Frequently Asked Questions by Prospective Students

Last updated: 6/1/2016

APPLICATION PROCESS/REQUIREMENTS

What graduate programs does your department offer?

Our department offers two Master’s programs. Our primary mission for both programs is to prepare students for doctoral study by offering quality instruction in the science of psychology and opportunities to conduct psychological research.

1. The Clinical Psychology MA program consists of a rigorous combination of classroom and research experiences, providing students with content knowledge that will prepare them for many doctoral programs, including clinical and counseling psychology. Students have the option of enhancing their content knowledge and skills by completing a concentration in Assessment, Clinical/Counseling, and/or Cultural Diversity. The program provides limited clinical training and does not lead to licensure at the Master’s level. This means that if you are interested in being a counselor without completing a doctoral degree, you should not apply to this program.

2. The Cognitive and Social Processes MA program provides extensive training in cognitive psychology, social psychology, statistics, and research methods. Students are strongly encouraged to complete a thesis or other independent research project. Please note that if you are interested in being a forensic psychologist, this program is not good preparation for a forensic psychology Ph.D., although it can prepare you for legal psychology programs.

What are your graduate programs’ strengths?

In 2015, we redesigned our master’s programs to enhance our graduates’ competitiveness for gaining admission to psychology Ph.D. programs. Enrolling in our programs will allow you to enhance your research skills, strengthen your methodological and quantitative skills, have opportunities and resources to complete your master’s thesis or independent research project, conduct research with faculty members, select courses that match will further your career goals, and receive training in cultural diversity.
**How many students are accepted to the Master's programs each year?**
Each year, we accept 8-10 students in the Clinical program and 8-10 students in the Cognitive and Social Processes program.

**How do I apply to the program?**
All application materials should be submitted online by February 1st. To be considered for admission, you must apply to both the Department of Psychological Science and to the Graduate School (U.S. citizens) or the Rinker Center for International Programs (international students). All accepted students will begin their studies in August. Read the preparing to apply document before filling out the Information Form. We recommend that you complete the Information Page as soon as possible. You do not need to be formally accepted by the Graduate School before submitting your application for our department.

**Instructions**
1. **Apply to the Department of Psychological Science.**
   
   Step 1: Fill out the Information Form for the program to which you are applying. You will be asked for your contact information and the names and contact information of three individuals who have agreed to write letters of recommendations for you. You will receive an email with a custom applicant code, link to our Application Form, and professional statement questions. 
   Information Form - MA in Cognitive and Social Processes
   Information Form - MA in Clinical Psychology

   Step 2: Fill out the Application Form in which you will also answer questions about program fit, career goals, research experience, research interests, and diversity experience/interest, and upload your curriculum vitae.

2. **Apply to The Graduate School.** Do one of the following:

   - If you are a U.S. citizen applicant, apply to the Graduate School. Indicate that you are applying to the Department of Psychological Science’s Clinical MA Psychology program OR Cognitive and Social Processes program. There are other programs at Ball State with similar names. Do not mark that you are applying to the “Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track”, as this is an MA program in Counseling Psychology and will prepare you for licensure at the Masters’ level. Do not mark that you are applying to the MA in Social Psychology program, which is a different program in the Department of Counseling and Guidance Services. Have your GRE scores and transcripts be sent directly to the Graduate School and pay your application fee.

   - If you are an international applicant, apply to the Rinker Center for International Programs. Indicate that you are applying to the Department of Psychological
**Science’s Clinical MA Psychology program** OR Cognitive and Social Processes program. **Do not mark** that you are applying to the “Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track”, as this is an MA program in Counseling Psychology and will prepare you for licensure at the Masters’ level. **Do not mark** that you are applying to the MA in Social Psychology program, which is a different program in the Department of Counseling and Guidance Services. Have your test scores and transcripts sent directly to the Rinker Center and pay your application fee. Please note that we do not offer conditional admissions.

**What do I need to apply to the program?**

1. Have three recommendation letters submitted by professors or supervisors who can comment on your qualifications for graduate study in psychology and evaluate you on a recommendation form. You will need to indicate if you have chosen to waive your right to review your recommendation.

2. Submit your responses to several essays relating to your skills, experiences, research interests, diversity experience, and reasons for applying to the program. Specific instructions for what goes into the personal statement are included in the online application.

3. Submit a curriculum vita outlining your education, honors and awards, research experience, work or internship experience that is related to psychology and other psychology-related experience.

**When is your application deadline?**

For applicants to both the MA in Clinical Psychology and the MA in Cognitive and Social Processes programs, the application deadline is February 1st.

**What is the minimum GPA and GRE scores that I need in order to be admitted?**

There are no minimum GRE scores. The minimum GPA is 2.75. The Graduate Committee considers an applicant’s entire record, and weaknesses in one area can be balanced out by strengths in other areas. Here are *average* successful applicant GRE scores: Quantitative, 149-151; Verbal, 156; Analytic Writing, 4.3-4.75. The *average* successful applicant overall GPA ranges from approximately 3.57-3.7 out of 4.0. Exceeding these averages does not guarantee admission into a program.

**Does the Graduate School have a minimum GPA?**

The graduate school has a GPA requirement of 2.75 for admission to the graduate school.

**How do I find out when I can take the GRE, how much it costs, etc.?**

Go to www.gre.org to find out when and where the test is offered, how much it costs, and how to prepare for it. Keep in mind that it usually takes four to six weeks for the
testing service to mail your official scores to a university, so you must make sure to take
the exam well before the application deadline. If you know what your scores are, it is
helpful to report them when you send your application materials, but you will not be
offered admission until the Graduate School has received your official score report from
the testing service.

What are the school and department codes to which GRE scores should be sent?
The GRE score code for Ball State is 1051. The department/program code for Clinical
Psychology is 2001. For Cognitive and Social Processes, the code is 2002.

I’m not happy with my GRE scores. Should I take the exam again?
Maybe. Keep in mind that the testing service will report all of your scores from the past
six years, no matter how many times you have taken the exam. Some students take the
GRE twice, but you probably do not want to take it more than twice. Also, consider
whether you can realistically expect to score higher if you retake the exam. If you were
ill when you took it initially, or if you have more time to prepare now than you did in the
past, then you may very well improve your scores. But if you studied reasonably hard
the first time and nothing about your situation has really changed, you will probably
score about the same if you try again.

I want to apply for the dual major in two Masters’ programs. How do I do it?
If you are applying for the dual-master’s program in one of our MA programs and a
second program in another department, you will need to complete and submit two
separate applications. One application will be for our program, and the other application
will go to the other department. Remember that you will also still need to submit an
application to the Graduate School—a total of three applications altogether.
Additionally, when you are completing the application materials for our departmental
program, you should explain in your personal statement that you are applying for a dual
major (and with which other program) and how you are qualified for both programs.

Can I apply to BOTH programs in your department?
You are strongly encouraged to consider which of our two programs best fits your
interests and career goals and to apply to that one program.

Would a recommendation from an employer be accepted?
The Graduate Committee will accept a letter from your employer. However, be aware
that recommendations from individuals who are familiar with your academic, research
and/or clinical experience are highly preferred. Recommendations from professors are
most preferred because they are good sources of information regarding your academic
potential. If your employer is familiar with your clinical experience, a letter from him or
her may also be helpful. If an individual cannot commit on your academic abilities, it is
not recommended that he or she serve as a recommender. Personal recommendations (e.g., friends, family, therapists, religious officials) are not acceptable.

**INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

*I’m an international student. How do I apply?*

1. **Apply to the Department of Psychological Science.**

   Step 1: Fill out the **Information Form** for the program to which you are applying. You will be asked for your contact information and the names and contact information of three individuals who have agreed to write letters of recommendations for you. You will receive an email with a custom applicant code and link to our **application form.**

   - Information Form - MA in Cognitive and Social Processes
   - Information Form - MA in Clinical Psychology

   Step 2: Fill out the **Application Form** in which you will also answer questions about program fit, career goals, research experience, research interests, and diversity experience/interest, and upload your curriculum vitae.

2. **Apply to The Rinker Center, which will send your materials to the Graduate School.**

   Apply to the [Rinker Center for International Programs](#). Indicate that you are applying to the Department of Psychological Science’s Clinical MA Psychology program OR Cognitive and Social Processes program. **Do not mark** that you are applying to the “Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track”, as this is an MA program in Counseling Psychology and will prepare you for licensure at the Masters’ level. **Do not mark** that you are applying to the MA in Social Psychology program, which is a different program in the Department of Counseling and Guidance Services. Have your test scores and transcripts sent directly to the Rinker Center and pay your application fee. We do not offer conditional admissions.

**What do I need to apply to the Department of Psychological Science?**

1. Have three recommendation letters submitted by professors or supervisors who can comment on your qualifications for graduate study in psychology and evaluate you on a recommendation form. You will need to indicate if you have chosen to waive your right to review your recommendation.

2. Submit your curriculum vitae and responses to several essays relating to your skills, experiences, research interests, diversity experience, and reasons for applying to the program. Specific instructions for what goes into the personal statement are included in the online application.
3. Submit a curriculum vita outlining your education, honors and awards, research experience, work or internship experience that is related to psychology and other psychology-related experience.

* Please note that although we do require GRE scores, we do not have a minimum necessary score for admission. We will consider your total application and all of your strengths. We are aware that the GRE scores do not predict graduate academic performance of international students as well as that of students from the U.S. We keep this in mind when making admissions decisions.

**When should international students start applying to meet the application deadline?**

We have the same deadline for all students. International students should apply as early as possible to make sure their materials reach the department by the deadline. Once the Rinker Center has received your information, it will then send it to the Graduate School at Ball State, which then sends it to us. This process can take weeks or months. See the Rinker Center for International Programs’ suggestions about when to apply to ensure that your application materials are processed on time (http://cms.bsu.edu/admissions/international/datesdeadlines).

**Can international students be admitted on a conditional basis?**

No.

**What do I need to know about TOEFL scores?**

The Rinker Center for International Programs can answer questions about TOEFL scores; our department does not make determinations about TOEFL scores. See Requirement #5 on this link (http://cms.bsu.edu/admissions/international/requirements/graduate) at the Rinker Center. If you still have questions, you can contact the Rinker Center directly by finding their contact information on the following link (http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/centersandinstitutes/rinker/contactus).
ADMISSION PROCESS

Do you require an interview?
No, we do not require an interview. However, some of the faculty with whom you have expressed an interest in working may request to speak with you via phone or video chat to learn more about your interests.

What is your policy on campus visits?
We do not require you to visit our campus before or after you apply to our program. However, if you would like to come to campus to meet with professors and graduate students, see the labs, and to tour the campus, we will be happy to make those arrangements with you.

Should I contact faculty members? If so, when should I do that?
We strongly recommend that you contact faculty members with whom you would like to work before and after you submit your applications. You should read the faculty members’ research interests and their recent publications before contacting them.

Who makes admission decisions?
The Graduate Committee, comprising of the director(s) of the graduate programs, the Chair of the department, the Internship Coordinator, and several other faculty members, makes the admission decisions.

What criteria do you use to make admission decisions?
The Graduate Committee tends to rate highly applicants who have:
- research interests that match those of at least one faculty member
- research experience
- strong letters of recommendation
- career goals that match with the programs’ mission
- cumulative GPA of above a 3.3 out of 4.0
- good GRE scores (no minimum GRE scores required)

When will you let applicants know about admission decisions?
We will let you know by March 15th whether you have been accepted, placed on our waitlist to be offered admission, or been denied admission.
When will accepted students need to make decisions about the admission offers?

We request that you let us know as soon as possible whether you accept our offers so that we can inform other students on the waitlist. However, you have until April 15th to make your decisions.

When will you let accepted students know about their graduate assistantships status?

If you are offered admission or placed on our waitlist, we will also let you know if you will receive a graduate assistantship or be placed on the waitlist to receive one. If we cannot offer you an assistantship, as soon as you have been offered admission, you may apply for a graduate assistantship outside our department. You may do so BEFORE the deadline to accept our admission offer (April 15th).

ASSISTANTSHIPS/FUNDING

Can I get an assistantship? How do they work?

You can apply for a departmental assistantship by checking the box indicating that you want to apply for “Admission and assistantship” on the departmental application. All applicants are ranked by the Graduate Committee as part of the admissions process. The top-ranked applicants are offered assistantships.

If you get a departmental assistantship, you will be assigned either to work with one professor for 20 hours/week or with two professors for 10 hours/week for each one. Graduate assistant/professor assignments are not made until late summer, so you will not know right away who you will work with or what your duties will be. The tasks you will do for an assistantship varies dependent upon the professor. Professors may have you assist with their research, teaching, or both.

You can see this link (http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/gradschool/employmentandgraduateassistantships) for more information on employment and graduate assistantships from the Graduate School.

If I get an assistantship, can I request a specific faculty member to work for?

No, but you may contact the professor and ask him/her to request you.

How much is the assistantship stipend, and how much will I still be responsible for paying with an assistantship?

In return for working, you will get paid a stipend of around $9,480 for the academic year (August-May), divided up and distributed bi-weekly like a regular paycheck. You also get
a tuition remission, meaning that you do not pay for tuition. However, you will need to pay the “dedicated” fees of around $2,056 per year (based on 2016-2017 academic year). All assistants get this tuition remission, regardless of whether they are in-state or out-of-state residents. Student loans or other payment arrangements should be made to pay these dedicated fees to the university.

See this link (http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/psychology/academicprograms/scholarships/payoptions) for more detailed information on options for paying for graduate study.

How much is tuition, not including fees, without an assistantship?

For graduate students from the U.S., as of 2016-2017, tuition for the academic year (for 9 credit hours per semester) for IN-STATE Indiana residents was about $7,092. For out-of-state residents, tuition for the academic year (for 9 credit hours per semester) was about $19,404. See this link (http://cms.bsu.edu/admissions/ tuitionandfees/graduate) for more detailed information on tuition and fees for graduate students. Student fees and tuitions for international students differ depending on whether they have assistantships. Please contact the Rinker Center for International Programs for more information.

I did not get offered a departmental assistantship. What do I do?

If you do not get a departmental assistantship, there is a good chance that you can get one through another office on campus. Although we can offer departmental assistantships to about half of our students, historically most students in our program get an assistantship somewhere on campus.

As soon as you have been offered admission, you may apply for a graduate assistantship outside our department. Postings of currently available graduate assistantships are available here: http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/careercenter/studentemployment/graduateassistantships.

You can also see this link (http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/psychology/academicprograms/scholarships/payoptions) for more detailed information on options for paying for graduate study.
In what sequence are the classes required?

We have some recommendations regarding our course sequence, which is listed below. There is some flexibility in the order in which you take them. We do recommend that you take intermediate statistics during your first year, as it is a prerequisite to completing a thesis. Students generally take 9 – 12 credits per semester, although they are allowed to take up to 15 credits:

For All Cognitive & Social Processes Students - Total hours = 44 minimum:

EDPS 642: Intermediate Statistics, 3 credits, fall first year
PSYS 616: Perception and Cognition, 3 credits, fall first year
PSYS 617: Memory Processes and Applications (offered alternatively with 618 every other year), 3 credits, spring first or second year
PSYS 618: Advanced Cognitive Processes (offered alternatively with 617 every other year), 3 credits, spring first or second year
PSYS 623: Theories of Personality, 3 credits, fall first or second year
PSYS 668: Physiological Psychology, 3 credits, fall first or second year
PSYS 680: Research Methods in Psychology, 3 credits, fall first year
PSYS 681: Applied Methods in Psychology, 4 credits, spring first year
PSYS 697: Diversity Issues in Psychological Research, 3 credits, spring first year
PSYS 690: Professional Development Colloquium, 1 credit per semester, every semester

Two of the following (6 credits overall):
SOPS 615: Social Cognition
SOPS 620: Group Dynamics
SOPS 640: Social Psychology of Attitudes
SOPS 660: Contemporary Social Psychology
PSYS 695: Seminar in Psychology (sometimes special seminars covering a social psychology topic are offered in our department),

Electives – 6 credits (See “pre-approved electives” in the Graduate Student guidebook or submit elective courses to be approved), varies

For All Clinical Students - Total hours = 44 minimum:

EDPS 642: Intermediate Statistics, 3 credits, fall first year
PSYS 632: Abnormal Psychology, 3 credits, fall first year
PSYS 640: Foundation in Assessment, 3 credits, spring first year
PSYS 652: Psychotherapy, 3 credits, spring first year
PSYS 668: Physiological Psychology, 3 credits, fall second year
PSYS 680: Research Methods in Psychology, 3 credits, fall first year
PSYS 681: Applied Methods in Psychology, 4 credits, spring first year
PSYS 690: Professional Development Colloquium, 1 credit per semester, every semester
PSYS 696: Diversity Issues in Clinical Psychology, 3 credits, fall first year

One of the following:
EDPS 730 Nonparametric Statistics, 3 credits
EDPS 740 Categorical Data Analysis, 3 credits, fall
EDPS 741 Applied Regression Analysis, 3 credits, fall
EDPS 742 Multivariate Statistics, 3 credits
EDPS 743 Factor Analysis, 3 credits
EDPS 744 Structural Equation Modeling, 3 credits
EDPS 746 Theory of Measurement, 3 credits, fall

Electives (See “pre-approved electives” in the Graduate Student guidebook or submit elective courses to be approved) – 12 credits minimum, varies

For Clinical Students with Concentration(s) – 44-50 hours
Concentrations and certificates are optional.
Concentration: Clinical/Counseling, 18 hours
Students may complete this concentration and/or one certificate listed below. If certificate is selected, the credits will count toward the concentration requirements:
Certificate in Applied Behavior Analysis
Certificate in Autism
Certificate in Neuropsychology
Certificate in Human Development and Learning

PSYS 613 Developmental Psychology, 3 credits
PSYS 685 Applied Research Internship, 3-6 credits
CPSY 606 Pre-practicum Skills, 3 credits, summer first year
CPSY 607 Appraisal Methods, 3 credits, fall
CPSY 608 Psychosocial Rehabilitation, 3 credits
CPSY 610 Career Theories and Realities, 3 credits
CPSY 634 Intro Behavioral Medicine, 3 credits
CPSY 644 Practicum in Counseling, 3 credits each fall & spring second year
CPSY 662 Couples Sex Therapy, 3 credits, fall
CPSY 664 Family Therapy, 3 credits
CPSY 675 Counseling Gifted, 3 credits
CPSY 676 Counseling Older Adult, 3 credits
CPSY 680 Social Justice, 3 credits
Concentration: Assessment, 18 hours
Students may complete this concentration and/or one certificate listed below. If certificate is selected, the credits will count toward the concentration requirements:
- Certificate in Institutional Research
- Certificate in Neuropsychology

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<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>PSYS 685</td>
<td>Applied Research Internship</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>697 Research Diversity Seminar</td>
<td>3 credits, spring</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPSY 610</td>
<td>Career Theories and Realities</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td></td>
<td>614 Career Counseling Assessment</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDPS 646</td>
<td>Tests and Measurements</td>
<td>3 credits, fall, online</td>
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<td>650 Individual Testing WS</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>652 Intro Neuropsychology</td>
<td>3 credits, fall</td>
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<td>656 Pediatric Neuropsychology</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>660 Diagnosis Learning Disorders</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>746 Theory of Measurement</td>
<td>3 credits, fall</td>
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<td></td>
<td>750 Developmental Psychopath</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>752 Practicum Neuro Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPCE 612</td>
<td>Theory and Pract EC Special Ed</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>613 Assessment Strategies in ECSE</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>680 Intro Persons Aut Spec Dis</td>
<td>3 credits, spring online</td>
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<td>682 Interv and Treat Persons Aut</td>
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<td>686 Intro: Mild Interventions</td>
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<td>687 Educ Assessment: Mild Int</td>
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Concentration: Cultural Diversity, 18 hours
Students may complete this concentration and/or one certificate listed below. If certificate is selected, the credits will count toward the concentration requirements:
- Certificate in Diversity Studies
- Certificate in Gerontology

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<th>Course Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>PSYS 524</td>
<td>Psychology of Women</td>
<td>3 credits, fall/spring</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>685 Applied Research Internship</td>
<td>3 credits, summer/fall/spring</td>
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<td>697 Research Diversity Seminar</td>
<td>3 credits, spring</td>
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<td>ANTH 527</td>
<td>Culture and Medicine</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>541 Anthropology of Gender</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<td>COMM 645</td>
<td>Intercultural Communication</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>EDPS 603</td>
<td>Human Development</td>
<td>3 credits, fall online</td>
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<td>629 Adult Development</td>
<td>3 credits, fall online</td>
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<td>GERO 540</td>
<td>Women and Aging</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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<tr>
<td>SOC 520</td>
<td>Social Inequality</td>
<td>3 credits</td>
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What is considered a full academic load in graduate school?

At Ball State, a full academic load during the fall and spring semesters for graduate students is 9-15 credit hours. A full-time graduate student, for financial aid purposes, must be registered for 9 credit hours during fall/spring semester. Graduate students may register for a maximum of 15 credit hours per fall/spring semester and 12 hours during an entire summer (though it is not required that you take credits during the summer).

Students with assistantships must take at least 9 credit hours each fall/spring semester; sometimes, for graduate assistants in other offices on campus, the minimum credit hours required is 6. There is no minimum requirement for students who are not graduate assistants.

Is the first year more class-heavy and the second year more focused on the Master's Thesis?

We generally recommend that you take more courses during your first year so that you can have room for taking thesis credits your second year if you plan on completing a thesis.

Can I take classes as a part-time student? Can I take classes while working full-time?

Yes, you may do both but should be aware that most classes are only offered once a year on certain days and times. Most classes are offered only during the day; therefore, your work schedule must be somewhat flexible. If you enter the Clinical program, be aware that many classes are prerequisites for other classes. This means it could take you twice as long as the usual two years to complete the program if you are a part-time student.

Can I take classes online?

Currently, we do not offer any of our PSYS graduate courses online. Thus, most of the courses you will need to complete for either the Clinical or Cognitive and Social Processes program will be on campus. Some elective courses (in other departments) are offered online.
Does your program have night classes?

Almost all of the classes for both programs, with the exception of PSYS 623, are offered during the day time, Monday through Friday.
**PROFESSORS/LABS**

*Is a specific way to ask if professors are taking on students or apply for research labs for the coming year?*

The best way to determine if a professor will work with you is to e-mail her/him. You may contact more than one professor. You can let them know that you were accepted to our program and offered an assistantship, a little bit about your interests, and ask if they would have an opening in their lab in the fall for you to work with them on research. You are also always welcome to arrange a visit if you would like, so that you could meet with professors in person. We highly recommend you e-mail professors even before you apply to the program, so that you can establish if they would be a good fit for your research interests. Student/faculty match is one of the main criteria for which the Graduate Committee determines admission.

*Can I work in more than one lab?*

Yes. You might be a part of someone’s lab through your assistantship, but you are always welcome to volunteer to work in other professors’ labs for additional research experience.

*Can I work with a faculty member who does not specialize in my program’s field? For example, I am a Cognitive and Social Processes student who would like to work in a lab of a Clinical faculty member.*

The faculty members in our department are well-rounded in their research and research interests. You can work with whomever is a good fit for your research interests, as long as the faculty member is willing and able to work with you.

*What do professors expect of graduate students who work in their lab?*

Each professor integrates students into their lab in different ways. This is something you should ask of the professors with whom you are considering working. Most professors enjoy collaborating with students in a variety of ways, from asking them to assist in data collection to eventually being more involved in the conceptual elements of projects. If you are part of a professor’s lab based on your assistantship, you may also occasionally be asked to assist your supervising professor in the classroom with such things as simple grading, student study sessions, attendance, etc.

*Do professors publish regularly with graduate students?*

Our tenured or tenure-track professors are respected members of their academic fields and publish consistently. Many of our professors do publish with the students who work with them in a substantial project in their lab. Particularly, although not exclusively, professors will attempt to assist students in publishing their thesis work. Please be aware, however, that unless you are able to start work on a substantial
research project early in their first year in the program, it is necessarily difficult for them to publish before they graduate due to the general scope of publishable work from start to finish.

**Do you have research equipment available for graduate students?**
There is certain equipment available. Professors usually allow students who need lab space to share their labs for collecting thesis data, including using their computer stations. There are not dedicated laptops assigned to students, who must provide their own laptops. We do have 4 iWorx systems for collecting psychophysiological data (heart rate, skin conductance, etc.), and we have a fully-functional electroencephalography/event-related potentials (EEG/ERP) lab.

**Is there a dedicated time I meet with my advisor each week?**
Each professor handles this differently. Academic advisors try to meet with you as needed and formally once or twice an academic year. However, once you have a thesis advisor, you may request of them that you meet weekly. For assistantships, some professors have weekly lab meetings where they will check in with you, as well.

**THEESIS/RESEARCH**

**When does the Master's Thesis process begin, and is it required?**
Although a thesis, particularly, is not required in our program, it is highly recommended that you complete one, particularly if you plan on applying to doctoral programs. If not a thesis, we suggest you complete an independent research project.

**Do I have to complete my thesis with my assistantship supervisor(s)?**
No, you do not have to complete your thesis with your assistantship supervisor(s). You should choose a supervisor whom you believe you would work well with and whose research interests are most similar to your own.
POST-GRADUATION

Do most students who graduate go directly into doctoral programs? If so, how many usually do?

Students do not always go directly into a doctoral program upon completing their MA, although many students do. Around 40% of our students go directly into a PhD program upon graduation (please note that not all students decide to go on to a doctoral program; of students who apply, this percentage increases to approximately 80%). Of those who apply and do not get directly into a program upon graduating, the majority of students are admitted the following year. This often has to do with the time it takes for work done in the program to make its way through the publication process.

Where do graduates of your programs go after graduating?

About half of the graduates in the Clinical program choose to go on to doctoral programs in clinical or counseling Psychology, and the other half obtain jobs in a mental health setting. For the Cognitive and Social Processes program, graduates have gone on to doctoral programs in cognitive, social, or experimental psychology. Graduates also obtain jobs as institutional researchers, admissions officers at universities, and as marketing consultants in business or industry.

MISCELLANEOUS/OTHER

What’s the difference between counseling psychology and clinical psychology?
What’s the difference between the Clinical and Counseling programs at Ball State?

The distinction between Clinical and Counseling Psychology is not always clear-cut. Traditionally, clinical psychologists treated and studied people with severe mental illness, whereas counseling psychologists helped people with common life troubles. But in recent decades, this distinction has become blurred.

It’s important to understand the distinction between the Clinical Psychology graduate program and Counseling Psychology Master’s programs at Ball State. These two separate programs are housed in entirely different departments at the university and are geared toward different outcomes.

The Psychological Science department’s Clinical Psychology Master’s program is research-focused. The primary goal of the Clinical program is to prepare students to
enter doctoral programs. Our Clinical program is a good fit for students who eventually want to teach and conduct research in academia.

In contrast, the Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services department’s Counseling Psychology Master’s program is more applied in focus. This program would be a better fit for students who want to be a licensed therapist or counselor. The Counseling Psychology program has “Clinical Mental Health Counseling Track” that can be pursued, and this track prepares you to be a licensed mental health counselor.

If you are interested in pursuing licensure and applied clinical counseling, you should contact the Department of Counseling Psychology and Guidance Services, as they will be able to give you more information about their program (http://cms.bsu.edu/academics/collegesanddepartments/teachers/departments/counselingpsych).

**Is the primary goal of the faculty to help students get into doctoral programs?**
Yes, the primary goal of our program is that of doctoral preparation. Therefore, we will assist and encourage you to gain as much research experience as possible while in the program, although that may not all occur with one specific advisor.

**What is the student to professor ratio for your programs?**
Each year, we accept no more than 10 students to each of our graduate programs. At any time, we may have a maximum of 40 students in our program (20 Clinical and 20 Cognitive and Social Processes students in total). We currently have 23 academic faculty and staff members (including professors, associate professors, assistant professors, and instructors) in our department.

**I didn’t major in psychology as an undergraduate. Can I still apply to one of your programs?**
Students with minimal or no background in psychology will not necessarily be disadvantaged when applying to our programs, but if admitted, they may need to take extra courses. These courses would be determined in consultation with the Director(s) of Graduate Studies. In particular, students without an undergraduate background in psychology might need to take an introductory graduate-level statistics class if they have never taken a statistics class, and they would need to take an introductory research methods class to prepare them for the required research methods class.

**I have already taken some graduate classes. Will they transfer to your program if I get accepted?**
Possibly. If admitted to our program, your transcript will be examined to see if any of the classes you took can be used to satisfy the degree requirements. You might also need to provide syllabi for the classes in question. The decision will be made by the Director(s) of the Graduate program, along with professors who teach the classes you want to have waived.

**Can I transfer to your program from my current graduate program?**

Regarding the transfer of credits, the Ball State Graduate School has several rules. Here are some of them.

- The “research requirement” must be done at Ball State rather than transferred. That means either a thesis or the statistics/research methods course sequence (two courses).
- The courses to be transferred must have been taken within the last 6 years, and you must have a B or higher in them. Classes you took with a pass/fail option won’t count.
- You can transfer a maximum of 15 credit hours.

Aside from the Graduate School rules, you would also have to satisfy the department of Psychological Science requirements. You would have to send the Graduate Director(s) a detailed course description or syllabus of each course you want to transfer. This would then be looked at and faculty who teach similar courses would be consulted. Finally, the Graduate Director(s) would make a decision regarding course equivalency.