DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD) DEGREE IN THE FIELD OF PSYCHOLOGY AND A MAJOR CONCENTRATION IN HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY AND BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE RESEARCH

Program Learning Outcomes for the PhD Degree in the field of Psychology and a Major Concentration in Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research

Upon completing the PhD degree in the field of Psychology and a major concentration in Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research, students will be able to:

1. Read critically and assess scholarship related to Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research and in other fields in the psychological sciences.
2. Apply theoretical and methodological tools to conduct independent research in Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research.
3. Write an independent and original thesis that is of sufficient quality to merit publication in a top journal within Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research.
4. Communicate Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research research clearly and effectively in papers and presentations.

Requirements for the MA and PhD Degrees in the field of Psychology

MA Degree Program

The MA degree is a thesis master's degree. For general university requirements, please see Thesis Master's Degrees (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-thesis-masters-degrees/). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see All Graduate Students (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/). Although students are not normally admitted to study for an MA in Psychology, graduate students may earn the MA degree after obtaining approval of their candidacy for the PhD. For general university requirements for PhD degrees, please see Doctoral Degrees (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/). For both MA and PhD degrees, students must complete a research thesis, including a public oral defense. Required coursework is determined by the student's major concentration. Students must complete an admission-to-candidacy procedure to establish their expertise in their chosen major concentration. Competence in a foreign language is not required.

The requirements listed in the General Announcements (GA) satisfy the minimum requirements for this degree program. In certain instances, courses (or requirements) not officially listed here may be substituted upon approval of the program's academic advisor or, where applicable, the department or program's Director of Graduate Studies. Course substitutions or any exceptions to the stated official curricular requirements must be approved by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (https://graduate.rice.edu/). Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the MA Degree in the field of Psychology		30

Requirements for the PhD Degree in the field of Psychology

PhD Degree Program

For general university requirements, please see Doctoral Degrees (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-doctoral-degrees/). For additional requirements, regulations, and procedures for all graduate programs, please see All Graduate Students (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/). In addition, students pursuing the PhD degree in the field of Psychology must:

- Complete all coursework with a minimum grade of B- (2.67 grade points) in each required course.
- Complete all of the course requirements in their major concentration.
- Successfully complete and present the first-year project in May of the first year.
- Successfully complete and present the second-year project in May of the second year.
- Write and defend a thesis. The thesis committee must be in the area of Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research and be overseen by a Psychology faculty member affiliated with the Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research Major Concentration.

Students who have not previously completed a master's degree in Psychology or a related field, must successfully defend a master's thesis and earn the MA degree in Psychology. Students who come to Rice with a master's degree in a related field can be exempted from this requirement.

The requirements listed in the General Announcements (GA) satisfy the minimum requirements for this degree program. In certain instances, courses (or requirements) not officially listed here may be substituted upon approval of the program's academic advisor or, where applicable, the department or program's Director of Graduate Studies. Course substitutions or any exceptions to the stated official curricular requirements must be approved by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (https://graduate.rice.edu/). Students and their academic advisors should identify and clearly document the courses to be taken.

Summary

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Total Credit Hours Required for the PhD Degree in the field of Psychology and a Major Concentration in Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research		90

Degree Requirements for the PhD Degree in the field of Psychology and a Major Concentration in Health Psychology and Behavioral Medicine Research

Code	Title	Credit Hours
Core Requirements		
PSYC 502 / STAT 509	ADVANCED PSYCHOLOGICAL STATISTICS I	4
PSYC 503 / STAT 510	ADVANCED PSYCHOLOGICAL STATISTICS II	3
PSYC 532	HEALTH RESEARCH SEMINAR	1-3
PSYC 546	PSYCHONEUROIMMUNOLOGY	3
PSYC 547	FOUNDATIONS OF HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY	3
PSYC 548	INTERVENTIONS	3
PSYC 553		3
PSYC 660	PROFESSIONAL ISSUES	3
Additional Requirements		
Select 1 course from the following:		*3*
PSYC 550	FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 552	EMOTION REGULATION	
Statistical Requirements		
Select 1 course from the following:		*3*
PSYC 507	RESEARCH METHODS	
PSYC 601	MULTIVARIATE STATISTICS	
PSYC 602	PSYCHOMETRICS	
PSYC 635	MULTILEVEL MODELING IN PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH	
Additional Requirements		
Select 1 course from the following:		*3*
PSYC 520	FOUNDATIONS OF COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 549	PSYCHOPATHOLOGY, DEVELOPMENT, & AGING	
Elective Requirements [1]		
Select 2 courses from the following:		*6*
PSYC 511	HISTORY AND SYSTEMS OF PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 520	FOUNDATIONS OF COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 549	PSYCHOPATHOLOGY, DEVELOPMENT, & AGING	
PSYC 550	FOUNDATIONS OF SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 552	EMOTION REGULATION	
PSYC 665	SEMINAR IN GENES AND COGNITION	
PSYC 575 / NEUR 501	ADVANCED COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE: ATTENTION AND PERCEPTION	
PSYC 576 / NEUR 502	ADVANCED COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE: HIGHER MENTAL FUNCTIONS	
PSYC 580	DEVELOPMENTAL COGNITIVE NEUROSCIENCE	
PSYC 586	SOCIAL AND AFFECTIVE NEUROSCIENCE	
PSYC 620	ADVANCED TOPICS IN COGNITIVE PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 630	ADVANCED TOPICS IN I/O	
PSYC 631	FOUNDATIONS OF INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES	
PSYC 636	ORGANIZATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY	
PSYC 651	TOPICS IN SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY	
GS14 1024	SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE [2]	
First-Year Project		
Second-Year Project		
Thesis Requirement		
Additional Coursework as Approved by Department		
Total Credit Hours		**Minimum of 90**

Footnotes and Additional Information

1. Students may select other elective courses if approved by an advisor in consultation with the faculty under the Major Concentration.
2. GS14 1024 - *SYSTEMS NEUROSCIENCE* is a course offered at the UTHealth Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences and available to Rice students as part of an existing inter-institutional agreement between our two institutions. Once received as approved transfer credit, GS14 1024 is eligible to be approved to meet an Elective Requirement.

Policies for the PhD Degree in the field of Psychology

Department of Psychological Sciences Graduate Program Handbook

The General Announcements (GA) is the official Rice curriculum. As an additional resource for students, the department of Psychological Sciences publishes a graduate program handbook, which can be found here: https://gradhandbooks.rice.edu/2026_27/Psychological_Sciences_PhD_Graduate_Handbook.pdf.

Transfer Credit

For Rice University's policy regarding transfer credit, see Transfer Credit (https://ga.rice.edu/graduate-students/academic-policies-procedures/regulations-procedures-all-degrees/#transfer). Some departments and programs have additional restrictions on transfer credit. Requests for transfer credit must be approved for Rice equivalency by the appropriate academic department offering the Rice equivalent course (corresponding to the subject code of the course content) and by the Office of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (GPS). Students are encouraged to meet with their academic program's advisor when considering transfer credit possibilities.

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Psychological Sciences website: https://psychology.rice.edu/.

Opportunities for the PhD Degree in the field of Psychology

Additional Information

For additional information, please see the Psychological Sciences website: https://psychology.rice.edu/.