Doctor of Philosophy in Behavioral Psychology

Psychology Licensure

The department’s doctoral program in behavioral psychology does not satisfy requirements for licensure in psychology. Students wishing to meet these requirements should, with their advisors, consult the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards (http://www.asppb.org) for state and province requirements. In developing a curriculum that fulfills these requirements, students should consider carefully whether the required courses, clinical experiences, and internships for state and province licensure that are offered by the department and university are open to them.

Admission to Graduate Studies

An applicant seeking to pursue graduate study in the College may be admitted as either a degree-seeking or non-degree seeking student. Policies and procedures of Graduate Studies govern the process of Graduate admission. These may be found in the Graduate Studies (http://catalog.ku.edu/graduate-studies) section of the online catalog.

Please consult the Departments & Programs (http://catalog.ku.edu/liberal-arts-sciences) section of the online catalog for information regarding program-specific admissions criteria and requirements. Special admissions requirements pertain to Interdisciplinary Studies degrees, which may be found in the Graduate Studies section of the online catalog.

Graduate Admission

Applicants seeking admission to the master’s or doctoral program should apply online (http://graduate.ku.edu/application-process). Detailed instructions are provided at that website. Applications are submitted to the university's Graduate Application Processing Center (http://graduate.ku.edu/application-process), which records and forwards them to the department. Applicants submit a completed application form and 1 official transcript of all undergraduate and any graduate course work. They may also submit copies of relevant scholarly or professional work, published or unpublished. Reports of Graduate Record Examination scores are encouraged but not required.

Applicants also must obtain letters of recommendation from 3 professionals familiar with their academic or professional records. These are also submitted online by the applicant's reference.

Among the department’s application materials is a list of the faculty members and descriptions of their research, scholarly, and professional interests. Applicants select at least 3 faculty members whose interests match their interests. These faculty members constitute the applicant’s admissions committee; only they review the application and its supporting materials. An applicant is accepted when one of the faculty members consents to admit the student. This faculty member becomes the advisor of record.

For admission with full graduate standing, the department recommends that applicants complete 12 credit hours of undergraduate or graduate course work in behavior analysis, behavioral science, psychology, education, or related fields, and 6 hours in experimental methods, research design, or statistics.

Many faculty advisors offer research and teaching assistantships. Information about graduate scholarships outside of the department is available online (http://graduate.ku.edu/funding). Applicants should inform their prospective advisors if they apply for a scholarship.

For admission in the fall semester, the application and supporting materials should be received by December 15 of the previous year. Later applications receive consideration in the order of their receipt. Students may be admitted for the spring semester through the application procedures above, but there is no filing deadline.

Ph.D. in Behavioral Psychology Degree Requirements

The doctoral program trains highly competent researchers in applied behavioral science (e.g., applied behavior analysis, applied psychology). Students are taught to discover and produce, translate and apply, and communicate knowledge in the behavioral sciences for understanding and solving problems of individual and societal importance, both local and global. The curriculum requires a sequence of instruction that integrates courses in the basic principles of behavior, experimental methods and research design, and conceptual foundations, but emphasizes course work and training in applied and intervention research (e.g., assessment, analysis, intervention, evaluation). Its objective is to discover and advance empirically based solutions to problems of individual and societal importance, both local and global.

The doctoral program follows a junior-colleague model. Students work closely with their advisors and join them in every aspect of professional development. This includes designing and conducting research, preparing manuscripts for presentation and publication, presenting and publishing those manuscripts, preparing editorial reviews of manuscripts, and engaging in all facets of the responsible conduct of research. Students typically work with 1 advisor, but may work with other faculty members or have co-advisors. If a student’s or advisor’s interests change, students are free to change advisors.

Course Requirements

The doctoral degree program requires students to take 1 course in 10 areas, along with 2 practicum courses. The areas and the practicum courses are:

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Applied Behavior Analysis II (Choose 1)
- ABSC 788 Designing Early Education Environments
- ABSC 802 Behavior Analysis in Developmental Disabilities
- ABSC 865 Applied Behavior Analysis in Complex Organizations
- ABSC 890 Seminar in: _____
- ABSC 961 Advanced Seminar in Applied Behavior Analysis: _____

Research Skill
The Office of Graduate Studies requires students to have training in responsible scholarship and research skills pertinent to the field of research. This will be met by:

- Satisfactory completion of ABSC 735 plus 1 graduate-level methods course (students in the joint PhD-MPH program must complete the “plus 1” course through the MPH program)
- Satisfactory completion of ABSC 841
- 1 of the following:
  - At least 1 first-author publication in peer-reviewed journals, or
  - At least 2 first-author scholarly presentations at regional, state, or national professional meetings, no more than 1 of which may be a poster (the work presented must have been entirely completed while at KU)
- Successful passing of the Written and Oral Comprehensive Exam

Teaching Requirement
Graduate students receive training in the teaching and supervision of undergraduates. The requirement may be met in 1 of 2 ways. In the first, students serve as a paid half-time teaching assistant for 1 semester or as a quarter-time assistant for 2 semesters, assuming proportionate responsibility for class organization, lecturing, grading, and office hours under a faculty member’s supervision. In the second, students take LA&S 792 or ABSC 941, attend 3 brown bag lectures at the Center for Teaching Excellence, and present a guest lecture to the department. In both cases, students must also write a statement of teaching philosophy and obtain numeric evaluations of their teaching in their guest lectures.

Experimental Analysis of Behavior II (Choose 1)
- ABSC 936 Quantitative Analysis of Behavior
- PRVM 800 Principles of Epidemiology
- BIOS 704 Principles of Statistics in Public Health
- BIOS 714 Fundamentals of Biostatistics I

Also required is Research or Intervention Practicum I and II (6). 2 supervised practicum courses in (a) basic or applied research or (b) behavioral interventions.

Research or Intervention Practicum I
- ABSC 870 Practicum I in Behavioral Psychology
- ABSC 871 Practicum I in Behavior Analysis: _____
- ABSC 872 Practicum I in: _____
- ABSC 873 Practicum in Educational Psychological/Rehabilitative Services: _____
- ABSC 875 Practicum in Community Health Promotion
- ABSC 876 Practicum in Community Development

Research or Intervention Practicum II
- ABSC 972 Practicum II in: _____

Electives
Any course that provides students the opportunity to develop competence in specialized areas of behavioral investigation. Students should consult their advisors for elective options.

Master’s Thesis
Students complete an empirically based master’s thesis and pass an oral examination on it. With their advisor’s approval, empirically based theses from other programs may meet this requirement.

Pro-seminar I Requirement
Graduate students are expected to attend pro-seminar sessions when they are scheduled throughout the Fall and Spring semesters. These are usually scheduled for Friday afternoons at 3:30. Pro-seminars are typically presentations given by graduate students (see next paragraph), faculty members, and visiting scholars.

As part of your master’s degree requirements, you are required to present the results of your research (basic, applied, or conceptual) at a weekly pro-seminar meeting. The presentation must be comparable to that which would be given at a professional conference (not a panel discussion). You should be ready to field questions from your peers and the faculty in attendance.

Professional Seminar II Requirement
Doctoral students are required to present the results of their research at a department professional seminar meeting. The presentation is comparable to what would be presented at a professional conference. Students answer questions from their peers and the faculty in attendance.

Editorial Critiques
Students write 3 editorial reviews of published or unpublished journal articles, all of them empirical. The articles cover a range of topics and experimental designs. The first 2 are graded pass-fail by the student’s advisor; the third must be passed by 2 other faculty members.

Comprehensive Examination
The examination has 2 components:

1. Written Examination. In preparation for the oral comprehensive examination, students write a research proposal that includes a critical and comprehensive review of the research literature relevant to the proposed research. The topic is chosen by students with the guidance of their advisors. Students may complete this requirement with a document formatted according to the 2010 APA Publication Manual or a federal grant proposal.

2. Oral Examination. In preparation for the oral examination, students provide their comprehensive examination committee members with a copy of their research review and proposal at least 2 weeks before the date of the defense. During the examination, committee members ask students questions about the review and proposal, as well as on topics covered in the required doctoral curriculum. The defense is successful if a majority of the committee members vote to pass it.

Dissertation
In consultation with their advisors, students conduct an empirically based dissertation, typically based on the comprehensive examination proposal, and pass an oral examination on it. The defense is successful if a majority
of the committee members vote to pass it. Any interested member of the College's Graduate Faculty may attend.