

Doctor or Philosophy in General Experimental Psychology (Health/Neuroscience)

About This Program

The Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology requires distinguished accomplishments in both scholarship and original research as well as a deep understanding of the strategic role of thoughtful research in the development of an empirical science. Although the student must meet the minimum requirements of a planned course of study, the ultimate basis for conferring the degree must be the demonstrated ability to do independent and creative work and the exhibition of a profound grasp of the subject matter of the field.

The specialization in Health/Neuroscience Psychology is designed to train researchers in health/neuroscience and behavior, working at the cutting-edge of interdisciplinary, biomedical and bio-behavioral investigation in areas such as pain, addiction, stress, psycho-immunology, memory, cancer and aging. Most research activity is based on the neurophysiological, bio-behavioral, or biopsychosocial model of health and illness.

Competencies

1. Ability to Apply Research: graduates will demonstrate their advanced skills in translating psychological theory and research into everyday life applications.
2. Critical Thinking Skills: graduates will be proficient in critically evaluating the adequacy of scientific research in psychology.
3. Knowledge of Psychology: graduates will demonstrate their knowledge of psychological theory and research.

Admissions Criteria

There are no fixed criteria for admission to the PhD programs in Psychology; many aspects of the student's application inform our admission decisions, but a complete application package **on or before December 1** is highly recommended to ensure a timely review of the student file.

There are, though, some standard requirements. A student is expected to have successfully completed the appropriate work prior to admission, including an undergraduate BA or BS degree. The Department of Psychology strongly encourages undergraduate courses in statistics and experimental methods. In addition, the Office of Graduate Studies requires a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in undergraduate work for unconditional admission to the program. Graduate coursework will also be reviewed for those who are applying to a degree-bound or direct PhD program, if any. For those applying to the direct PhD program already having earned or will earn a master's degree, a minimum of 28-30 graduate hours with a GPA of 3.0 or better as calculated by the Graduate School is typically required.

Qualified applicants are admitted once a year in Fall terms only and must be degree-seeking. Non-Fall/non-degree seeking applicants will be asked to submit the [update/reactivation form](https://common.forms.uta.edu/view.php?id=2626) (<https://common.forms.uta.edu/view.php?id=2626>) to have their file reviewed for the applicable Fall semester. Only Fall-intended degree-seeking applications will be reviewed. The application portal will open in September. Selected candidates are typically notified in the April to May time frame; however, this time frame is subject to change.

ADMISSIONS FOCUS

Graduate admissions committees are subcommittees of the Graduate Studies Committee. Each specialization (i.e., Psychological Sciences, Health/Neuroscience, I/O) will convene an admissions committee to make recommendations to the Graduate Studies Committee regarding advisors of applicants. Each is composed of faculty representatives from the specialization, as well as the graduate advisor and the Department Chairperson. Admissions decisions are based on interpretation of indicators of potential success in the program. Committees consider several factors in admissions decisions:

Grade point average

Most candidates for admissions present averages greater than 3.2. We do, however, examine the applicant's coursework as evidence of research interest. Positive indicators of success in our program include greater than average work in biological and physical sciences, mathematics and psychology. In similar fashion, evidence of research experience is viewed as a predictor of future research potential.

Verbal and quantitative GRE scores

Submission of verbal and quantitative GRE scores is required unless otherwise noted. High GRE scores are viewed positively, but lower GRE scores need not exclude a candidate who shows positive indicators in other areas. We do not require the GRE Subject Test in Psychology.

Language-based tests

If applicable, submission of language-based tests for applicants who do not have a U.S.-based degree is required. An applicant whose native language is not English must demonstrate a sufficient level of skill with the English language to assure success in graduate studies. Applicants are expected to submit a score of at least 6.5 on the IELTS, or achieve a minimum TOEFL iBT total score of 79. Further, when the TOEFL iBT is taken, sectional scores of at least 22 on the writing section, 21 on the speaking section, 20 on the reading section, and 16 on the listening section are preferred. It should be

noted that admission to our graduate program is limited and competitive. Meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance, and the program may give preference to students with higher scores. Only scores submitted directly by ETS or IELTS to UT Arlington are acceptable.

English proficiency for graduate teaching assistants

Before being appointed to an assistantship at UT Arlington, a student whose native language is not English must demonstrate acceptable skill with spoken English. An applicant who is a non-native speaker of English must submit a TOEFL iBT score of at least 23, or a score of at least 7 on the Speaking section of the IELTS, or take and pass the UTA Developmental English course to meet this requirement. The English proficiency requirement will be waived for non-native speakers of English who possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution.

Letters of reference

A minimum of three reference letters is required. These are important insofar as they offer evidence of commitment to research, the ability to think independently, critically and creatively, and to integrate knowledge. Letters also provide additional information about a candidate's experience and interests.

Personal statement

The personal statement is required and is meant to be specific concerning the applicant's career goals/interests regarding our program. The statement will be examined for evidence of the appropriateness of the candidate to the program. It should contain information about the student's intended specialization and preferred faculty mentor.

Completion of a master's degree. Successful completion of a master's degree in another department may be viewed positively even when the degree was received in an area outside of psychology. In this latter case, some conditions in terms of make-up (or deficiency) coursework may be specified.

Admission steps:

a. Submit your application via [ApplyUTA \(https://www.uta.edu/apply/\)](https://www.uta.edu/apply/) by your applicable program priority date to ensure timely processing/review of your file.

- Applications will not be reviewed by Graduate Admissions until the application fee is received. Once in "GCOM" or "GCUT" (complete) status by Graduate Admissions, your file will be sent to our department for review. Until the appropriate transcripts and test scores are received, you will be in "GCLI" (incomplete) status. Only "GCOM" or "GCUT" files are reviewed by our department. You can monitor your status via your MyMav account.
- Please note that the "Academic Goals Essay" on the application itself is optional; however, our department requires all applicants to submit the "Personal Statement" separately as described above, which will be reviewed by the faculty. If an exact copy of the academic goals essay is submitted as the personal statement, the applicant will be required to submit a new personal statement.

b. Submit official [transcripts \(https://www.uta.edu/admissions/apply/submitting-transcripts/\)](https://www.uta.edu/admissions/apply/submitting-transcripts/) from all 4-year institutions attended.

- Monitor your MyMav account "to-do list" for submission requirements/updates.

c. If applicable, submit official [GRE \(https://www.ets.org/praxis/\)](https://www.ets.org/praxis/) scores. Only scores submitted by ETS directly to UTA are acceptable.

- While there are no minimum GRE sectional requirements, a standard of 300 or higher GRE total has been positive indicator of our most successful students as have average scores of 150 or higher for both quantitative and verbal sections.

d. If applicable, submit official [English Language Test \(https://www.uta.edu/admissions/apply/international-graduate/\)](https://www.uta.edu/admissions/apply/international-graduate/) scores as determined by Graduate Admissions. Only scores submitted directly by ETS or IELTS to UTA are acceptable.

e. Email the completed [Departmental Summary Sheet \(https://cdn.web.uta.edu/-/media/project/website/science/psychology/documents/degree-programs/graduate/forms-and-resources/summary-sheet-07092021.ashx\)](https://cdn.web.uta.edu/-/media/project/website/science/psychology/documents/degree-programs/graduate/forms-and-resources/summary-sheet-07092021.ashx) in PDF format (Last Name, First Name, UTA ID number if known or Program of Interest_DptSS) to psychologydepartment@uta.edu.

f. Submit a minimum of 3 reference letters via SLATE or directly to psychologydepartment@uta.edu, preferably from professors or employers. NOTE: To submit reference letters directly to our email, it is the applicant's responsibility to contact their recommenders and have them follow the instructions below:

- Letter writers can email the [Recommendation Request Form \(https://cdn.web.uta.edu/-/media/project/website/science/psychology/documents/degree-programs/graduate/forms-and-resources/recommendation-form-2022-fillable.ashx\)](https://cdn.web.uta.edu/-/media/project/website/science/psychology/documents/degree-programs/graduate/forms-and-resources/recommendation-form-2022-fillable.ashx) in PDF format (Recommender Name: Student Name, Program of Interest) to psychologydepartment@uta.edu along with an official letter on letterhead. It is preferred by faculty to submit both the Recommendation Request Form and a letter; however, it is also acceptable to submit only a letter or the form.

g. Email the Personal Statement in PDF format (Last Name, First Name, UTA ID number if known or Program of Interest PS) to psychologydepartment@uta.edu. There is no page limit. Past applicants have submitted personal statements that are 2 to 3 pages long.

- The personal statement is separate from the "Academic Goals Essay" on the application. While it is understood that there may be some overlap, the personal statement should be more in-depth, detailing laboratory field or applied interests, career plans, and research experience, as well as a discussion of how our graduate psychology program can serve to further your interests and plans. Ph.D. applicants should be sure to include

information about the intended specialization and preferred faculty mentor. Ph.D. applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the specific faculty member of interest prior to or during the application process.

- NOTE: To improve your chances of admission, it is in your best interest to list only ONE faculty mentor to indicate a singular/specific focus in your area of research. Listing multiple mentors can imply a lack of focus in career goals and academic purpose. You may, however, provide an updated personal statement if your research interests have changed or if updating your file.
- Please include a cover page with your personal statement that includes your name, UTA ID number, program of interest, and preferred faculty mentor. Your last name and page numbers should be on the header.

h. Check your application status on the [Graduate Admissions Application Status Website](https://www.uta.edu/admissions/apply/application-status/) (<https://www.uta.edu/admissions/apply/application-status/>).

- The to-do lists in your Mymav account will be updated as the appropriate transcripts, test scores, and departmental materials are received.

ADMISSION STATUS

As noted in the Graduate Catalog, there are several categories of admission in addition to unconditional admission to the Graduate Program in Psychology.

Unconditional Admission

An applicant who meets all requirements is normally considered for unconditional admission.

Probationary Admission

If an applicant does not evidence a majority of the positive indicators for the unconditional admission described above, they may, after careful examination of their application materials be given probationary admission. Probationary admission requires that the new student receive a 3.0 (B average) GPA or better in the first 9-12 hours of graduate course work at UT Arlington.

Deferred Admission

A deferred decision may be granted when a file is incomplete or when denial of admission is not currently appropriate.

Provisional Admission

An applicant unable to supply all documentation (including certified transcripts, GRE scores, letters of reference, and personal statement) prior to the admission deadline, but otherwise appears to meet admission requirements, may be granted provisional admission.

Denial of Admission

Applicants whose records in the aggregate do not show sufficient positive indications of potential success will be denied admission. Please note that not all "qualified" applicants are admitted. Successful admission depends upon the competitiveness of the applicant pool, the number of positions available, and the applicant's fit with the current research interests of the faculty.

ELIGIBILITY FOR ASSISTANTSHIPS/FELLOWSHIPS

Ph.D. students who wish to be considered for an assistantship should have their application and Department forms sent in by **December 1** for the Fall Semester. Students unconditionally admitted to the program are eligible for scholarship and fellowship support. We currently have no funding available for the master's programs.

The criteria applied will be the same as those applied to admission decisions. To be eligible, candidates typically must: (1) be a new student; (2) have a GPA of 3.0 or higher in their last 60 undergraduate credit hours, plus any graduate credit hours as calculated by the Office of Graduate Studies; and (3) be enrolled in a minimum of 9 hours of course work in both long semesters (6 hours in the Summer) to retain their fellowships. Assistantship assignments are made by the Department Chairperson in consultation with the Associate Chair and the Graduate Advisors. Students may be eligible for other forms of support. Please refer to the Office of Graduate Studies for further information under [Financial Aid Resources](https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/gradschool/funding/) (<https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/gradschool/funding/>).

UT ARLINGTON GRADUATES

GRE Requirements

Submission of verbal, quantitative and analytical writing GRE scores is required of **all** applicants unless otherwise indicated, including UT Arlington alumni, with the exception of "Facilitated Admission" (see below).

Facilitated Admission of Outstanding UT Arlington Undergraduates

Students with extraordinarily strong undergraduate records at UT Arlington may receive advanced admission to the Ph.D. program without having to pass through the normal application process. The following conditions must be met in order to qualify for advanced admission of outstanding undergraduates:

UT Arlington Bachelor's Degree

The student must have graduated from a commensurate bachelor's degree program at UT Arlington no more than one academic year prior to the semester for which admission to a graduate program is sought. A commensurate bachelor's degree program is one that is a normal feeder program for the master's degree or doctoral degree-bound program to which the student seeks admission. Undergraduate students in their final year of study are also eligible; in such cases, facilitated admission is a conditional upon a successful completion of the bachelor's degree.

Satisfactory GPA

The student's GPA must equal or exceed 3.5 in each of the following calculations:

- The grade-point average in the last 60 hours of study as calculated in the Office of Graduate Studies for admission purposes.
- All work completed at UTA to date.

The student's record will be assessed for strengths relevant to success in the program. All prospective facilitated admission applicants must also submit a personal statement and two (2) reference letters with the understanding that submitting the facilitated admission form does not guarantee admission into the program; all facilitated admission applicant's will be reviewed by committee the same as applicants applying via regular application.

Students who are accepted via facilitated admission will be admitted directly to graduate school without completing the application for admission, submitting an application evaluation charge, or taking the GRE. Students who believe they qualify for this program should contact the appropriate Graduate Advisor in the Department of Psychology.

CURRENT MASTER OF INDUSTRIAL/ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY STUDENTS

Students currently enrolled in the Master of I/O Psychology program who wish to be considered for admission into a Ph.D. program must submit the Change of Program form for either Psychological Sciences or Health/Neuroscience and must follow the formal admission procedures as stated previously. Students must meet the criteria for admission to the Ph.D. program which will be determined, in part, by the scholarly achievements accomplished as well as the fit between the student and faculty mentor.

MASTER'S IN PASSING

Students who are applying to the Ph.D. program without having earned a master's degree can apply as a degree-bound student and earn a master's in passing as a required milestone while working toward their Ph.D. This will include foundational and core courses from our degree plan as well as 6 hours of thesis and 3 hours of research to earn the master's.

Curriculum Requirements

Foundations

Complete the following with the first 24 hours of study.

PSYC 5110	PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	1
PSYC 5405	ADVANCED STATISTICS I	4
PSYC 5407	MULTIVARIATE DATA ANALYSIS	4
PSYC 5307	RESEARCH METHODS	3
or PSYC 5324	APPLIED RESEARCH DESIGN	
PSYC 5333	BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE	3
or PSYC 5334	HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY	
PSYC 5313	COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY	3
PSYC 5322	SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY	3
PSYC 5342	LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONS	3
PSYC 5391	RESEARCH IN PSYCHOLOGY (*Or a combination of 5191/5291 or 5600)	3
PSYC 6101	GRADUATE STUDENT SEMINAR (Take until ABD)	1

Electives

Select four from the following:		12
PSYC 6300	SEMINAR IN PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 5334	HUMAN PHYSIOLOGY	
PSYC 5333	BEHAVIORAL NEUROSCIENCE	
PSYC 5321	PERSONALITY PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 5345	HUMAN LEARNING AND MEMORY	
PSYC 6320	NEUROPHARMACOLOGY	
PSYC 5323	GROUP PROCESSES	
PSYC 6318	SOCIAL AND PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT	

PSYC 5309 HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY

Any course approved by the Graduate Advisor (e.g., a graduate course in statistics, genetics, immunology, endocrinology, or other specialized biomedical topic available at UT Southwestern or another UT Arlington department).

In consultation with advisor, select additional hours sufficient to bring total to 81.

Research Component

Select one of the following: 6

PSYC 5698	THESIS (Students seeking the MS in passing should select this option.)
PSYC 5600	ADVANCED RESEARCH

Complete 9 dissertation hours.

PSYC 6999	DISSERTATION	9
or PSYC 6399	DISSERTATION	
or PSYC 6699	DISSERTATION	
or PSYC 7399	DOCTORAL DEGREE COMPLETION	

Students with prior graduate work may waive hours from any of the above requirements (except dissertation hours) by a written request to the Graduate Studies Committee. The request should include a syllabus or other documentation showing that a prior course and one of our required courses are equivalent. Students should discuss course equivalency with the professor(s) who teaches the course(s) in question before submitting the request.

Students are expected to maintain a GPA at or above 3.0 to ensure the successful completion of the program. A grade of D is not considered to be acceptable at the doctoral level and if earned, the student risks being dropped from the program. Grades of C have been found to slow down adequate academic progress and should not be taken lightly. All students are expected to consult their faculty mentors if such grades are earned to see how the GPA can be improved.

Psychology recommends the following plan of study:

First Year

First Semester	Hours	Second Semester	Hours
Advanced Statistics I		4 Multivariate Data Analysis	4
Required Core Course		3 Required Core Course	3
Professional Development		1 Readings and Research/ Graduate Student Seminar	2
Research and Reading		1	
		9	9

Second Year

First Semester	Hours	Second Semester	Hours
Required Core Course and Research Methods		6 Thesis OR Electives	6
Research and Readings/Graduate Student Seminar		3 Research and Readings/ Graduate Student Seminar	3
		9	9

Third Year

First Semester	Hours	Second Semester	Hours
Research and Readings/Graduate Student Seminar		6 Research and Readings/ Graduate Student Seminar	6
Elective		3 Elective	3
		9	9

Fourth Year

First Semester	Hours	Second Semester	Hours
Advanced Research OR Research and Readings/Graduate Student Seminar		6 Advanced Research OR Research and Readings/ Graduate Student Seminar	6
Elective OR Research and Readings/Graduate Student Seminar		3 Elective OR Research and Readings/Graduate Student Seminar	3
		9	9

Fifth Year

First Semester	Hours	Second Semester	Hours
Dissertation		6 Dissertation	3
		6	3

Total Hours: 81

Note: This is based on a 5-year program of study. Students may adjust the speed at which milestones are achieved by adding 4th year courses earlier.

A doctoral student must pay non-resident tuition beginning the first long semester (Fall or Spring) in which a) the student has been enrolled previously as a graduate student for 14 or more long semesters, AND b) the student has accumulated more than 99 semester credit hours of graduate study at any Texas state university. Students exceeding both limits will not be eligible for assistantships supported by state funds.

Program Completion

RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

Research requirements include general expectations of student involvement in research throughout their graduate career as well as specific milestones that must be accomplished in order, including:

Holistic Diagnostic Exam (Qualifying Examination)

A holistic diagnostic exam will occur at the end of the student's first year in the doctoral program with a public Research Progress Symposium (RPS) presentation. Following their RPS presentation, students will submit to their advisory committee a First Year Portfolio demonstrating their performance in five core doctoral student performance areas. The advisory committee will evaluate this portfolio and bring a recommendation to the graduate faculty for final discussion and evaluation. Students must be scored as "meets expectations" or "exceeds expectations" in all performance areas to pass the Holistic Diagnostic Exam.

Master's Thesis or Equivalency Paper

Progress toward the PhD degree requires the completion of a master's degree in a specialization in psychology or a "master's equivalency paper".

Dissertation Proposal (Comprehensive Exam)

Students who pass their diagnostic examinations may continue in the PhD program after having a dissertation proposal approved by their dissertation supervising committee. The committee is formed by the student in consultation with his or her major advisor and the Graduate Advisor, and consists of at least five members, at least three of whom are from the psychology graduate faculty (additional members are optional). The oral presentation of the dissertation proposal satisfies the University requirement that a graduate student must take and pass a "comprehensive examination". This is the final step for the student to be admitted to candidacy for the PhD degree. The dissertation project is then carried out as approved, or as modified with prior approval of the committee members, and the dissertation is written. When a student has completed a draft of the dissertation that the primary mentor deems appropriate for his or her committee, a date for the oral defense is scheduled, and written drafts must be provided to committee members at least two weeks before this date.

Dissertation Defense

The PhD final oral examination (i.e., the Dissertation Defense) is conducted by the dissertation committee in a meeting that is open to any member of the University community and to guests. The first part of the examination is an oral presentation of the research and its findings. The second part is a closed examination and consists of specific detailed questions about the dissertation. Both the oral defense and the written dissertation must be passed.

For more details about the program's research requirements and student milestones, you are encouraged to refer to the psychology department's current [Graduate Student Handbook \(https://cdn.web.uta.edu/-/media/project/website/science/psychology/documents/degree-programs/graduate/forms-and-resources/graduate-handbook-2024_2025.ashx\)](https://cdn.web.uta.edu/-/media/project/website/science/psychology/documents/degree-programs/graduate/forms-and-resources/graduate-handbook-2024_2025.ashx).

Advising Resources

Prospective applicants for the Master of Science in Industrial/Organizational Psychology are welcome to reach out to the faculty MSIO program advisor for information regarding our graduate program. Current master students should reach out to have their intended courses approved for the upcoming semester.

Prospective applicants for the PHD in Experimental Psychology (psychological sciences) are welcome to reach out to the faculty program advisor for Experimental Psychology for information regarding our graduate program.

Prospective applicants for the PHD in Experimental Psychology (Health/Neuroscience concentration) are welcome to reach out to the faculty program advisor for Health/Neuroscience for information regarding our graduate program.

Location:

Industrial/Organizational Psychology

SWSH 405A

Psychological Sciences

SWSH 404Y

Health/Neuroscience

LS 503

Email:

psychologydepartment@uta.edu

Phone:

Industrial/Organizational Psychology

817-272-8881

Psychological Sciences

817-272-0746

Health/Neuroscience

817-272-5222

Web:

Psychology advising (<https://www.uta.edu/academics/schools-colleges/science/departments/psychology/advising/>)