

Master of Arts in Psychology

Introduction

This handbook describes the major milestones, program regulations and requirements that students will encounter as they complete the Master's program in Psychology at Medaille College. Planning of all phases of the Master's program should be done in consultation with your academic advisor or Program Director. The academic advisor should not only help to provide guidance about academic matters, but should also serve as a mentor. Department faculty are committed to making your graduate work the most productive educational experience possible.

Policy statements described herein are subject to change. Students are advised to consult Department, College and Graduate School publications for detailed and up-to-date information. Copies of forms (or instructions) required to complete the procedures described in this Handbook may be obtained from either the Department or from the Graduate School at Medaille College. For further information, consult your academic advisor.

The Master of Arts Program in Psychology is designed to provide students with a thorough grounding in advanced principles and methods of psychology at a graduate level suitable for building careers in business, education, research, and government. The objectives include providing students with an opportunity to

- explore several sub fields of psychology,
- learn more about the science and practice of psychology and focus their interest.
- gain advanced training in each of the core areas of study;
- develop the analytical tools necessary to successful careers and/or further study in psychology.

Those students with a goal of continuing to doctoral-level study will have the opportunity to strengthen their credentials and to gain a more advanced background to facilitate continued learning.

Delivery Format

Currently, the Master's in Psychology is offered to students in a cohort model through a mixture of on-ground and on-line courses. Students in the Program take a fixed sequence of coursework and move through the program together. In addition to creating a built-in support group, this format allows students to take 4 graduate courses per semester during the Fall and Spring semesters while attending classes regularly only 2 nights per week. The remaining coursework occurs during the summer months. This method of delivery allows students to complete all the required coursework (and potentially the Masters Thesis or Supervised Internship) within one calendar year.

In the Fall semester, students take two consecutive 7 week courses with a Saturday component at the beginning and end of each course; additionally they take one 15 week course and one on-line

course. This allows students to attend classes only 2 nights a week. This format is repeated in the Spring. In the Summer, students take two consecutive 7 week courses with a Saturday component at the beginning and end of each course and sign up for either Thesis Guidance or Internship (meeting times are arranged with the student’s supervisor).

Because the coursework is sequentially arranged, it is strongly recommended that students start the program in the Fall semester. However, students will also be accepted in the Spring with the understanding that they are entering a coherent and unified program midstream. No student shall be allowed to begin the program during the summer semester.

Required Coursework

The Master of Art (M.A.) program in Psychology is a 36-credit course of study in which students are required to take core courses (21 credits) in the biological basis of behavior, counseling psychology, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, evolutionary psychology, psychopathologies, and social psychology. These are complemented by courses (6 credits) in research design and statistical methods. Students are also required to take a Special Topics course (3 credits), and must also complete a thesis course of potentially publishable quality or a supervised 180 hour internship (6 credits) to earn the Master’s degree.

Psychology		Credit
Semester	Fall	Hours
PSY 504	*Social Psychology (on-line)	3
PSY 511	*Cognitive Psychology (7 week format)	3
PSY 521	Biological Basis of Behavior (15 week format)	3
PSY 531	Research Methods (7 week format)	3
Semester	Spring	
PSY 602	Counseling (on-line)	3
PSY 607	Statistics (15 week format)	3
PSY 614	*Evolutionary Psychology (7 week format)	3
PSY 631	*Developmental Psychology (7 week format)	3
Semester	Summer	
PSY 598	Special Topics in Psychology (7 week format)	3
PSY 760	Psychopathologies (7 week format)	3
PSY 797 or	**Thesis Guidance or	6
PSY 777	**Internship (arranged with instructor)	
Total		36
Credits		

**Student must obtain instructor permission to register for PSY 797 or PSY 777

The Master's Thesis

The Master of Arts with Thesis candidate must successfully complete a thesis. A thesis committee of two (2) faculty members guides and encourages the student in the design and execution of the research program and in the writing of the thesis. During the time the thesis is being completed, the student must register with the advisor or an assigned research director for a total of six (6) semester hours of thesis credit (PSY 797).

The thesis must be approved by an examination committee nominated by the advisor in consultation with the student. Master's thesis committees must consist of members of the Psychology Graduate Faculty at Medaille College or upon approval by the Program Director, qualified experts from the community.

Students should identify a thesis advisor from faculty in the program by April 1. Students who would like to work with an advisor from the community may make this request of the Program Director. All thesis advisors must hold doctoral degrees in the behavioral or biological sciences or in health or mental health fields. Students must notify the Program Director once the advisor has agreed to work on the project. The Program Director can help identify potential thesis advisors.

Because of the accelerated nature of the program, it is **highly recommended** that students begin researching their thesis topics early in the Spring semester. Students should expect that the writing process will take a minimum of 3-4 months.

Use of Human Subjects

If human participants are involved in thesis research, the student must obtain approval from the Institutional Review Board at Medaille College. Application materials and instructions are available from the Program Director, and students should consult with the Program Director in preparing these materials. Data may not be collected for the Master's thesis before human subjects approval has been granted.

The Oral Examination

The final oral examination may be requested by the student, the thesis advisor or the second reader of the thesis. A final oral examination on the Master's thesis shall be held when the student has completed the thesis to the satisfaction of the student's advisor, provided all other requirements for the Master of Arts degree have been completed and a 3.0 grade point average has been maintained throughout the student's coursework. An oral examination committee conducts the oral examination. The chairperson of the examination committee selects the time and place of the oral examination and is responsible for notifying the other members of the committee and the candidate. Members of the oral examination committee must be given a minimum of seven (7) business days to review the student's thesis prior to the oral examination. The duration of the oral examination is approximately one (1) hour. The decision to accept the oral examination as satisfactory must be unanimous. Students may present themselves for oral examination only twice.

The Master's Internship

The MA Psychology Internship is designed to provide an introduction to the role that psychologists play in varied settings. Under the guidance of both on-site and campus supervisors, students gain hands-on practical experience by shadowing professionals and/or by providing entry-level mental health services at a site of their choice. The experience provides students with an opportunity to integrate and apply acquired knowledge, theories, and concepts of psychology in a 180-hour placement developed in consultation with the faculty advisor. It can take place in a traditional mental health setting (community mental health agency, health care facility, psychiatric hospital etc.) in a human services setting (correctional facility, business setting, law enforcement agency, etc.) or in a research setting. Students have the flexibility to focus on areas of interest, which may include administrative, clinical, advocacy, or research activities. Supervision includes at least one-hour of individual weekly meetings with the Site Supervisor and participation in a biweekly seminar with the assigned campus supervisor.

The following applies to all students:

- a) Students may not complete the internship in settings in which they are employed.
- b) All students enrolled in practicum must be covered by Professional Liability Insurance.
- c) The Director of Clinical Training, in conjunction with the student's advisor has the authority to determine a student's readiness for practicum.
- d) In order to register for internship, students must be in good academic standing (GPA of 3.0 on a scale of 4.0.)
- e) The final grade is determined by the Campus Supervisor in consultation with the Site Supervisor, who completes a final evaluation of the student's performance at the site.

Time Limits

All requirements for the degree of Master of Arts must be completed within three years of the date of admission to the Department of Psychology Graduate Program. All graduate students must be registered for a minimum of six credit hours during each fall, spring and summer semester. Graduate students in good academic standing who cannot maintain continuous registration should apply for a leave of absence by the beginning of the semester in which the leave is to begin. Students who do not apply for a leave of absence will be required to reapply for admittance into the program after being out of the program for one year.

Registration Requirements

All master's students are required to register every semester for at least one credit hour. When all other requirements have been completed except for the completion of the thesis and/or passing the oral examination or completion of the Internship, students may have an automatic one-term extension at the discretion of the thesis or internship supervisor. After one term, students are required to file for an extension and register for a minimum of 1 credit of PSY 797 or PSY 777.

Transfer of Coursework Taken at Other Institutions or as an Advanced Special Student

A maximum of six (6) credit hours of graduate level coursework earned from regionally accredited institutions prior to or after matriculation at Medaille College Graduate School may be applied towards a masters degree in Psychology. All transfer credits must meet the following

criteria:

- a) Courses must have been offered at the graduate level.
 - b) Courses may not have been used to meet degree requirements for previously earned graduate degrees.
 - c) Courses must have been completed within the last five years of matriculation in the Department.
 - d) Courses must receive approval from the student's advisor, the Department Chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School.
 - e) A grade of "B" or above must have been earned in the requested transfer courses.
- * The student may be subject to final examination in all coursework transferred into the Master's degree in Psychology.
- ** No credit is granted for correspondence courses or for "credit-by-examination" courses.

Waiver of a Course Requirement

In certain circumstances, a waiver of a course requirement may be requested based on coursework taken at Medaille College or at another institution. To petition for a course waiver, the student must submit a formal written letter requesting a Waiver of a Course Requirement. This letter must be approved by the Program Director, the Registrar and the Dean of the School of Adult and Graduate Education.

Concerns or Questions about a Course, Grade or Program Requirement

In the event that a student has a concern or question about a course, the instructor of the course should be consulted before bringing concerns to the Program Director. If the situation is not resolved in consultation with the instructor, concerns and/or questions should be brought to the attention of the Program Director. If the concerns cannot be resolved, the issue may then be brought to the Dean of the School of Adult and Graduate Education. The Dean's decision is final.

Grade Point Average Requirements

A student earning less than C in any course is required to repeat the course, and a student may carry a maximum of two C grades on their transcript during the program. Should a student receive a grade lower than a C, the class must be repeated. A student may repeat any course in an effort to earn a higher grade. The later grade will be used in computing the grade point average.

Continuation in graduate studies requires satisfactory progress toward a graduate degree. Evidence of such progress includes maintenance of a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average each term. The progress of each student is reviewed each term by the a committee designated by the Dean. Failure to maintain the minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average will result in being placed on probation. Any student on probation must not only achieve a 3.0 cumulative average within two successive terms following the term in which the deficiency occurred, but must also maintain at least a 3.0 term average in any term in which he or she is on probation. Failure to meet either of these requirements will result in dismissal from graduate studies at Medaille.

Any graduate student who receives a grade of F or U in any course required for completion of the M.A. degree or who indicates a lack of ability as determined by the program faculty, will receive an immediate academic review by the graduate program faculty. Upon completion of the academic review, the graduate program faculty may place the student on academic probation. Such notice will be made in writing by the Program Director or Academic Dean prior to the end of the drop/add period of the next semester and will indicate the terms of the probation and its removal. Any graduate student not meeting the written terms of their academic probation may be academically dismissed from the College.

Students who have been dismissed may apply for readmission to the Graduate Admissions Committee after the lapse of two regular semesters. Such students who then again are placed on probation must earn removal by the end of one semester or be subject to or dismissal.

If a student wishes to appeal an academic standards decision, he or she may appeal through to the Academic Affairs Office. The initial appeal must be in writing within 14 calendar days of notification or by the end of the first week of the next semester (whichever comes first) and state, in specific terms, the student's case for appeal.

Graduation Requirements

In order to qualify for graduation, graduate students must have

- a minimum 3.0 cumulative grade point average within their academic program
- a maximum of two current grades below a B-
- no current grades of F or U.

The computation of academic standing is based on hours earned each term. The most recent grade for each course is used to determine eligibility to graduate.

Students should complete an Application for Graduation

(<http://www.medaille.edu/college/registrar/gradapp.pdf>) the semester prior to finishing the program. This will allow the Registrar to review the student's transcript and confirm that the student has met the requirements for graduation, or indicate what needs to be completed before the degree can be conferred.

Policy on Incompletes

Under very rare circumstances, a student may request an Incomplete for a particular course. Incompletes (i) may be granted by the instructor only if the student is passing the course, (ii) must be completed within one semester after the course ends and (iii) must be requested, in writing, using the College's "Request for an Incomplete" form. Students may receive a maximum of two (2) Incompletes during the course of their program.

Professionalism

The Psychology Program expects students to maintain their integrity and professionalism as students and prospective professionals. Students are expected to be psychologically sound, interpersonally effective, and able to engage with peers, faculty, colleagues, consumers, and professionals in a healthy and responsible manner. Students are expected to give and receive

feedback as a part of their training and growth.

Students are not only expected to achieve academically at the graduate level, but also to manage themselves throughout the program as ethical professionals-in-training. Issues of Ethical Misconduct, Behavioral Misconduct, Impairment, and Incompetence will be dealt with swiftly and fairly as they might arise.

Academic Integrity

Medaille's faculty and administration expect all students to complete their academic assignments with honesty and integrity. Students who engage in any form of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on a test, forging a signature or an entire college document) will be dealt with severely, with penalties ranging from an F on a given assignment to failing a course or even academic suspension or dismissal from the program. It is important to note that the Graduate School at Medaille College interprets the submission of the same paper, or substantially the same paper, to more than one instructor to be a violation of this code. Students found guilty of such offenses risk expulsion from the College. Students should consult The Graduate Catalog for full details on the college's policy and procedures for handling formal charges of academic dishonesty.

Grade Appeal

Students wishing to appeal a final grade in a course must do so in writing within 30 days of the semester's grade report. This written appeal should be directed to the instructor of the course in question. If the matter is not resolved with the instructor, the instructor's program director should be contacted in writing. If that appeal is unsuccessful, a further appeal may be made to the Dean of the School of Adult and Graduate Education.

Course Prerequisites

Students may not register for a course without the required prerequisite(s) or written approval from the Program Director.

Other Helpful Resources

Program FAQ

[Graduate Catalog](#)

[Campus Store](#)

Medaille College Handbooks

[Volume I: Governance and Administration](#)

Contents: History, Mission, Charter, Administration, Organizational Charts

[Volume II: Campus Community Policies](#)

Contents: General Campus Information, Health Related Policies, Safety and Security Policies, Information Technology, Public Relations Policies, Code of Ethics Governing Research, Institutional Advancement Policies, Miscellaneous Policies, Office of Disability Services Policies and Procedures

[Volume VII: Student Life and Residence Policies](#)

Contents: General Student Information, Student Services, Student Alcohol and Drug Policies and Programs, Peer Sexual Harassment, Residence Life, Student Code of Conduct and Judicial Procedures, Student Activities and Organizations, Student Government Association Constitution, Athletics