

Psychology

Degrees Offered

- Master of Science
- Doctor of Philosophy

Doctoral Program Majors

The doctoral degrees in Behavior Analysis, Behavioral Neuroscience, Clinical Psychology, and Life-Span Developmental Psychology prepare students for careers in research, teaching, and/or practice.

Program Accreditation

The Clinical Program at West Virginia University is comprised of two major areas of study: Clinical Psychology and Clinical Child Psychology. The Clinical Program has been accredited continuously by the American Psychological Association since 1966. In 2020, the Program was re-accredited until 2030. For any questions regarding accreditation of this or any other APA-accredited program, contact the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation of the American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. Phone number: (202) 336-5979. Website: <http://www.accreditation.apa.org> (<http://www.accreditation.apa.org/>).

The Behavior Analysis Program at West Virginia University has been accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International since 2003. In 2019, the Program was re-accredited until 2025. For any questions regarding accreditation of this or any other ABAL-accredited program, contact the ABAL Accreditation Board, 550 West Centre Avenue, Portage, MI 49024. Phone number: (269) 492-9310. Website: <https://accreditation.abainternational.org> (<https://accreditation.abainternational.org/accredited-programs.aspx>).

FACULTY

CHAIR

- Kevin Larkin - Ph.D. (University of Pittsburgh)
Clinical Health Psychology, Applied Psychophysiology, Cardiovascular Behavioral Medicine

ASSOCIATE CHAIR

- Karen Anderson - Ph.D. (University of Florida)
Behavioral pharmacology; self-control and impulsivity

DIRECTOR OF GRADUATE STUDIES

- Claire St. Peter - Ph.D. (University of Florida)
Procedural Fidelity, School-Based Behavior Supports, Observational Measurement

PROFESSORS

- Christina Duncan - Ph.D. (Louisiana State University)
Behavioral Pediatrics, Pediatric Chronic Illness, Adherence
- Barry A. Edelstein - Ph.D. (University of Memphis)
Eberly Family Distinguished Professor of Clinical Psychology. Burnout in Intergenerational Caregiving, Older Adult Decision-Making
- Amy Gentzler - Ph.D. (Kent State University)
Emotion Regulation and Adjustment in Children and Adolescents, Positive Psychology
- Kennon A. Lattal - Ph.D. (University of Alabama)
Centennial Professor. Experimental Analysis of Behavior, History and Philosophy of Psychology, Human-Pet Interactions
- Tracy L. Morris - Ph.D. (University of Mississippi)
Eberly Distinguished Professor of Outstanding Teaching
- Melanie C. Page - Ph.D. (Arizona State University)
Quantitative/Developmental Psychology
- Julie Hicks Patrick - Ph.D. (University of Akron)
Health Disparities, Cognitive Aging, Mid- and Late-Life, Methodology
- Michael Perone - Ph.D. (University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee)
Positive and Negative Reinforcement, Animal and Human Operant Behavior, Research Methodology
- Claire St. Peter - Ph.D. (University of Florida)
Procedural Fidelity, School-Based Behavior Supports, Observational Measurement

- JoNell Strough - Ph.D. (University of Utah)
Life-Span Development, Decision Making, Everyday Problem Solving, Gender Development

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Karen G. Anderson - Ph.D. (University of Florida)
Behavioral Pharmacology, Self-Control and Impulsivity
- Melissa Blank - Ph.D. (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Behavioral Pharmacology, Nicotine/Tobacco Addiction, Tobacco Use Disparities
- Amy Fiske - Ph.D. (University of Southern California)
Late Life Depression and Suicide
- Elisa Krackow - Ph.D. (Binghamton University-SUNY)
Adult and Child Testimony, Developmental Psychopathology
- Shari Steinman - Ph.D. (University of Virginia)
Cognitive Bias in Anxiety Disorders, Treatment of Anxiety and Obsessive Compulsive Disorders
- Nicholas Turiano - Ph.D. (Purdue University)
Personality, Health, and Aging

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Ryan Best - Ph.D. (Florida State University)
Adult Development, Value-based Decision-making, Cognitive Aging
- Mariya Cherkasova - Ph.D. (McGill University)
Addiction; Psychopharmacology; Reward-related Behavior
- Kathryn Kestner - Ph.D. (Western Michigan University)
Applied Behavior Analysis, Assessment and Treatment of Challenging Behaviors
- Kathleen Morrison - Ph.D. (University of Tennessee)
Stress and Neuropsychiatric Disease; Women's Health

TEACHING ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Elizabeth Levelle - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
Teaching of Psychology, Academic Advising
- Sharon Tenenholz - Ph.D. (University of California, Los Angeles)
Teaching of Psychology, Curriculum Design, Academic Advising
- Connie Toffle - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
Teaching of Psychology

TEACHING ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Kristina Penikis - Ph.D. (New York University)
Teaching of Neuroscience, Systems Neuroscience, Advising and Mentorship

SERVICE ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

- Brennan Armshaw - Ph.D. (University of North Texas)
Behavior Analysis, Behavioral Medicine and Neuromuscular Behavior, Behavior Analysis and Education, Advising and Mentorship
- Stephanie McWilliams - Ph.D. (West Virginia University)
Youth Mentorship; Sport and Exercise Psychology, Health Psychology, Behavior Change and Weight Management

PROFESSORS EMERITI

- Edward Caldwell - Ph.D.
- Stanley Cohen - Ph.D.
- Philip Comer - Ph.D.
- William J. Fremouw - Ph.D.
- Robert Hawkins - Ph.D.
- Katherine Karraker - Ph.D.
- Daniel W. McNeil - Ph.D.
- Cheryl B McNeil - Ph.D.
- Kent Parker - Ph.D.

Admissions

PH.D. IN PSYCHOLOGY

The Psychology program admits students directly to the doctoral degree. The requirements for the master's of science are completed as part of the doctoral degree requirements. The department currently offers doctoral degrees in four subdisciplines of Psychology: Behavior Analysis, Behavioral Neuroscience, Clinical, and Life-Span Development.

In addition to WVU's general admission requirements (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#classificationtext>), applicants for graduate studies in Psychology should have adequate preparation in psychology and related fields and a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in undergraduate or graduate coursework. The personal statement should describe the fit between the applicant's interests and the graduate program major area of study, outline the applicant's academic and professional goals, and demonstrate the personal qualities that predict success in graduate study.

List of Admission Requirements:

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>)
- Applicants must submit transcripts from all institutions attended
- Three letters of recommendation, written by people (typically faculty) in a position to evaluate the applicant's academic strengths and abilities
- Resume/Curriculum Vitae
- Statement of purpose

International Applicants:

- See the steps to apply for admissions and access the application here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/how-to-apply/>)
- International applications should view additional requirements here (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/graduateeducationatwestvirginiauniversity/#internationaltext/#internationaltext>) and here (<https://graduateadmissions.wvu.edu/information-for/international-students/>)
- Language proficiency is required to hold a graduate teaching assistantship. See here (<https://elli.wvu.edu/testing-resources/english-proficiency-gtas/>).

Application Deadlines:

- Psychology only admits students in the fall semester; all application materials, including letters of recommendation, must be received by the preceding December 1st
- All applicants received by the deadlines will be considered for financial support, typically in the form of a graduate teaching assistantship (GTA). Language proficiency is required to hold such an assistantship. See here (<https://elli.wvu.edu/testing-resources/english-proficiency-gtas/>).
- Exceptional Ph.D. applicants may be nominated by the Psychology program for competitive University Fellowships. Qualified applicants will be notified if they are nominated. More information on WVU fellowships can be found here (<https://graduateeducation.wvu.edu/finances/fellowships/>).

Applications received after the deadline may be reviewed at the discretion of the admissions committee. Certain application requirements may be waived based on a preliminary review of an application by the program.

NON-DEGREE STUDENTS

Graduate courses in psychology are designed for regularly admitted degree-seeking psychology students as part of an extensive program of preparing those students for professional careers. Thus, students not admitted into one of the psychology graduate program areas are discouraged from taking graduate courses in psychology. Non-psychology graduate students must obtain the instructor's permission to enroll in any psychology graduate course.

Admission Requirements 2024-2025

The Admission Requirements above will be the same for the 2024-2025 Academic Year.

Major Codes:

Ph.D. Psychology: Behavior Analysis 14D1

Ph.D. Psychology: Behavioral Neuroscience 14D2

Ph.D. Psychology: Clinical 14D4

Ph.D. Psychology: Life-Span Development 14D5

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- Psychology, M.S.
- Psychology: Behavior Analysis, M.S.

For specific information on the following program, please see the link to the right:

- Psychology, Ph.D.

Degree Progress: M.S.

Thesis proposals should be approved no later than May 15, Year 2. Thesis defense and ETD submission should not occur later than May 15, Year 3. Students receive at least a yearly letter of evaluation. Students may be placed on probation or dismissed for any of the following grounds: (1) failing to make timely progress through the program, (2) inability to form a thesis committee, (3) taking unauthorized leaves of absence, (4) engaging in academic misconduct or unethical behavior, (5) receiving two grades below B- (C, D, F, or U), (6) failing to remove two or more grades of incomplete as specified in incomplete contract, (7) failing to meet academic or professional standards outlined in department handbook or program-area supplements to the handbook, (8) violating of any of the institutional, academic, or behavioral standards described in the the WVU Graduate/Professional Handbook (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/>), the American Psychological Association code of ethics (<https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/>), or codes of ethics specified for the student's Program Area.

Degree Progress: Ph.D.

Dissertation proposals should be approved not later than May 15, Year 4. For students who entered with an approved master's thesis, this date is May 15, Year 3. Each program area also has specific milestones associated with other training activities (found on the program area catalog pages). These additional activities include, at a minimum, completion of preliminary examinations. Students receive at least a yearly letter of evaluation. Students may be placed on probation or dismissed for any of the following grounds: (1) failing to make timely progress through the program, (2) failing the preliminary examination, (3) failing to be recommended for doctoral candidacy by training area or full faculty, (4) inability to form a dissertation committee, (5) taking unauthorized leaves of absence, (6) engaging in academic misconduct or unethical behavior, (6) receiving two grades below B- (C, D, F, or U), (7) failing to remove two or more grades of incomplete as specified in incomplete contract, (8) failing to meet academic or professional standards outlined in department handbook or program-area supplements to the handbook, (9) violating of any of the institutional, academic, or behavioral standards described in the the WVU Graduate/Professional Handbook (<http://catalog.wvu.edu/>), the American Psychological Association code of ethics (<https://www.apa.org/ethics/code/>), or codes of ethics specified for the student's Program Area.