

**Cognitive and Social Processes M.A. Program**  
**Department of Psychological Science**  
**Ball State University**  
**Application Instructions and Information**

This packet contains forms and instructions for applying to the Cognitive and Social Processes program in the Department of Psychological Science. In addition to applying to the department, you must also apply separately to Ball State's Graduate School (if you are a U.S. citizen) or to Ball State's Rinker Center for International Programs (if you are an international student).

**U.S. citizens:** Besides submitting an application to the Department of Psychological Science, you must apply to Ball State University's Graduate School. You can complete the Graduate School's application online (go to [www.bsu.edu/gradschool](http://www.bsu.edu/gradschool)). You will be required to submit an application fee before the Graduate School will process your information. On the application form, please *indicate carefully* that you are applying to the Cognitive and Social Processes M.A. program in the Department of Psychological Science; there are other programs at Ball State with similar names. You must be admitted to the Graduate School to be eligible for admission to the department's program; however, acceptance to the Graduate School does not guarantee admission to the department.

**International students:** Besides submitting an application to the Department of Psychological Science, you must apply to Ball State University's Rinker Center for International Programs. The International Programs website ([www.bsu.edu/internationaladmit](http://www.bsu.edu/internationaladmit)) will guide you through their application process. On all forms, please *indicate carefully* that you are applying to the Cognitive and Social Processes M.A. program in the Department of Psychological Science; there are other programs at Ball State with similar names.

**Required Application Materials for Applying to the Department of Psychological Science**

The application deadline for fall semester is the previous March 1. Late applications will be considered only if openings are available after consideration of all applications received by March 1. Please note that the department will not review incomplete applications; you must submit all of the required items. Collect the required materials listed below (except the official report of your GRE scores, which is sent by the Educational Testing Service), put them in one packet, and send them to:

**Dr. Kerri Pickel**  
**Director of Graduate Studies**  
**Department of Psychological Science**  
**Ball State University**  
**Muncie, IN 47306**  
**USA**

1. Complete and submit the Department of Psychological Science Application form. Before beginning, please carefully read the section below titled "Instructions for Completing the Department Application Form."
2. Print out three copies of the recommendation form included in this packet. Give the forms to three professors or supervisors who can comment in detail on your qualifications for graduate study in psychology, including your academic ability and performance, research skills, and the extent to which your research interests and career goals match those offered by our program. You should not request a recommendation from a nonacademic person unless he or she supervises you in a research setting. Recommendations from friends and family members are inappropriate. Collect the completed recommendations and enclose them when you submit your application materials. The recommenders should seal the materials in an envelope and sign across the envelope flap.
3. Write a personal statement that discusses your skills, experiences, interests, and reasons for applying to the program. Before beginning, please carefully read the section below titled "Instructions for Writing the Personal Statement."
4. Submit a résumé or vita outlining your education, honors and awards, work or internship experience, research, and other psychology-related experience.
5. Instruct the Educational Testing Service (ETS) to send an official report of your scores on the general test (verbal,

quantitative, and analytic writing sections) of the Graduate Record Examination. We do not require or consider the psychology subject test. Ball State's institution code is 1051. The department code is 2002 for the Cognitive and Social Processes program.

Direct your questions to Dr. Kerri Pickel at [kpickel@bsu.edu](mailto:kpickel@bsu.edu).

### **Instructions for Completing the Department Application Form**

Items 1 and 2. Report your full legal name, along with any names you have previously used. "Last name" means your family name, and "first name" means your given name.

Item 3. Ball State University is on the semester system. Students in both programs begin their studies during fall semester. Please indicate which year you would like to begin graduate study.

Items 4-5. Self-explanatory.

Item 6. If you have a temporary address (e.g., a school address) that you will leave before the start of the term for which you are applying, enter that address here and specify the date when you will leave. If you do not have a temporary address, leave this item blank.

Item 7. If you entered a temporary address in Item 6, report your permanent address here.

Item 8. Please enter your e mail address carefully and legibly; some characters look similar (e.g., lower case L and the number one). We will use this address to contact you about the status of your application.

Item 9. Remember to send to the Graduate School official transcripts from all colleges and universities you attended, regardless of length of time enrolled or number of credits earned. It is not necessary to submit high school transcripts.

Item 10. Indicate by checking the appropriate box whether you intend to be a full-time or part-time student. A full-time student is one who registers for nine or more credit hours per semester.

Item 11. Indicate here whether you wish to be considered for a graduate assistantship. If you are awarded an assistantship, you receive a partial tuition remission and a stipend. In return, you work 20 hours per week assisting faculty with teaching, research, and/or administrative duties. We have a limited number of assistantships, which are offered to the top students on our ranked admission list. We will let you know if we can give you an assistantship when we contact you about admission.

Item 12. Compute your undergraduate cumulative grade point average (GPA) as follows: First, convert course letter grades to numerical grades using the following scale: A = 4, A- = 3.67, B+ = 3.33, B = 3.00, B- = 2.67, C+ = 2.33, C = 2.00, C- = 1.67, D+ = 1.33, D = 1.00, D- = 0.67, F = 0. Then multiply each numerical grade by the number of credit hours assigned to that course. Add the products, and divide by the total number of credit hours taken. Be sure to include all undergraduate grades, including credits you may have transferred from one institution to another.

Item 13. Follow the instructions in Item 12, but base your calculations on the courses you have taken during your junior and senior years only.

Item 14. Follow the instructions in Item 12, but base your calculations on the psychology courses you have taken.

Item 15. Report all GRE scores that you have earned within the past six years. Your scores will be verified using reports from ETS, but your application may be processed more quickly if you submit your scores on this form.

Item 16. Please follow the instructions on the form.

Item 17. Self-explanatory.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE  
 BALL STATE UNIVERSITY  
 MASTER OF ARTS IN COGNITIVE AND SOCIAL PROCESSES  
 DEPARTMENT APPLICATION FORM

Please read the instructions before filling out this form. Please type or print clearly.

1. LAST NAME			FIRST NAME		MIDDLE NAME		2. OTHER NAMES UNDER WHICH RECORDS HAVE BEEN ISSUED			
3. INTENDED TERM OF ENTRANCE FALL, 20_____		4. CITIZENSHIP <input type="checkbox"/> US <input type="checkbox"/> CANADA <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent U.S. Resident				5. INTERNATIONAL APPLICANT VISA STATUS <input type="checkbox"/> Student visa <input type="checkbox"/> Immigrant visa <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify) _____				
6. CURRENT MAILING ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE/PROVINCE, ZIP CODE)						EFFECTIVE UNTIL (DATE)		PHONE		
7. PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS (STREET, CITY, STATE/PROVINCE, ZIP CODE)							PHONE			
8. E MAIL ADDRESS							EFFECTIVE UNTIL (DATE)			
9. Beginning with the most recent, list in order of attendance all high schools, colleges, and universities you have attended, including the one in which you are currently enrolled (if applicable). List all schools, regardless of the length of time enrolled or the number of credits completed. If the college is part of a university with a different name, give the name of the university. International applicants: List the actual name of the degree received or expected; do not translate or interpret in terms of the U.S. equivalent. Attach an additional page if necessary.										
NAME OF INSTITUTION (Do not use initials)	LOCATION (City, State, or Country)	ATTENDED/ATTENDING		MAJOR	NAME OF DEGREE OR DIPLOMA RECEIVED OR EXPECTED	DATE RECEIVED OR EXPECTED (Month/Year)				
		FROM (Month/Year)	TO (Month/Year)							
10. INTENDED REGISTRATION STATUS <input type="checkbox"/> Full Time <input type="checkbox"/> Part Time										
11. ARE YOU APPLYING FOR A GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIP IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No										
12. CUMULATIVE UNDERGRADUATE GPA				13. GPA IN JUNIOR-SENIOR YEARS				14. UNDERGRADUATE GPA IN PSYCHOLOGY		
15. GRE SCORES (Report all scores earned within the past six years. Attach an additional page if necessary)										
Verbal		Quantitative			Analytical Writing			Date taken		

16. Our Cognitive and Social Processes M.A. program is designed to prepare students to begin doctoral study. To help students become competitive candidates for doctoral programs and to ensure their success at that level, we strongly encourage them to complete an independent research project or an M.A. thesis while enrolled in our program. Our professors welcome the opportunity to do research with students. Faculty research topics include, but are not limited to, those listed below (for more information about individual professors' interests, please check their websites).

Please identify the names of 2 to 3 of our graduate faculty members with whom you would like to conduct research:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Please check from the list below to indicate areas in which you would like to conduct research while completing your degree. Please note that this list is only a starting point to identify research areas that you might be able to pursue while enrolled in our program.

	Abuse and Trauma		Industrial/Organizational and Training Evaluation
	Attachment		Infidelity Distress
	Attitudes, Stereotypes, Prejudice, and Discrimination		Interpersonal Communication Processes and Psycholinguistics
	Authoritarianism and Social Dominance Orientation		Marginalized Populations
	Binding Auditory and Touch Information in the Brain		Perception
	Cognitive Neuroscience		Personality Assessment
	Control Motivation		Personality and Information Processing
	Critical Thinking and Problem Solving		Qualitative Paradigm
	Decision Making		Reading Comprehension
	Diversity and Ethnic Minority Issues in Psychotherapy and Teaching		Relational Victimization and Bullying
	Emotions		Selective Exposure to Information
	Eyewitness Memory and Juror Decision Making		Sleep Habits
	Human Factors and Uses of Computers in Psychology		Other (specify):
	Identity Development		

17. I certify that the foregoing statements and all other information and transcripts submitted by me in conjunction with this application for admission are true and correct. I understand that falsification or deliberate omission of information is grounds for rejection of the application or dismissal from the school.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Ball State University  
Department of Psychological Science  
M. A. in Cognitive and Social Processes  
Recommendation for Graduate Study**

*To the applicant:* Give this form to professors or supervisors who can comment in detail on your qualifications for graduate study in psychology, including your academic ability and performance, research skills, and the extent to which your research interests and career goals match those offered by our program. You should not request a recommendation from a nonacademic person unless he or she supervises you in a research setting. Recommendations from friends and family members are inappropriate. Collect the completed recommendations and include them when you submit your application materials. The recommenders should seal the materials in an envelope and sign across the envelope flap.

**PART I: TO BE COMPLETED BY APPLICANT**

Applicant's Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Application for: Admission and Assistantship \_\_\_\_\_ Admission only \_\_\_\_\_

Under the federal Family Education Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, students are entitled to review their records, including letters of recommendation. However, those writing recommendations and those assessing recommendations may attach more significance to them if it is known that the recommendation will remain confidential. It is your option to waive your right to access to these recommendations or to decline to do so. Please mark the appropriate phrase below, indicating your choice of option, and sign your name:

\_\_\_\_\_ I waive my right to review this recommendation.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do *not* waive my right to review this recommendation.

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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**PART II: TO BE COMPLETED BY RECOMMENDER**

*Note to the recommender:* The primary purpose of Ball State University's M.A. program in Cognitive and Social Processes is to prepare students for doctoral study in cognitive or social psychology or a related area. The program consists of a rigorous combination of classroom and research experiences. To help students become competitive candidates for doctoral programs and to ensure their success at that level, we strongly encourage them to complete a thesis or other type of independent research project. We ask that you consider our program's purpose when deciding whether to provide a recommendation for this applicant and when answering the following questions.

1. Our program's purpose is to prepare students for doctoral study in cognitive or social psychology or a related area. Please indicate whether the applicant's career goals match this purpose, regardless of his/her academic potential:

- \_\_\_\_\_ Applicant's career goals match the program's purpose  
\_\_\_\_\_ Applicant's career goals do not match the program's purpose  
\_\_\_\_\_ No basis for judgment

2. I have known the applicant for \_\_\_\_\_ years, \_\_\_\_\_ months.

3. I know the applicant \_\_\_\_\_ slightly \_\_\_\_\_ fairly well \_\_\_\_\_ very well

4. I have known the applicant as (check all that apply):

- \_\_\_\_\_ an undergraduate student    \_\_\_\_\_ an advisee    \_\_\_\_\_ a research assistant    \_\_\_\_\_ a teaching assistant  
\_\_\_\_\_ a graduate student    \_\_\_\_\_ a supervisee in a mental health center, crisis counseling, or peer advising center  
\_\_\_\_\_ other (explain below):

5. Comparing this applicant to other successful Master's level applicants you have known, please rate the applicant on the following criteria:

	Poor				Superior	No basis for judgment
Professionalism	1	2	3	4	5	
Emotional maturity	1	2	3	4	5	
Ability to work with others	1	2	3	4	5	
Independence & initiative	1	2	3	4	5	
Research potential	1	2	3	4	5	
Intellectual ability	1	2	3	4	5	
Oral communication	1	2	3	4	5	
Written communication	1	2	3	4	5	
Professional commitment	1	2	3	4	5	
Openness to diverse perspectives and to people from diverse backgrounds	1	2	3	4	5	
Overall qualifications for a cognitive and social psychology Master's program	1	2	3	4	5	

6. Please indicate the strength of your overall endorsement of the applicant:

- Highly recommended  
 Recommended  
 Recommended with some reservations  
 Not recommended

Please attach a letter to the Director of Graduate Studies that includes information that is not reflected in the applicant's transcript and test scores (i.e., work done outside of class and other characteristics you believe are related to success in graduate school). We are especially interested in the applicant's academic ability and performance, research skills, and fit with our program's purpose.

7. Recommender's signature \_\_\_\_\_

Printed name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

After checking to make sure this form is completed, please place it in an envelope, seal the envelope, and sign your name across the seal. Then return the form to the applicant so that the recommendations can be included with his/her application.

## **Instructions for Writing the Personal Statement**

Please write one concise paragraph in response to each of the following questions. In your statement please include the headings in bold that we have provided.

- 1. Program Fit:** Why are you interested in our Cognitive and Social Processes program, and why would this program be a good fit for you?
- 2. Career Goals:** What do you plan to do immediately after completion of your Master's degree, and what are your long-term career goals?
- 3. Research Experience and Interests:** **a)** Please describe briefly any research projects you have worked on, and indicate whether each study was an independent research project, a senior thesis, a faculty project that you assisted with, etc. In addition, describe briefly the skills you acquired through your work. **b)** What research topic(s) might you like to pursue for a thesis or independent research project in your Master's program? Please discuss possible research questions and populations of interest.
- 4. Additional Qualifications:** Please describe any additional qualifications that may not be obvious from your transcripts or other materials that you believe would be beneficial to your application to our program.