

# University of Rochester Psychology Department PhD Programs

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Table of Contents

<b>General Information .....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Graduate Student Life .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Mentorship.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Program Opportunities .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Financial Support.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Application .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>TOEFL/GRE .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Statement of Purpose .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Letters of Recommendation .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Interviews and Decisions.....</b>	<b>10</b>

## General Information

### **What are the different areas within the graduate program in Psychology?**

- [Clinical Psychology](#)
- [Developmental Psychology](#)
- [Social-Personality Psychology](#)

### **Does your department have a program in Clinical Psychology? Are you accredited by the APA? Are you accredited by PCSAS?**

Yes, our department does have a Clinical Psychology PhD program. The program is accredited by the APA through the year 2028. The department is not currently accredited through PCSAS; however, we are a member of the [Academy of Psychological Clinical Sciences](#). and are in the process of seeking PCSAS accreditation.

### **Is there a standalone Master of Arts program in Psychology?**

Our department does not offer a terminal Master's degree program, though doctoral students will earn a Master of Arts in Psychology during the course of their PhD program.

### **Do you have a cognitive psychology/cognitive science program?**

While the UR psychology department uses a wide range of methodologies and theoretical perspectives, the PhD program for cognitive sciences is housed in the [Department of Brain and Cognitive Sciences \(BCS\)](#), which is conveniently located next to the Department of Psychology! Faculty research interests in BCS include cognition, perception, neuroscience, and cognitive development.

### **How long does it take to get a PhD in Psychology at UR?**

The PhD program is designed to be completed in five years of full-time study. However, the time to complete the program depends on individual students' goals and progress. Clinical Psychology students also complete a 1-year internship as part of their degree, and the majority of Clinical Psychology students finish their degree in 6 years. Please see our [Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data](#) page for more details on the Clinical PhD Program.

### **What are the requirements for the PhD degree in Psychology?**

Requirements vary by subfield program and can be found in the [Psychology Graduate Handbook](#).

## Graduate Student Life

### **What is Rochester like?**

Rochester is the third most populous city in New York state. Located on Lake Ontario in the Finger Lakes region of Western New York, Rochester is home to both the beautiful outdoors and urban life. The city includes a variety of museums and performing arts centers, and areas like the East End, Park Ave, and South Wedge provide fun dining and nightlife. Rochester is surrounded by many national parks, is only about 40 minutes away from the famous wineries of the Finger Lakes, and is located only 90 minutes away from Niagara Falls. Additionally, Rochester is located nearby several other cities, including Buffalo (1 hour), Toronto (3 hours), Cleveland (4 hours), Pittsburgh (4.5 hours), and New York City (5.5 hours).

### **What is the cost of living in Rochester?**

Rochester is an extremely affordable city with a [median gross rent of \\$831](#), compared to \$1077 in Chicago, \$1099 in Atlanta, \$1376 in Los Angeles, \$1396 in New York City, and \$1539 in Boston.

### **Do you offer health insurance?**

A [student health insurance plan](#) is available through purchase from the University. However, you are not required to purchase University insurance if you are covered as a dependent or if you choose to purchase health insurance directly through an insurer, as long as those plans meet [University Insurance Criteria](#).

The university does pay for a [Mandatory Health Fee](#) for 5 years, which covers a range of primary care services through the [University Health Center](#).

### **Do you offer dental insurance?**

Dental insurance is available for purchase through the University of Rochester [Eastman Institute for Oral Health](#).

## Mentorship

### **Which Faculty are accepting students?**

Our application lists the faculty who are accepting students. You can also look at their faculty profile on our website. If they are accepting students there will be a bolded statement at the top of the bio. The list of faculty can be found [here](#).

### **What does a mentor-based research program mean?**

The UR Psychology programs are a mentor-based programs, which means that students are encouraged to apply to a specific faculty member(s) whose work aligns with the applicant's own research interest. That faculty member will act as the primary mentor to the student. This does not mean students cannot collaborate with other faculty, as collaboration is a common occurrence within and outside our department,

### **Can I only select one faculty member?**

The graduate application allows you to select more than one faculty member; however, it is not necessary to select more than one and you are discouraged from selecting more than a couple faculty. Because our department is a mentor-based program, faculty are looking for students who research interests (but not necessarily experience) align with or complement their own. A research interest that is either too broad or an applicant who selects too many faculty may be harder for faculty to evaluate.

### **Can I reach out to faculty members I am interested in working with?**

Absolutely! You are encouraged to reach out to faculty of interest in order to introduce yourself and learn more about their current research. However, given the volume of emails that faculty receive, it may not be possible for faculty to respond to every email they receive so don't be discouraged if you don't hear back from them right away. Contact information for faculty can be found on the [faculty page](#). Additional faculty who may be accepting students in the Clinical Psychology program can be found on the [Clinical Psychology home page](#).

### **How can I learn about faculty research?**

The [faculty page](#) includes a list of all faculty in the department by discipline. When you select a faculty member's name you will be sent to their faculty page, which lists their research interests and related information. These pages also often include links to their lab-specific websites.

## Program Opportunities

### **What is the Certificate in Quantitative Psychology?**

The [Certificate in Quantitative Psychology](#) program trains students in the application of advanced methodological and statistical methods. It enables students to engage in high quality methodological practices within their substantive areas. Upon completion of the requirements (see [Psychology Graduate Handbook](#)), the certificate will be recorded on the student's transcript and may be listed on the student's curriculum vitae.

### **What are the Developmental Psychopathology Emphasis/Tracks for the Clinical and Developmental programs and how do they differ?**

The [Developmental Psychopathology Emphasis in Clinical Psychology](#) and the [Developmental Psychopathology Track in Developmental Psychology](#) take advantage of the extensive training resources in developmental psychopathology available at the UR. Each emphasis or track has different requirements, but both prepare their students for research in developmental psychopathology.

### **What opportunities are there to do neuroimaging research?**

UR has a robust neuroimaging research program that includes the research-dedicated [Center for Advanced Brain Imaging and Neurophysiology \(CABIN\)](#), which is located within walking distance of the department. The CABIN hosts a Siemens 3T MAGNETOM PrismaFit, a [Mobile Brain/Body Imaging system \(MoBI\)](#), among other resources for researchers to use.

### **What is the Department's teaching requirement?**

All graduate students are required to teach a minimum of one semester. In addition, undergraduate courses in our summer semester are taught by graduate students. The department has a series of teaching workshops for first-time instructors to help prepare new teachers, as well as a faculty mentoring program for ongoing support while they are teaching.

In addition, the University of Rochester has developed two teaching programs: [Foundations in Teaching](#) and [Advanced Teaching](#). Graduate students who complete the requirements for either (or both) will receive a notation on their transcript recognizing completion of the particular teaching program(s).

## Financial Support

### **What is the annual cost of attending your program?**

All students are accepted into our programs with a full tuition scholarship and 9-month stipend for 5 years. Stipends typically come from teaching or research assistantships. The departmental stipend for incoming students during the 2020-2021 academic year is \$24,000.

### **Do you offer support for the summer months?**

Assistantships and/or fellowships are NOT guaranteed during the summer months; however, there may be opportunities to receive summer funding through research assistantships in faculty labs, summer teaching, and other opportunities for funding outside of the department.

## Application

### **How do I apply?**

The application portal can be accessed [here](#). More information about applying can be found [here](#).

### **When is the application deadline?**

December 1<sup>st</sup>

### **What is included in the application?**

A complete application includes

- a statement of purpose,
- un/official transcripts\*,
- three letters of recommendation,
- a CV/resume, and
- if applicable, English proficiency scores.

GRE scores are not required for Fall 2021 admission; however, students may submit them if they desire.

\*Only unofficial transcripts are necessary for the application. Official transcripts will be requested for admitted students.

### **Is there an application fee? If so, can I apply for a fee waiver?**

The application fee is \$20. If the fee is a burden for you, you can email Jamie Salamone at [Jamie.Salamone@rochester.edu](mailto:Jamie.Salamone@rochester.edu) to ask for a fee waiver, no questions asked.

**Do I have to have a degree in psychology or related field (e.g., cognitive science)?**

No. Although most applicants have degrees in psychology and related fields, many do not. Applications are judged holistically and students who have shown an interest in the psychological sciences, whether through research assistantships or volunteering can also be and are often competitive applicants.

**I have been out of school for a while, is that okay?**

Yes! Many students in our program joined us several years after graduating from their undergraduate institution and this is actually becoming more common across all programs.

**Does an advanced degree (e.g., masters) affect my application?**

Due to the variability of advanced degree programs, having an advanced degree does not necessarily have an effect on your application.

**Do I need to upload official transcripts?**

No, only unofficial transcripts are required with your application. We will need official transcripts if you are admitted to our program.

**What is the credit/degree conversion rates from another University?**

If the degree has 120 credit hour equivalent, then we will accept it as an undergraduate degree. We will accept a 30 hour credit equivalent for master's degrees.

**I already have a graduate degree, can I transfer credits?**

Applicants who have completed graduate work at other universities are evaluated by the same criteria as other students. Transfer of credit for graduate work with approval can be made up to a state-mandated maximum of 30 hours toward the PhD degree, but these arrangements cannot be made until after an applicant is offered admission. Students with prior coursework may also place out of introductory requirements with approval from the program director and instructor.

**Do I need to upload a writing sample?**

The writing sample is an optional component of our application; however, you are encouraged to submit one. Anything that shows your ability to write at a graduate level (such as a research paper or paper submitted to a journal) is preferred.

**I can't find where to upload the contact information of my references.**

The application reveals sections as you work through it. Begin to fill out the application and once you have filled out enough information, a section titled "Reference" should appear. You can click there to add in their contact info.

**Is it okay for parts of my application (i.e., GRE and Letters of Recommendation) to arrive after the application deadline?**

Yes, as long as your main application has been submitted by the deadline, we allow about a 2 week window for GRE scores and letters of recommendation to be submitted. We will review your application once those materials are in.

**I realized I made a mistake on my application and/or uploaded the wrong version of my documents. What do I do?**

Contact the Psychology Academic Coordinator at: [PsychAcademics@ur.rochester.edu](mailto:PsychAcademics@ur.rochester.edu)

GRE/English-Language Proficiency Tests

**Is the GRE general test required? Is the Advanced Psychology GRE subject test required?**

No, neither GRE general test nor the GRE subject test are required for the 2020-2021 application cycle. Applicants may submit GRE scores if they choose, but the faculty will be de-emphasizing scores in our admissions process and evaluating applications with a more holistic approach.

**Are there minimum GRE scores I need to have to apply?**

No, there are no minimum GRE score.

**Do I need to submit an English proficiency exam results (e.g., IELTS, TOEFL, or PTE-Academic)?**

All international applicants from non-English speaking countries must demonstrate proficiency in the English language through one of the following:

- You are a native speaker of English in your home environment;
- You completed 3 or more years of secondary education at an American or international school where English is the primary language of instruction; or
- You have fulfilled the English proficiency examination requirement through one of the following: IELTS, TOEFL, or PTE-Academic. In addition, **we will accept the [Duolingo English Test](#) for the current application cycle.**

**How do I request an English proficiency exam exemption or waiver?**

To request a waiver, applicants need to have graduated from an institution where English was the primary language of instruction. Applicants who graduated from a school in the US, UK, Canada, Australia, or New Zealand will automatically receive a waiver. For schools in other countries, applicants will need to supply proof from the registrar of the schools that the courses were taught in English. For further questions regarding a waiver, please contact [PsychAcademics@ur.rochester.edu](mailto:PsychAcademics@ur.rochester.edu)

**What is the minimum TOEFL or IELTS score?**

The minimum score for the TOEFL is 90; the minimum score for the IELTS is 7.

**Should I mail the physical copy of my IELTS certificate to any university address? Or can it be just uploaded online?**

You can forward the online IELTS certificate to graduate admissions at [graduateadmissions@rochester.edu](mailto:graduateadmissions@rochester.edu).

**What are the GRE/TOEFL codes for ETS to use in order to send in my scores?**

- Institution: 2928 (or new code: 7267)
- Clinical: 2001
- Developmental: 2006
- Social-Personality: 2015

**Will you accept expired GRE/TOEFL scores?**

No. Expired scores are not accepted.

### Statement of Purpose

**What should I write for the personal statement?**

The personal statement should discuss your psychology academic/research experiences and interests and tie into the research of the faculty member(s) you are interested in working with.

**Is there a certain length or format requirement?**

There is no specific length or format requirement.

### Letters of Recommendation

**How many recommendations do I need?**

You need to include at least 3 letters of recommendation.

**Can my recommenders submit their letters via email or fax?**

On your application, you will be prompted to include your recommenders' email. They will be emailed instructions on how to complete the recommendations.

**My recommenders are having technical difficulties with the online letters of recommendation process. Who should they contact?**

Contact the Psychology Academic Coordinator at: [PsychAcademics@ur.rochester.edu](mailto:PsychAcademics@ur.rochester.edu)

## Interviews and Decisions

### **Is there an interview process?**

Yes. Faculty of each area will conduct virtual interviews with promising candidates in February. Because of the large number of applicants, interviews are arranged by invitation only. We regret that we cannot honor requests for interviews initiated by applicants.

### **When are the on-campus interviews?**

UR interview weekend will be held virtually in 2021. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it would be impossible to conduct our traditional interview weekend without jeopardizing the health and safety of our applicants, graduate students, and faculty. Although we will miss the opportunity to meet our applicants in person, we are already brainstorming ways to virtually showcase our labs, campus, research, and student culture. And, we hope that the reduction in travel burden and associated costs will help our applicants.

### **When can I expect to find out the decision on my application?**

We will notify interviewees of their status before the University's April 15 deadline.

### **I still have questions!**

If you have additional questions, please contact us at [psychacademics@ur.rochester.edu](mailto:psychacademics@ur.rochester.edu).