M.A. Psychology Graduate Program

General-Experimental Psychology

Department of Psychology
Western Carolina University
Cullowhee, NC  28723

2013

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ADMINISTRATION OF GRADUATE PROGRAMS

Graduate programs at WCU are administered by the Dean of the Graduate School with the advice of the Graduate Council. The Graduate Council is a unit operating under the authority of the University Faculty and represents the graduate faculty of the University. The Graduate School receives and processes application materials, maintains records on each student and processes applications for candidacy and graduation. The Department of Psychology has its own graduate studies committee, the Psychology Graduate Committee, which is responsible for developing policy recommendations for admission, graduate psychology programs, evaluation of the progress of the individual graduate students and serves as the communicating link between the students, the members of the department and with the Graduate Council. The Psychology Graduate Committee is composed of a chair, three members of the faculty serving as voting members, a student representative who serves as a voting member, and several ex-officio members of the faculty serving in advisory roles. The admissions committee for the Clinical Psychology Program is composed of a chair and two members. Several additional faculty members are included in the interview process.

ACADEMIC SUPERVISION

The Director of the General-Experimental Psychology Program, Dr. Thomas E. Ford has primary responsibility for the academic supervision of all students in the general-experimental program.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

The Department of Psychology is one of three departments in the College of Education and Allied Professions and offers the B.S. degree, the M. A. degree for general-experimental psychology, the M.A. degree for clinical psychology and the specialist degree for school psychology. The Department of Psychology, located on the third floor of the Killian building and in the McKee building clinic, consists of 16 full-time faculty members. A list of the current faculty and their area of specialization and research interest is listed below. Information on all faculty including phone numbers and email addresses is available by following the faculty links accessed through the department home page.
PSYCHOLOGY FACULTY

L. Alvin Malesky, Jr., Ph.D., Department Head
University of Memphis
Area of Specialization: Forensic and Counseling Psychology
Research Interests: Expert witness testimony; sex offenders and internet usage

Kia Asberg, Ph.D.
University of Central Florida
Area of Specialization: Clinical Psychology
Research Interest: Stress and resilience; impact of child maltreatment and trauma on adolescent and adult functioning, (including involvement with the legal system); coping and social support; emotion regulation

Candace Boan-Lenzo, Ph.D.
University of Alabama
Area of Specialization: School Psychology
Research Interest: gender issues, self-concept, concept acquisition, behavioral assessment

Thomas E. Ford, Ph.D.
University of Maryland
Area of Specialization: Social Psychology
Research Interests: Social consequences of disparagement humor, prejudice, person perception

Winford Gordon, Ph.D.
University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill
Area of Specialization: Experimental (Learning and Cognition)
Research/Teaching Interest: stimulus generalization, cognition and metacognition in non-humans, psychological processes and change during adventure activity

John Habel, Ph.D.
University of Tennessee
Area of Specialization: Educational Psychology
Research Interests: Narrative and life histories, teaching/learning in higher education

Bruce B. Henderson, Ph.D.
University of Minnesota
Area of Specialization: Developmental Psychology
Research Interests: Development and exploration of curiosity

Harold A. Herzog, Ph.D.
University of Tennessee
Area of Specialization: Psychobiology
Research Interests: Evolution of behavior, attitudes toward animals
Becky Hester, M.A.
Western Carolina University
**Area of Specialization:** Clinical Psychology
**Research Interests:** Stress/Anxiety, Social and I/O psychology

David M. McCord, Ph.D.
University of Alabama
**Area of Specialization:** Clinical Psychology
Research Interests: Personality theory and assessment, evolutionary psychology

Erin Myers, Ph.D.
University of Southern Mississippi
**Area of Specialization:** Social-Personality Psychology
**Research Interests:** Status-signaling properties of self-esteem, fragile self-esteem.

Mickey Randolph, Ph.D.
University of South Carolina
**Area of Specialization:** School Psychology
**Research Interests:** Family issues, incest, family violence

Ellen Sigler, Ed.D.
Texas Tech University
**Area of Specialization:** Educational Psychology
**Research Interests:** Metacognition, Judgment of Learning, Study Strategies, Special Education.

Ethan Schilling, Ph.D.
University of Georgia
**Area of Specialization:** School Psychology
**Research Interests:** Pediatric school psychology, School neuropsychology related to students with traumatic brain injuries.

Lori E. Unruh, Ph.D., Director, School Psychology Graduate Program
University of Kansas
**Area of Specialization:** School Psychology
**Research Interests:** Educational program evaluation, assessment issues

**ADMISSION PROCEDURES FOR THE GENERAL-EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM**

Before an individual can be considered for admission into the graduate program in general-experimental psychology, the applicant must supply the Graduate School with the following credentials:

1. A completed online application form for admission that can be obtained via the Graduate School website: [http://westerngrad.com](http://westerngrad.com) .
2. An official transcript.

3. Graduate Record Examination scores - Verbal and Quantitative

4. Three letters of recommendation from former instructors.

5. A personal statement describing interest in pursuing a graduate degree in Psychology

All applications and supporting materials are submitted online. When the Graduate School has received the completed online file, the Department of Psychology is notified for action.

**FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AND ASSISTANTSHIPS**

WCU maintains an Office of Financial Aid which assists students with loans, work study and other forms of financial assistance. Most entering graduate students are awarded an assistantship, either within the psychology department or in another department in the university. Assistantship stipends and duties differ depending on the student's placement. Out-of-state students may apply for a waiver of the out-of-state portion of their tuition after their first year. We try to obtain some funds for partial or full waivers of out-of-state tuition for all out-of-state first year tuition; however this is not always possible. Most out-of-state students are able to pay in-state tuition for the second year of the program.

**PROFESSIONAL INVOLVEMENT**

Graduate students can receive reduced membership rates to a number of professional organizations. As a member of these organizations you will receive journals and newsletters which provide information about current research interests of other professionals. Additionally, many organizations have yearly conferences where cutting edge research is presented. Participation in professional organizations and attendance at conferences are highly recommended. Students are especially encouraged to become involved with the Southeastern Psychological Association (SEPA), American Psychological Association (APA), Association for Psychological Science (APS), and the WCU Chapter of Sigma XI.

**ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

All graduate students are expected to be familiar with the Ethical Principles of the APA and to follow them without exception. Failure to adhere to these principles may result in immediate dismissal from the graduate program.
THE GENERAL-EXPERIMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE PROGRAM TRACK

The goal of the General-Experimental track is to train students to conduct psychological research and prepare them to continue on to a doctoral program in a core academic area of psychology including cognitive, developmental, learning, physiological, and social psychology. Therefore, the program is heavily research oriented.

Curriculum of the Experimental Psychology Program Track

The program requires 37 hours of course work, 21 hours of required classes and 27 hours of electives selected from a General (15 hours minimum) and Interdisciplinary category (12 hours maximum). The program is designed for full-time students to graduate in two calendar years.

Required Courses (28 hours)

PSY 555 – History of Psychology (3hrs)
PSY 650 – Advanced General Psychology (3hrs)
PSY 651 – Advanced Research Methods: Statistics (4hrs)
PSY 652 – Advanced Research Methods: Design and Communication (3hrs)
PSY 680 – Independent Research (9 hours)
PSY 699 – Thesis (6 hours)

Electives (9 hours minimum)

PSY 544 – Cognitive Psychology
PSY 548 – Neuropsychology
PSY 610 – Advanced Social Psychology
PSY 624 – Child and Adolescent Development
PSY 693 – Special Topics/Seminar

Tentative Schedule of Classes

Fall 1st Year
PSY 555 History of Psychology or PSY 650 Advanced General Psychology 3
PSY 651 Advanced Research Methods: Statistics 4
PSY 680 Directed Study 3
10 hrs

Spring 1st Year
PSY 652 Advanced Research Methods: Design and Communication 3
PSY 680 Directed Study 3
One Elective 3
9 hrs
**Thesis Prospectus Exam**: The student’s thesis committee must be identified and the first three chapters of the thesis written and orally defended by the end of the Spring semester of the first year.

**Fall 2nd Year**
- PSY 555 History of Psychology or PSY 650 Advanced General Psychology: 3
- PSY 680 Directed Study: 3
- PSY 699 Thesis: 3

**Spring 2nd Year**
- PSY 699 Thesis: 3
- Two Electives: 6

**Research Requirements**

Exposure to research methodology and research experience is an important component of graduate training at WCU and particularly in the Experimental program. Graduate students pass a Thesis Prospectus Examination and successfully complete and orally defend a thesis. When conducting their thesis project, students work closely with a faculty chair who is primarily responsible for supervising the student’s research, and two other faculty who serve as thesis committee members. In addition to the thesis, students are required to complete 9 additional hours of directed study with a faculty member with the intent of developing a publishable project and presenting at professional conferences.

(revised 11/5/2013)