

**THE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM  
IN GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCE  
NEW YORK UNIVERSITY**

**Information Booklet for Applicants**

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For the latest information on our MA program, including course schedules, as well as descriptions of our courses and faculty, please visit the website for NYU's Psychology Department at: [www.psych.nyu.edu](http://www.psych.nyu.edu).

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# THE MASTER OF ARTS PROGRAM IN GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

## OVERVIEW

### The Department of Psychology

The graduate psychology programs at New York University offer a unique opportunity for study in one of the most prestigious departments of psychology in the country. The Department of Psychology of the Graduate School of Arts and Science at NYU has a distinguished faculty of more than 35 full-time professors that includes nationally prominent researchers and editors of major journals in psychology and neuroscience, in addition to a large adjunct faculty. The faculty in the department at NYU carry out active research programs in many areas of psychology. The Department offers courses of study leading to the Master of Arts and the Doctor of Philosophy degrees. It also offers a postdoctoral certificate program in psychotherapy and psychoanalysis, as well as a limited number of postdoctoral research fellowships.

### Departmental Resources

The Department of Psychology maintains laboratories, classrooms and project rooms in renovated space within its own 11-story building near Washington Square. Laboratories are modern and are continuously updated through grants from foundations and federal agencies. The Department collaborates closely with the Center for Neural Sciences in maintaining animal facilities, advanced computational equipment, and a technical shop. Multiple computer resources are available to students through the NYU Information Technology Services (ITS) which supports computing laboratories, access to e-mail and the internet, mainframe systems and technical courses on emerging computational tools.

### General University Facilities

Among the many other facilities available to students at New York University are the Bobst Library and Study Center (with more than 2.5 million books and journals) and the Jerome S. Coles Sports and Recreation Center. The University provides an exciting intellectual environment with many lectures, films and festivals. Students of psychology at New York University have a special opportunity to study in a city that encompasses many of the top scientific and corporate institutions and community service agencies. It is possible for students to expand their experiences in research and other applied settings through fieldwork arrangements and through other independent projects.

## The Master of Arts Degree

The Master of Arts degree in psychology is offered to students who wish 1) to prepare for employment, or to improve their current status, in the growing field of health delivery/social services and relevant research institutions, or for human resources work in the business community; 2) to prepare for doctoral level studies. It should be emphasized, however, that the MA Program in the Department of Psychology at NYU is a terminal degree. It is separate from the department's doctoral programs in psychology. Students with the appropriate background who wish to obtain a PhD in psychology should consider applying directly to one of our two doctoral programs: Cognition and Perception, or Social Psychology. [The latter includes a subprogram in Organizational Psychology, and both programs allow a concentration in Developmental or Quantitative psychology). The MA in psychology is not a prerequisite for any of the doctoral programs.]

Most MA-level courses are taught by adjunct members of the psychology faculty, but MA students have the opportunity to work directly with regular faculty members both in tutorial research programs and in master's thesis research. Master of Arts students also have the opportunity to participate in the department's colloquium series, where many distinguished speakers from NYU and other universities present their ideas.

The MA Program may be completed on a part-time or full-time basis, providing that all course work and either a comprehensive examination or thesis are completed within a five-year period. Most MA courses begin at 6:20 pm and the rest begin at 4:20 pm. Courses meet once a week (Monday through Thursday), except for Statistics, which meets twice a week. Students can begin the MA program in either the Fall or Spring semester, or in one of the Summer sessions.

*[Note that there is a separate department of Applied Psychology in NYU's Steinhardt School of Education, which offers programs in educational, counseling, and school psychology. If an applicant feels that one of these programs are more in line with his or her interests, s/he should telephone 212-998-5030 or 212-998-5555 for information and material, or check their web site: <http://steinhardt.nyu.edu/appsychn/>]*

## THE TWO PROGRAMS OF STUDY

Two programs of study lead to the MA degree: (1) the general psychology program for students who wish to explore several areas in the field, or shape their course of study to fit special interests and needs; and (2) the I/O psychology program for those wishing to expand their knowledge of the psychological principles and methods useful in employee relations and human resources programs. Within the general program, students have the opportunity to create a concentration in community, social, developmental, quantitative, cognitive psychology, biopsychology, psychopathology, or forensic psychology to explore concepts and issues in one of those areas or prepare for doctoral study.

### The Industrial/Organizational Psychology Program

The MA Program in Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology is designed for students interested in careers in employee relations, human resources, or management consulting, and who wish to acquire the technical knowledge of the psychological theories, research methods and problem-solving skills applicable to those fields. Examples of topics considered in this program include the standardization and validation of employment tests, techniques and uses of job analysis, programs of improving work motivation, principles of human learning relevant to personnel training, and techniques of social and organizational change. Although this program is chiefly designed as a terminal master's degree, the MA in I/O program can be modified to prepare students for doctoral study in industrial and organizational psychology. For more information on this program, ask our office for a copy of the separate information brochure for the MA in Industrial/Organizational Psychology program (or visit: <http://www.psych.nyu.edu/programs/ma/io.html>).

### The General Psychology Program

The General Program is designed for students who wish to sample from a variety of areas of psychology. It is an appropriate program of study for students wishing to apply for doctoral-level studies, as well as for students who have limited background in psychology and wish to determine which area of psychology might interest them most. In keeping with these goals, the curriculum for the General Program requires sampling courses from the field of experimental psychology (Core A courses), from the fields of clinical,

social/personality and developmental psychology (Core B courses), and from courses providing research skills (Core C courses).

### Students

The General MA program typically receives about 250 applications each year, of which fewer than half are accepted as matriculants and less than 10% are accepted with nondegree status. Of the students accepted each year, about half actually enroll. At any one time, there are more than 100 students active in the General MA Program. Our students come from across the United States as well as from several foreign countries (especially India, Korea, China, Japan, Brazil, Mexico, Greece, Russia, and Turkey). They range in age from 22 to over 50, with a mean age of around 25, many with academic backgrounds and/or work experiences in fields other than psychology. Most of the students in the general MA program share a strong motivation to become mental health professionals as their ultimate career goal, and nearly all aspire to continue for their doctorate. Most of our MA students seeking admission to doctoral programs do succeed, but due to the extreme competition, very few gain admission to a doctoral-level program in our own department.

### Advisement

In-depth information regarding a wide variety of nearby doctoral level programs is updated and made available to students wishing to continue their study beyond the MA. In addition, personal advisement is offered by an experienced staff. There is an active General MA Psychology Student Association (GPA) that runs special "career nights," where relevant professionals in the field share information regarding career paths and the nature of their work, and workshops helping students to prepare for the doctoral application process (in addition to a variety of social events).

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION**

Students must have completed a baccalaureate degree with at least a 3.0 (or B) grade point average. To ensure a minimal background in psychology, all applicants must have completed an undergraduate introductory psychology course, and an undergraduate behavioral statistics course with a grade of B or better in each. Depending on the specific background of the individual and his/her career goals, additional undergraduate level work may be required before acceptance into the MA Program is granted.

All applicants must take the General Aptitude Test of the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). Recommended minimum scores are 530 in the verbal section, 580 in quantitative, and 4.5 in analytical writing. The verbal guideline is less strictly enforced for international students who learned English as a second language. Students whose undergraduate training was not in English must also submit an acceptable TOEFL – Test of English as a Foreign Language – score (minimum of 250 on the computerized test, or 600 on the paper test).

Applicants must submit letters of recommendation from three people. Preferably, the letters should come from former professors at college, but, for applicants who have been out of school for some time, letters from supervisors are acceptable. Letters should not be from family friends or counselors, or from religious or political figures, unless the recommender has been in a position to personally supervise the applicant's academic or work performance.

Applications for admission can be obtained from NYU's Graduate School of Arts and Science, Office of Admissions and Financial Aid, PO Box 907, New York, NY 10003 (212-998-8050), or from the graduate

school website at <http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/Admissions/AdmApp.html>. Applications should be submitted by June 1 for Fall admission, November 1 for Spring admission, and April 15 for Summer admission. International students should apply at least a month before these deadlines to allow time for the processing of a student visa.

Nondegree Status. If applicants wish to apply for the coming semester but have not taken the GRE (or need to buttress their psychology background) it is possible to be considered for nondegree status (check "Non Degree" at the top of the application form and submit all other requested material). Nondegree students must have completed an undergraduate introductory psychology course with a grade of B or better and have an undergraduate GPA of at least a B (3.0). With nondegree status, a student may take a maximum of 12 points of MA-level courses before applying for a change of status into the MA program. Nondegree students who wish to petition for admission to the MA program must satisfy any condition set by the department, including taking the General but not the Psychology subject test of the GRE. Once the student has attained matriculated status, he or she will receive credit for all psychology graduate courses completed as a nondegree student. Unfortunately, our I/O program is too crowded to allow nondegree students to take I/O courses at this time.

### **MA DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

Formal requirements for the MA degree in psychology are the satisfactory completion of 36 points (at least 24 in the Graduate School of Arts & Science of New York University, and at least 18 in the Psychology Department), and either a written comprehensive examination or, with special permission, a master's thesis.

In addition, (1) all core courses must be taken at NYU in the Psychology Department, and (2) students must earn a grade of at least B in all substantive core courses (i.e., not including the statistics and research courses).

All of the courses in the MA program are 3 points each, so 12 courses are normally taken. Students may take anywhere between one and four courses each semester. The program is expected to take two years to complete in most cases, but can be completed a little sooner for full-time students, or somewhat later for those working full-time. A maximum of five years is allowed for the degree. A student who has completed all course work, but must stay enrolled to take the comprehensive examination or complete a thesis, must pay a matriculation fee (currently more than \$700) each semester until graduation.

Statistics Requirement. All students must satisfactorily complete either G89.1016, Introductory Master's Statistics, or G89.2016, Intermediate Master's Statistics (which course is taken depends on the student's prior background). The statistics course requirement must be satisfied upon completion of 12 credits.

Research Requirement. Students in the General Program must satisfy a research requirement by taking one of the following (Core C) courses: Clinical Research Design (G89.2066), or Research Methods and Experiences (G89.2126).

Comprehensive Examination. Separate written comprehensive examinations are given for the General and the I/O programs, with questions drawn from areas covered by the core courses in each program (see Core Course Requirements below). The questions that will appear on the next comprehensive exam are available for study several months before each administration of the exam. Students are allowed only three

attempts to pass the "comps." The exam is given three times a year: on the third Friday of October, February, and June.

MA Thesis. Instead of taking the Comprehensive Examination, the student may seek permission to write an MA thesis. For such permission to be granted, the student must demonstrate a superior record of performance in his or her studies and, as a minimum, must have completed all of the core requirements with at least a B+ average in all core courses. The student must also secure the sponsorship of a full-time faculty member in consultation with the MA Director.

MA Scholars. MA students with exceptional academic credentials, as reflected in their GRE scores and undergraduate GPA's, will automatically be designated as *MA Scholars* upon acceptance, and are encouraged to enroll in certain doctoral-level courses, given permission of the relevant instructor. Students who do not enter as MA Scholars can attain that status through superior coursework in the MA program.

The core requirements for the General MA program are listed below.

### **Core Course Requirements**

Three courses, distributed as follows: 1-2 from each of Core A and Core B for a total of 3 (i.e., 2 from Core A and 1 from Core B; or 1 from Core A and 2 from Core B). Note: Students who are admitted without having majored in Psychology as an undergraduate will be required to take a total of 4 core courses, such that each core is sampled.

#### Core A:

G89.2010 Principles of Learning  
G89.2011 Sensation and Perception  
G89.2012 Physiological Basis of Behavior  
G89.2025 Cognitive Psychology

#### Core B:

G89.2014 Psychology of Social Behavior  
G89.2015 Theories of Personality  
G89.2020 Child Development  
G89.2034 Foundations of Psychopathology

### **Currently Available Electives**

#### Clinical / Psychopathology :

G89.2051 Health Psychology  
G89.2054 Developmental Psychopathology  
G89.2057 Traumatic Stress Reactions  
G89.2060 Introduction to Psychological Testing  
G89.2062 Theories of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

#### Forensic Psychology :

G89.2036 Psychology of Violence  
G89.2038 Forensic Psychology  
G89.2039 Adv. Forensic Psychology  
G89.2040 Psychology of Addiction  
G89.2041 Personality Disorders

#### Clinical / Psychopathology (cont.) :

G89.2075 Counseling Psychology  
G89.2082 Psychology of Adolescence

#### Physiological Psychology :

G89.2030 Physio Basis of Abnormal Behavior  
G89.2031 Neuropsychology

G89.2121 Theories of Psychotherapy

Social / Community Psychology:

G89.2042 Psychology of Diversity  
G89.2053 Gender Roles  
G89.2059 Psychology of Decision Making  
G89.2083 Group Dynamics  
G89.2084 Cross-Cultural Psychology

Non-Classroom Courses :

G89.2110 Independent Study  
G89.2125 Fieldwork  
G89.2140 Independent Research  
G89.2199 Master's (Thesis) Seminar

Some of our most basic and popular courses are given in both the Fall and Spring semesters. However, for long-range planning purposes, note that, at the current time, the following courses are not given in both the Fall and Spring (though some are offered in the summer).

Fall Only Courses :

G89.2012 Physiological Basis of Behavior  
G89.2020 Child Development  
G89.2025 Cognitive Psychology  
G89.2036 Psychology of Violence  
G89.2038 Forensic Psychology  
G89.2057 Traumatic Stress Reactions  
G89.2060 Introduction to Psychological Testing  
G89.2062 Theories of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy  
G89.2066 Clinical Research Design  
G89.2075 Counseling Psychology  
G89.2084 Cross-Cultural Psychology

Spring Only Courses :

G89.2010 Principles of Learning  
G89.2014 Psychology of Social Behavior  
G89.2030 Physio Basis of Abnormal Behavior  
G89.2031 Neuropsychology  
G89.2039 Advanced Forensic Psychology  
G89.2051 Health Psychology  
G89.2053 Gender Roles  
G89.2054 Developmental Psychopathology  
G89.2059 The Psychology of Decision-Making  
G89.2121 Theories of Psychotherapy

Summer Only Course :

G89.2082 Psychology of Adolescence