

University of Rochester Psychology Department PhD Programs

Frequently Asked Questions

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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 \\$848](#), compared to \$1112 in Chicago, \$1153 in Atlanta, \$1450 in Los Angeles, \$1443 in New York City, and \$1620 in Boston.

What happens if I have a child during the program?

The department is no stranger to students having children while enrolled as graduate students! To support students who have children, the department offers an 8-week parental leave for the birth or adoption of a child. See the [University Graduate Handbook](#) for more information.

Mentorship

Which Faculty are accepting students?

Our application lists the faculty who are accepting students. You can also look at each program area's admission criteria webpage ([Clinical](#), [Developmental](#), [Social-Personality](#)). Additionally, faculty that are accepting students have a bolded statement at the top of their bio on their faculty webpage. The list of faculty can be found on our [faculty index](#).

What does a mentor-based research program mean?

The UR Psychology programs are mentor-based programs, which means that applicants are encouraged to apply to a specific faculty member(s) whose work aligns with their 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. The application will ask you to select one faculty member as your first preference for a potential mentor, and you may select one additional potential mentor (two additional for Clinical applicants). Because our department is a mentor-based program, faculty are looking for students whose 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 index](#) 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 opportunities are there to teach in the department?

All graduate students serve as a teaching assistant for a minimum of one semester. Teaching assistantships often include opportunities to guest lecture or teach labs. In addition, undergraduate courses in our summer semester are taught by graduate students.

The Graduate Education office of the School of Arts, Sciences & Engineering provides an introductory training for all new teaching assistants, and 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. Students are responsible for the cost of health insurance as well as a graduate activity fee and international student fee, if applicable. See the [Bursar's website](#) for the most up-to-date information about fees.

How much is the departmental stipend?

The departmental stipend for incoming students during the 2021-2022 academic year is \$24,000. Stipends typically come from teaching or research assistantships. Additionally, some students secure funding from external fellowships (e.g., NSF, NIH NRSA).

University Sproull Fellowships and Provost Minority Fellowships provide additional awards to incoming graduate students of exceptional academic promise. There is no additional application required to be considered for these fellowships.

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.

Do you offer health insurance?

A [student health insurance plan](#) is available for 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](#).

You may also purchase health insurance from the University for any of your own dependents (spouse, children, etc.)

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](#).

Application

How do I apply?

Applications are submitted on the [online application portal](#). More information about applying can be found on our [application information page](#).

When is the application deadline?

December 1st

What is included in the application?

A complete application includes

- a statement of purpose,
- a CV/resume,
- unofficial transcripts*,
- three letters of recommendation,
- a writing sample (optional), and
- if applicable, English proficiency scores.

GRE scores are not required for Fall 2022 admission, but students may submit them if they desire. However, the faculty will be de-emphasizing scores in our admissions process and evaluating applications with a holistic approach.

*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 us at psychacademics@ur.rochester.edu to ask for a fee waiver, no questions asked.

How do I select a faculty mentor in the online application?

The application lists the faculty members who are interested in mentoring students for the upcoming academic year. The application will ask you to select one faculty member as your first preference for a potential mentor, and you may select one additional potential mentor (two additional for Clinical applicants). There is also a place where you can clarify or explain for mentor preferences.

Do I have to have a degree in psychology or a 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 becoming more common across all programs.

Do I have to have prior research experience?

An applicant's experience and interest in research are strongly considered. The admissions committee values evidence of the applicant's scholarly potential as well as comments by endorsers concerning the applicant's potential as a research psychologist and as a teacher. Prior experience in psychological research is given strong weight.

Does an advanced degree (e.g., master's) 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 is equivalent to 120 credit hours, then we will accept it as an undergraduate degree. We will accept a 30-hour credit equivalent for master's degrees. If you are applying with a three-year degree from a foreign institution, you will need to provide a WES evaluation stating that the degree you were awarded is equivalent to a bachelor's degree.

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 received.

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

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 2021-2022 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 holistic approach.

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

No, there are no minimum GRE scores.

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.

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

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 ase.graduate.admissions@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.

Personal Statement

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 three 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.

Interviews and Decisions

Is there an interview process?

Yes. Faculty of each area will conduct 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?

Interviews are typically held in late January to early February. We are still determining the format of our 2022 interview weekend. We hope to be able to bring promising candidates to our campus, but we will be following any visitor guidelines set forth by the University of Rochester. The health and safety of our applicants, graduate students, and faculty is very important to us, so we will conduct interviews in whatever manner is deemed appropriate at that point in time.

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 decision deadline. Please note that our programs subscribe to the [Council of Graduate School's resolution on the April 15 deadline](#) for acceptance of offers of financial support.

I still have questions!

If you have additional questions, please contact us at PsychAcademics@ur.rochester.edu.