, APA Research Office.

Doctoral Programs in Clinical vs. Counseling Psychology

- Both programs are very competitive. The programs accept, on average, 6 to 8% of applicants.
- The overall GPA average is 3.5 ($SD = .2$) and the psychology GPA average is 3.7 ($SD = .1$).
- Approximately two thirds of incoming doctoral students were baccalaureate level and one third master's level

Just when you thought you might want to do the Ph.D....

- For clinical or counseling psychology, in addition to the 4-5 years of coursework, here is what else to expect:
 - One year internship
 - Approximately one to three years of postdoctoral experience
 - Licensing exam – requirements for total hours vary by state (usually at least one year)

What are the admission requirements for graduate programs in Psychology?

- Requirements for admission vary from program to program
- Many psychology programs prefer or require significant undergraduate coursework in psychology
- General GPA cut-off for master's programs is a 3.0.; for doctoral programs, probably closer to a 3.5
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE-General and Subject-Psychology) or (less frequently) the Miller Analogies Test (MAT).
- Research experience, work experience, clinically-related public service, extracurricular activity, letters of recommendation, resume/vita, statement of goals and objectives, and an interview (mostly for clinical/counseling doctoral programs)

Research Experience

- For doctoral programs, you must have substantial research experience.
 - Taking PSY 300 (Methods) is NOT enough!
- Any research experience is good, but if applying to a clinical program, try to get some applied experience if possible
- Students must also work in professors' labs, be part of research teams, attend conferences and participate in posters and/or presentations, and perhaps even conduct an independent study (PSY 422 Directed Studies) or apply to Honors or McNair.
- Consider taking PSY 401 – Advanced Research Methods
- Some people applying to doctoral programs are already published, so this is who you will be competing against.

Work/Clinical Experience

- For master's programs, you must show that you have actually worked with people in therapeutic settings.
 - Your PSY 491 internship is a good start for this, but probably not enough.
- Although research is more highly stressed in doctoral programs, it is a good idea to also get some clinical experience if applying to Ph.D. programs in Clinical or Counseling Psychology.
- Try to get some work or volunteer experience in a variety of settings (with a variety of populations).
- NOTE: some master's programs will not accept people straight out of a bachelor's program.

GRE

- Administered by Educational Testing Service (www.ets.org/gre/)
- Usually required for admission to graduate school (and also to compete for fellowships and assistantships)
- Do I need to prepare/study in advance?
 - YES! Plan to study for 6-12 months in advance.
- Take the exam no later than October if applying for admission the following year
- Fees
 - \$140 for General Test / \$130 for Psychology Test
- General test is taken on the computer (offered any time of year)
- Psychology Subject Test is taken on paper (only in Oct., Nov., April)

GRE

- Three scores (for each of 3 sections) are reported on the General Test:
 - Verbal Reasoning score reported on a 200-800 score scale, in 10-point increments
 - Quantitative Reasoning score reported on a 200-800 score scale, in 10-point increments
 - Analytical Writing score reported on a 0-6 score scale, in half-point increments
- One score is reported for the Psychology test
 - Score ranges from 200-800, in 10-point increments
 - Question Areas: Experimental/natural science oriented – 40%, Social or social science oriented – 43%, General – 17%

GRE

- Score requirements: Depends on program
 - For master's programs, generally need 500 or more on all sections.
 - For doctoral programs, you'll be competing with folks in the 600-700's.
- Study materials:
 - Local bookstores carry materials to prepare for both the general and subject GRE's
 - You can also take practice exams through Career Services (UC)
 - There are also practice materials available on the ETS website.
 - There are also prep courses available through Kaplan (www.kaptest.com). These are very expensive (>\$1000), but can be effective

When applying

- Know the programs well
- Examine:
 - What are your interests? What are the program's emphases? Research or clinical opportunities? Theoretical orientation? Financial Aid?
- Do you want to live there for 4-5 years? How much work are you willing to do? Do you have a partner?
- If applying to clinical/counseling doctoral programs, may need to apply to 10-20 programs
- Costs
 - Application fees: \$0-100
 - Transcripts: \$5 (at UNC)
 - GREs: \$15 each (additional score reports)

So you got an interview...Now what????

- Interview Format

- On your dime
- Everything is part of the interview (Do not get too personal)
- Dress for success (suit up)
- You will typically be asked to attend the program for a half- or full-day, where you will:
 - Meet with faculty individually and as a group
 - Meet with graduate students
 - Have lunch and socialize
 - Ask questions about the program
 - Talk about your interests and the work (research and clinical) you have done

Interview/Acceptance

- Programs vary as to the weight they put on these interviews (often used as a screen)
- Clinical/counseling doctoral program offers usually go out in mid-Spring (March to April-ish)
- Must accept an offer by April 15th (APA Rules)
- The fun begins the following Fall!

What can I expect in a graduate program?

- Master's
 - Many students enrolled in masters programs are working (at least part-time) outside of the university
 - Less money available for stipends/tuition assistance
- Doctoral
 - Most likely will not work outside of university (due to intensity of program, although this varies)
 - Expect to work as a graduate assistant, which will provide a small stipend and tuition waiver/stipend
- Finances
 - I advise that you seriously consider whether you want to attend a doctoral program that does not offer you a tuition waiver

What can I expect in a graduate program?

- In most doctoral programs, you will enter to work under a specific professor, who will serve as your mentor
 - You may be doing assistantship work with this professor or working in his/her lab
- In most programs, you will be coming to that program with some idea of the type of research you would like to do
 - This, of course, may change during your studies

What can I expect in a graduate program?

- Work Load
 - Doctoral Programs require a fairly intensive work load
 - Expect to simultaneously:
 - Take 9-12 credit hours of graduate level courses (Note: the time needed to complete your coursework and difficulty of these courses is often 2-3 times that of undergraduate coursework)
 - Conduct independent research (masters thesis, dissertation)
 - Conduct research for your advisor or within a research group
 - Be involved in clinical work (if in an applied program; e.g., internal and external practicum, assessment teams, etc.)

Clinical Psychology: APA Requirements

1. Curriculum
 - Breadth of scientific psychology
 - Diagnosis/assessment and intervention
 - Cultural and individual differences
2. Practicum Experiences ($M = 700$ hrs)
 - 400 hours direct care
 - 75 hours supervision
3. Internship – 2000 hours (one-year full-time)
4. 2000 hours Supervised Post-Doctoral Experience
 - National Licensing Exam
 - State Licensing Requirements

Jobs in Psychology

- Master's Degree recipients
 - Private non-profits
 - Private non-profits
 - Self-employed
 - University
 - Other educational institution
 - Federal government
 - State/local government

Jobs in Psychology

- Doctoral Degree recipients
 - Academia/University (more common in non-clinical fields)
 - Schools or other educational settings
 - Hospitals (mostly the clinical Ph.D.s)
 - Managed care (mostly the clinical Ph.D.s)
 - Independent practice (mostly the clinical Ph.D.s)
 - Other human service fields
 - Business/government/other