

Application Information: Graduate Studies in Psychology

Department of Psychology
University of Cincinnati

Welcome to the Psychology Department at the University of Cincinnati

We take great pride in our graduate program in psychology, and we are pleased that you are interested in exploring what we have to offer at UC. Our department is over one hundred years old, with an outstanding experimental program and a clinical training program that has been continuously accredited by the American Psychological Association since 1948 (American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002-4242).

We pride ourselves on being innovative. Our curriculum is based on a foundation in the breadth of psychology, the development of professional skills, as well as coursework in statistics and research design. Our clinical students also complete a sequence of clinical courses. On top of this foundation, our students—in collaboration with a faculty mentor—develop an individualized set of courses and training experiences selected with an eye toward propelling them on their chosen career path. Our faculty have forged relationships with the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine, Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, as well as numerous other educational, research, and service agencies. Our collaborators are a critical component in the graduate school experience of our students. We encourage you to gain all the benefits possible from the University of Cincinnati's outstanding faculty and resources, and the wealth of educational assets available in the Cincinnati area.

In order to apply to our program, you will need to fill out the [Department of Psychology Information Sheet](#) that appears on this site and send it along with three letters of reference, official transcripts, and your Personal Statement (they should all be sent in the same packet) directly to the Department of Psychology. More detailed information about these application materials is provided in the file that contains the Information Sheet. *In addition*, you need to complete the UC Graduate School application online at <http://www.grad.uc.edu/content/gradapp.cfm>.

Because we believe in the importance of mentoring to our students' career development, our admissions process is based on a mentor model in which the quality of the match between faculty and students is crucial. We encourage you to review the information on our website about faculty interests and recent work.

If you have any questions about this process, please feel free to contact [me](#) (steven.howe@uc.edu) directly or to write to our Graduate Coordinator, Karen Eichelbrenner (karen.eichelbrenner@uc.edu). I wish you great success with your graduate school applications.

Sincerely,
Steven Howe, Ph.D.
Professor of Psychology
Department Head

Graduate Studies in Psychology

Overview

The University of Cincinnati Department of Psychology offers the Ph.D. in Psychology and includes an APA-accredited training program in Clinical Psychology. We do not currently admit students who are seeking a terminal master's degree. We train doctoral-level researchers and scientist-practitioners, primarily in health psychology, neuropsychology, human factors, and cognition, action and perception. Students interested in combining clinical and experimental training may enter the Clinical Training Program, provided they apply and are accepted for clinical training at the initial application. Students admitted for clinical training must satisfy general departmental requirements in addition to the requirements of the clinical program. These requirements are discussed in the section below on the Clinical Psychology Training Program.

The doctoral program is limited to full-time students who show outstanding promise as demonstrated by excellent undergraduate achievement, strong scores on the Graduate Record Exam, and letters of recommendation. The doctoral program is also open to students who have earned a master's degree in psychology from another institution. Applicants must specify a general area in which they plan to do research. The department has special resources and interests in health psychology, experimental psychology and human factors, and neuropsychology. The training opportunities and requirements in each of these areas are described in separate sections. The department also provides excellent training in a variety of other research areas. Students are admitted to the doctoral program to work with a specific faculty research mentor. Faculty mentors are responsible for ensuring that students are actively engaged in research from the beginning of their graduate school careers and that this work leads successfully to a master's thesis and a dissertation within the prescribed period. Mentors are also responsible for providing guidance on a wide range of professional development matters. Training committees consisting of three faculty members are appointed for every student early in their first year of study to ensure that students receive a course of instruction tailored to their needs. These committees help students design a customized course of study that is the basis for evaluating their progress.

You may refer to the *Graduate Handbook* on our department website for more comprehensive information about program requirements and procedures. *The Handbook also includes a section describing recommended coursework for our applicants.*

Financial Support

On average, our graduate students complete the doctoral program in six years (which includes the required internship year for clinical students). The University of Cincinnati Board of Trustees prohibits guarantees of support for more than one year. However, it is our intention to ensure that our students are supported for a minimum of four years, and the department has never failed to do so in the past forty years. During the first four years, graduate students are supported by teaching assistantships, research assistantships or clinical traineeships. There are also competitive summer placements, research fellowships, and opportunities to teach summer school. Students in their fifth or sixth years generally find it possible to secure clinical, teaching, research, or consulting positions, either within the department or externally. In addition to a monthly stipend, graduate students receive a University Graduate Scholarship during each of their first four years that covers the cost of tuition and some fees.

Commitment to Diversity

The department is committed to recruiting and mentoring students of color who demonstrate strong potential for academic advancement. Many current minority students have received additional funding through the university and external sources. About 68% of the students in the graduate program are women, and 27% are people of color. The department has a new core curriculum in which every required course incorporates issues of diversity. Several faculty members are actively conducting research on matters of particular concern to the African-American community. For clinical students, several placements are available at sites that serve minority clients. In addition, the clinical curriculum includes a course on diversity issues in clinical practice.

The University

The University of Cincinnati is characterized by its rich mixture of cultures, ideas, and activities. As a graduate student at the University, you will benefit from the teaching skills of nationally prominent scholars and researchers, use some of the finest library and research facilities in the country, and be challenged by innovative programs providing multiple opportunities for intellectual growth and career satisfaction. The university's mission is to provide the highest quality learning environment, world-renowned scholarship and innovation, and to serve as a model for freedom of intellectual interchange. Over 80 endowed chairs and professorships contribute to a most distinguished and gifted faculty. Our record of endowment funds and sponsored programs place the University of Cincinnati among the top comprehensive institutions in the country. This level of support means that UC can provide the resources necessary for scholarship and research in virtually any area of human endeavor. We have an active, architecturally noteworthy, 200-acre campus that houses 250 student organizations and cultural and recreational activities ranging from concerts, ballets and musicals to sports.

City of Cincinnati

With its unique people, personality and offerings, Cincinnati provides a perfect complement to the university. Cincinnati, an urban center of a metropolitan area with a population of about 1.9 million people, is located in southwest Ohio on the banks of the Ohio River. Typical student apartment rentals range from \$400 to \$700 per month, making Cincinnati a very affordable place to live. In addition, UC students are able to ride the Metro buses at no cost on any route at any time, in addition to travel to and from school. Only five minutes from UC's campus, downtown Cincinnati embodies the traditional and the modern in a riverfront setting that combines business, recreation, and culture. The Cincinnati Symphony, one of the best in the country, has a full concert season each year. The Cincinnati Opera performs most of its program during the summer, and the Cincinnati Ballet performs year-round. There is a full schedule of musical performances at the College Conservatory of Music, located on the main campus. The Cincinnati Playhouse and University Theater programs offer a variety of experimental and traditional professional programs. The city has several large art museums and a natural history museum, as well as a number of smaller, topical museums. The Cincinnati Zoo is internationally known for its projects and progeny. The Krohn Conservatory and Mt. Airy Forest Arboretum provide a chance to see flowering plants and trees year-round. Major league professional football and baseball teams play their home games downtown, and a major professional tennis tournament takes place each summer. Students may use the newly constructed athletic facilities of the University free of charge. In addition, there are numerous public golf courses, swim clubs and fitness centers located throughout the city. Cincinnati is well known for its restaurants, bars, and clubs. On any night you can choose from jazz, rock, country-western, and folk music. Weekends bring concerts and nationally known performers on tour at the Coliseum, Cincinnati Gardens, Riverbend, and several of the larger nightclubs. In addition, there are dozens of movie theaters and repertory film festivals.

Clinical Psychology Training Program

The goal of the Clinical Training Program is to prepare students for the widest possible range of jobs, from academic researcher to independent clinical practitioner. We view research and practice as complementary activities. Researchers in virtually any area of psychology can benefit from their clinical experiences, and clinicians need to know how to evaluate research critically in order to apply empirically supported interventions. Thus, students in the clinical program are expected to develop expertise in both research and clinical practice. Graduates of the program hold faculty positions in colleges and universities, research positions in hospitals and research institutes, and clinical positions in community mental health centers, industry, penal systems, and independent practices. Clinical students take a set of core clinical courses covering such areas as assessment, personality, and intervention in addition to satisfying general departmental requirements. Clinical course work begins in the first year in the program. In addition, clinical students are encouraged to pursue coursework within their area of emphasis (typically health psychology or neuropsychology). As a result, students gain expertise in a specialty area in addition to broad knowledge of general clinical areas. For students who are admitted to the clinical program to work with a faculty member whose interests do not fall into the areas of health psychology, human factors, or neuropsychology, the Director of Clinical Training will assist you in defining an area of clinical specialization consistent with your research interests and career goals. The department believes in integrating classroom experience, research experience, and clinical experience from the first year in graduate school. Clinical students in each of their first two years take a mixture of courses in general psychology, clinical psychology (including clinical case conferences) and areas relevant to their research emphasis. They also begin working with their research mentor from the first week of graduate school, and this program of research leads eventually to the master's thesis and dissertation. Finally, students get clinical training every year in the program. First year students complete a six-month practicum; second year students do a year long practicum; and third and fourth-year students spend 20 hours per week in paid clinical placements in one of more than 20 community agencies. Clinical students are required to complete an APA-accredited internship or its equivalent. Over the past several years, students have been extremely competitive for these internships, with many students winning their first choice of assignment. Core faculty members affiliated with the clinical program include the following: Professors Burlew, Drotar, Epstein, Hovanitz, Jacquez, Medina, McLeish, Mitchell, Nabors, Peteet, Ris, Schefft, Shear, Strakowski, Stutz, Tran. For questions about the clinical training program, please contact Paula K. Shear, Ph.D., Director of Clinical Training at paula.shear@uc.edu.

Areas of Emphasis

Most of our faculty have interests in health psychology, neuropsychology, human factors, or cognition, action and perception. (See [Faculty Profiles](#)).

Health Psychology

Students in Health Psychology are trained to make scientific, educational, and professional contributions in the discipline of psychology to the promotion and maintenance of health. Prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of illness, identification of the intraindividual as well as interindividual correlates and causes of health, illness and related dysfunction, and the analysis and improvement of the health care system and health policy formation are all considered components of the field of health psychology. Many of our graduates are employed by medical centers; some provide clinical services, while others function as researchers, organizational and human resource development consultants, and educators. A significant number of graduates pursue research and teaching at universities. Yet another set of graduates choose to engage in independent consultation or practice. Our training in health psychology occurs primarily in a

research context, with faculty mentors. The focus area is intended to prepare students for entry into intensive specialization at the predoctoral internship and postdoctoral levels. Long-term research projects by health psychology faculty are diverse. Several faculty are involved in issues surrounding substance abuse and prevention (Drs. [Burlew](#), [Medina](#), and [Tran](#)). Another group of faculty are involved in the area of stress and health (Drs. [Hovanitz](#), [Jacquez](#), [McLeish](#), [Mitchell](#) and [Matthews](#)). We have faculty studying child and adolescent psychology (Drs. [Burlew](#), [Medina](#), [Mitchell](#) and [Nabors](#)), including research programs in psychosocial adjustment to pediatric chronic illness, quality of life in sickle cell disease, and adolescent substance abuse. Another group is interested in community intervention and prevention programs, including their design and their evaluation (Howe, [Jacquez](#) and [Mitchell](#)). Research programs by individual faculty include studies of the etiology and treatment of headache, the integration of primary and behavioral healthcare, recovery from serious mental illnesses, and family violence. The Psychophysiology, Alcohol, Mental Health Services Evaluation, and Stress laboratories are housed within the Department of Psychology. Many resources are available within the local hospital systems. Located within 1 to 3 miles of the University of Cincinnati West (main) Campus are the University Hospitals Complex, the Cincinnati Children's Hospital Center (one of the largest children's hospitals in North America), the Cincinnati Veterans Administration Hospital, Deaconess Hospital, and Christ Hospital. Students entering health psychology (adult or child emphasis) are encouraged to take the course Seminar in Health Psychology (15-PSYC-915). This class is team taught by multiple health psychology faculty and takes place Fall through Spring quarters the first two years of the curriculum. Other classes are individually tailored to meet professional prerequisites (i.e., APA criteria for an approved clinical program), and take into account the career objectives of the individual. Health psychology students usually take electives in their area of emphasis. These courses may be selected from the offerings of the College of Medicine, Department of Environmental Health; College of Pharmacy; College of Business Administration; McMicken College of Arts & Sciences, Departments of Psychology and Sociology; and College of Education, School and Community Health Education. For more information, contact [Drs. Giao Tran or Laura Nabors](#), Co-Directors of Health Psychology, at Giao.Tran@uc.edu or Laura.Nabors@uc.edu.

Experimental Psychology

The department offers comprehensive training in experimental psychology, focusing on cognition, action and perception, and on human factors. The UC human factors program has a reputation of excellence, with strengths in research on vigilance, stress and performance, and cognitive workload. The cognition, action and perception program features unique and cutting-edge training in ecological psychology and dynamical systems. Areas of specialization represented among the program faculty include visual, auditory, olfactory, and haptic perception, psychophysics, selective and sustained attention, cognition, psycholinguistics, speech perception and recognition, stress and performance, cognitive development, and motor behavior and control. Recent research support has come from the U.S. Army, Navy, and Air Force, National Science Foundation, National Institutes of Health, and the Procter & Gamble Company. The department maintains extensive research facilities, including the country's largest laboratory for the study of sustained attention, together with laboratories for the study of human performance and driver behavior, visual and haptic perception, motion capture and force measurement in motor behavior and postural control, cognitive performance, cerebral blood flow, and speech perception and recognition.

Department faculty affiliated with the experimental program include Drs. [Peter Chiu](#), [Gerald Matthews](#), [Michael A. Riley](#), [Kevin Shockley](#), [Robert Frank](#), [Guy Van Orden](#), [Heidi Kloos](#), and [Sarah Cummins-Sebree](#). In addition to department faculty, faculty members in other units of the university collaborate closely with our faculty, including researchers in the Philosophy and

Biology Departments in the McMicken College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Applied Health Sciences, the College of Engineering, and the College of Medicine. Our program is affiliated with the Southwestern Ohio Human Factors and Ergonomics Consortium (SOFEC), which also includes the University of Dayton and Miami University. Students from member institutions can take courses and gain research experience at any participating school. UC is also affiliated with the Air Force Research Laboratory at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, one of the most distinguished human factors research facilities in the nation, and with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), where students can work as research interns.

The philosophy of the program is that the strongest preparation for a career is one in which specialized competence in a particular area is bolstered by a breadth of background in modern experimental psychology. As a result, graduates are well suited to take advantage of emerging opportunities in industry, government, and the academic world. Specialized coursework in experimental psychology emphasizes theory and knowledge in the core of modern experimental psychology, including quantitative methods, experimental design, the philosophy of science, sensation, perception, and psychophysics, motor coordination and control, performance and information processing, cognition, stress, human factors, and the physiological basis of behavior. Our graduate program involves much more than coursework, however. Students engage extensively in research throughout their course of study, and are expected to publish their research in peer-reviewed journals and present their work at national and international conferences. The Cognition, Action, and Perception seminar series features presentations by nationally and internationally renowned scholars as well as presentations by UC faculty and students. Training also includes the opportunity to teach courses in the student's area of emphasis.

For additional information about the Experimental Psychology concentration contact [Dr. Michael A. Riley](#) at michael.riley@uc.edu or [Dr. Kevin Shockley](#) at kevin.shockley@uc.edu.

Neuropsychology

Our neuropsychology training includes theoretical and empirical foundations of brain-behavior relationships as well as applied experience. Students who are also enrolled in the Clinical Training Program develop the graduate-level diagnostic, assessment and intervention skills needed to practice as a clinical neuropsychologist. Nationally, the field of neuropsychology is experiencing tremendous growth. Graduates of our program have secured academic appointments, taken research positions in major university medical centers and joined established clinical practices. Some of the active research programs in neuropsychology concern the cognitive neuroscience of human memory, neural correlates of perception and memory of speech, the psychophysics of taste and smell, cognitive effects of substance abuse, the effects of developmental disorders on mood and personality, functional neuroimaging, the effects of brain tumors and head trauma in children, clinical research on neuropsychological test development, the application of behavioral self-regulation methods with medically intractable epilepsy patients and diagnostic localization of epileptogenic lesions. The department was one of the first in the country to offer comprehensive specialized doctoral training in neuropsychology. Research facilities within the department include a laboratory for the neuropsychology of taste and smell, a psychoacoustics and auditory cognition laboratory, and an electrophysiological laboratory. Many of the faculty make extensive use of research facilities and patient populations at the UC Medical Center, including the programs at University Hospital's Epilepsy Monitoring Unit and the Division of Bipolar Disorders Research in the Department of Psychiatry (<http://psychiatry.uc.edu/research/bpdr/>). Students have access to other instructional and research opportunities as a result of collaborations between the

department's faculty and the UC interdisciplinary Neuroscience Institute, the pediatric neuropsychology program at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center, the epilepsy and neurology clinics in the Department of Neurology, the neurobehavioral research programs in the Department of Communication Disorders and the Aring Neurology Center at UC's College of Medicine (<http://www.med.uc.edu/neurology/>). All neuropsychology students participate together with program faculty in a bi-weekly seminar that focuses on research issues and methods. In addition, students in both the clinical and non-clinical tracks work closely on research activities in a mentoring relationship with faculty, beginning in the first year and continuing throughout the program. Beyond completing the core clinical psychology training experiences, clinical neuropsychology students take courses in neuroscience and neuropsychology that include neuroanatomy, advanced physiological psychology, neurobiology, foundations of clinical neuropsychology, and psychopharmacology.

The course of study for clinical students is consistent with national guidelines developed for doctoral study in neuropsychology (Houston Conference Guidelines). Neuropsychology training is overseen by a group of core faculty in the Department including Professors [Chiu](#), [Frank](#), [Medina](#), [Ris](#), [Schefft](#), [Shear](#), [Strakowski](#), and [Stutz](#). This core group is supported by a large number of neuropsychologists who hold adjunct status in the Department and full-time academic/clinical positions in other departments of the University, including the College of Medicine and various hospitals throughout greater Cincinnati. For more information, contact [Dr. Bruce K. Schefft](#), Director of Neuropsychology, at email address scheffbk@email.uc.edu.

General Contact Information

If you have any questions about your application to our program, please contact Karen Eichelbrenner, our Graduate Coordinator, at 513.556.5539 or Karen.Eichelbrenner@uc.edu. Thank you very much for your interest in our program.