

Masters in Psychology (Research)



Program overview

The Research Psychology option is designed to prepare students for doctoral work in psychology and related fields as well as for careers in research requiring a masters' level education. The program combines coursework in basic areas of psychology with research skill objectives, such as critically analyzing research and designing studies. This coursework provides the basis for collaborative research with faculty members. An outstanding feature of this program is the opportunity for close interaction with faculty, both in the classroom and in the laboratory, because of the low student to faculty ratio.

Faculty and principal area of expertise

- ▶ **Robin Locke Arkerson**, Associate Professor, Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Madison: Study of emotional development to elucidate the emotional processing and biological correlates of atypical emotional behavior.
- ▶ **Brian Ayotte**, Associate Professor, Ph.D. in Lifespan Developmental Psychology, West Virginia University: The role of interpersonal relationships and individual characteristics on health and functioning during emerging and older adulthood.
- ▶ **R. Thomas Boone**, Associate Professor, PhD in Psychology, Brandeis University: Nonverbal communication, cooperation, trustworthiness, social development and emotions.
- ▶ **Jennifer Fugate**, Assistant Professor, Ph.D. in Psychology (Neuroscience and Animal Behavior), Emory University: Social cognition, facial expression.
- ▶ **Mahzad Hojjat**, (M.A. Research in Psychology Program Director), Professor, Ph.D. in Social Psychology, Yale University: Relationship satisfaction, love, betrayal, forgiveness, and resilience in romantic relationships and friendships, Interethnic dating.
- ▶ **Trina Kershaw**, Associate Professor, Ph.D. in Cognitive Psychology, University of Illinois at Chicago: Skill learning and transfer, Insight problem solving, creativity in engineering design, transfer in educational settings, individual differences.
- ▶ **Raina Lamade**, Assistant Professor, Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, concentration in Forensic Psychology, Fairleigh Dickinson University: Psychological and forensic assessment; evaluation of criminal offenders; treatment of trauma; assessment and treatment of military and veteran populations.
- ▶ **Elizabeth Lloyd Richardson**, Associate Professor, Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, Louisiana State University: Health psychology: Improving understanding of youth health-risk behaviors (obesity, substance use, self-injury) and developing innovative treatments.

- ▶ **Joshua Masse**, Assistant Professor, Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, West Virginia University: Childhood externalizing disorders, clinical training, treatment dissemination and implementation.
- ▶ **Theodore Powers**, Professor, Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, McGill University: Self-criticism and perfectionism, motivation and goal progress, brief therapies, group dynamics and group therapies.
- ▶ **Andrew Revell**, Associate Professor, Ph.D. in Human Development and Family Studies, The Pennsylvania State University: Cognition and mental health in aging; identifying the nature of declines and ways to prevent or stop them; parenting and healthy development.
- ▶ **Anna Schierberl Scherr**, Assistant Professor, Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology, University of Connecticut: Health behavior change; enhancing treatment outcomes for eating disorders and obesity, clinical supervision.

Application Requirements

- ▶ A Bachelor of Arts or Science degree from an accredited institution (official transcript is required)
- ▶ Three letters of recommendation from individuals who are familiar with your academic or research experience
- ▶ A personal statement in which you provide evidence of research interest/experience and the reason you believe our graduate program is a good fit (please specify the faculty members you would like to work with or the preferred area of research).
- ▶ The submission of Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores is optional, but will be considered if submitted.
- ▶ A sample of your writing is optional.
- ▶ Although not required for application, students must have successfully completed an undergraduate statistics course before beginning the program.

Students must demonstrate evidence of potential to excel in course work and research. Admission decisions will be made based on all of the submitted documents (e.g., research experience/interest, personal statement, GPA, letters of recommendation, etc.)

Degree Requirements for Research Masters

Typically students will complete the 36-credit MA program in two years of full-time study, although other schedules can be arranged. There are four required content courses, one offered each semester of students' careers. Three of these have as skill objectives the three major skills required for successful research careers—analyzing research, writing literature reviews, and developing ideas for research. First year students also take a two-semester sequence in statistics and research design. Second year students enroll in thesis credits both semesters. Students round out their curriculum with elective courses and independent study.

In addition to conforming to the Graduate Degree Requirements, students must pass at least five of the six required courses with a B- or better in each course.

Curriculum:

Required (24 credits):

- PSY 502 - Statistical Methods
- PSY 506 - Advanced Research Design
- PSY 513 Seminar: Advanced Research Topics in Psychology (Social)
- PSY 513 Seminar: Advanced Research Topics in Psychology (Cognitive)
- PSY 513 - Seminar: Advanced Research Topics in Psychology (Developmental)
- PSY 513 - Seminar: Advanced Research Topics in Psychology (Health)
- PSY 596 - Graduate Thesis (one in fall and one in spring of second year)

Sample Electives (12 credits)

- PSY 457/580 - Research Ethics
- PSY 459/580 - Positive Psychology
- PSY 458/580 - Affective Neuroscience
- PSY 450/580 - Evolutionary psychology
- PSY 456/580 - Social Constructionism
- PSY 460/580 - Individual Differences

Graduate Assistantships and Financial Aid

The department awards a limited number of graduate assistantships and tuition credit to qualified graduate students each year. The assistantships require twenty hours per week of work as assigned by the department. This award is subject to the work needs of the position and department, your satisfactory performance of duties, your academic record, and availability of funds, and may be subject to change. For more information about assistantships and financial aid, please contact the graduate school (www.umassd.edu/graduate).

Faculty Research

The faculty for the Research Psychology Masters program at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth conduct research in a number of different domains, as indicated by the research interests listed above. For more information and their publications, please visit the UMASS Dartmouth Faculty/Staff Profiles (go to <http://www.faculty.umassd.edu> and search for the researcher's name).

Occupational Outlook

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, jobs in Psychology are expected to grow at a rate of 14% through 2026, which is considered 'faster than average'. Massachusetts is second in the nation for highest concentration of jobs in Psychology.

Student Achievements

The following is a small sample of what some of our graduates are doing now:

Vanessa Castro earned her Ph.D. at North Carolina State University and is a Ruth L. Kirschstein Award Postdoctoral Fellow at Northeastern University.

Leamarie Gordon earned her Ph.D. at Tufts and is a faculty member at Assumption College.

Sara Haden earned her Ph.D. at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University and is a faculty member at Long Island University.

Nichole Lang is in her second year in the MD program at UMass Medical School.

Elizabeth Lozano is a Ph.D. student in social psychology at the University of Illinois, Champaign.

Kristina Monteiro earned her Ph.D. at URI and is now a member of the Research Faculty at Brown University Medical School.

Rebecca Von Der Heide earned her Ph.D. in Neuroscience at Penn State University. She is now the Director of Nielsen Consumer Neuroscience.

Alumni

The program succeeds well at its basic mission. Of those who apply to Ph.D. programs 80 percent gain admittance; this is true both of students applying to Clinical Psychology Ph.D. programs and those applying to experimental programs. Examples of programs to which students in 2016 gained admittance are Emory University, Tufts University, and University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana. Students who choose not to continue to Ph.D. programs find careers in research-related positions, such as institutional or market research, in service careers, such as career resources, or in teaching careers, such as junior college or business training.

Contact information

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