

# Psychology Program Student Handbook

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# **I. Psychology at Columbia College**

## **A. Introduction**

Welcome to Psychology at Columbia College! We are pleased that you have chosen to pursue an undergraduate degree in this area and we will assist you in your efforts for an enriching and successful experience as a psychology major. Within this handbook is an overview of the psychology program at Columbia College, descriptions of additional opportunities to enhance your education in psychology, and tips and guidelines to help make your academic experience the best possible. To recommend any changes and/or additions to this handbook, please notify Dr. Ross or Dr. Wiederman.

**Note:** This handbook is intended to highlight information contained in the *Columbia College Bulletin* and the *Columbia College Student Handbook*. Please refer to these guides for complete academic and student-related information.

## **B. Overview of Psychology at Columbia College**

Psychology involves the study of human behavior and mental processes. People often equate psychology with counseling or psychotherapy, yet these are just a couple of the things that psychologists might do. The Psychology curriculum at Columbia College is designed to expose students to the rich variety of subfields within psychology, insure that students have an understanding of the science of psychology, and encourage the application of that knowledge to not only psychology-related careers, but also the mental health and well-being of themselves and others.

Two undergraduate psychology degree programs are available at Columbia College: the Bachelor of Arts (B.A.) and the Bachelor of Science (B.S.). Both programs provide training in the theories and practices of psychology within a liberal arts framework. There are some differences between the B.A. and B.S. degree programs in terms of college and major requirements (see section on Psychology Major Requirements, B.A./B.S. checklists in the Appendix, or the *Columbia College Bulletin* for specific information.)

In general, the B.A. program is designed for psychology majors who desire a well-rounded psychology education and may have plans to pursue graduate training or a career in applied psychology or related fields (see section on Psychology Specialty Areas). Most Psychology majors opt for the B.A. program. The B.S. program is designed primarily for students who have plans to pursue graduate training in psychology or related fields, especially those fields with a research orientation (see section on Psychology Specialty Areas). However, these distinctions are not meant to be restrictive and may have only minor bearing on career and/or graduate school opportunities. Students should consult with their advisor regarding the appropriate Psychology program for personal and career goals.

## **C. Psychology Program Objectives**

We developed the Psychology program to meet several objectives, each providing Columbia College psychology majors the knowledge and skills required for professional achievement and personal fulfillment. They include the following:

### ***Objective 1 (Knowledge Base of Psychology):***

- Students will demonstrate knowledge of the major concepts, theoretical perspectives, empirical findings, and historical trends in psychology.

### ***Objective 2 (Research Methods in Psychology):***

- Students will critically evaluate and apply basic research methods and statistics in psychology.

### ***Objective 3 (Career Planning and Preparation for Graduate School):***

- Students will graduate with realistic ideas about how to implement their psychological knowledge, skills, and values in occupational pursuits or in graduate school.

## **D. Psychology Faculty Profiles**

### **Dr. Michael Wiederman**, Associate Professor of Psychology

Dr. Wiederman is originally a Michigan native and received a B.S. degree in Clinical/Community Psychology from the University of Michigan-Flint. He earned a Master's and doctoral degree in clinical psychology from Bowling Green State University in Ohio. Dr. Wiederman's clinical experiences include a predoctoral internship and a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Kansas School of Medicine-Wichita, where he also worked in an eating disorders program. He teaches such courses as Abnormal Psychology, Personality, Counseling, Introductory Psychology, and Psychology of Sexual Behavior. His research and writing interests include body image and disordered eating, gender, intimate relationships, and sexuality.

Favorite quote: A man said to the Universe, "Sir, I exist."

"However," replied the Universe, "that fact has not created in me a sense of obligation."

### **Dr. Karen Ross**, Associate Professor of Psychology

Dr. Ross is originally an Ohio native. After completing an undergraduate degree in psychology at Bowling Green State University in Ohio, she received a Master's degree

and a Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology from the University of South Carolina. Her dissertation was on the use of special nervous system cells to prevent epileptic seizures in rats. She teaches such courses as Basic Statistics, Research Methods in Psychology, Biological Psychology, Learning, Memory, and Cognition, and History and Systems of Psychology. Her research interests include the biological bases of epilepsy and the application of neural transplantation or gene therapy to alleviate epileptic attacks.

Favorite quote: “The best way to predict the future is to create it” – Peter Drucker

## **E. Psychology Course Descriptions**

The following is a list of Psychology (PSY) courses offered at Columbia College.  
(Note: s.h. = semester hours)

**102. Introduction to Psychology.** Provides an introduction to the field of psychology and the psychological study of human behavior. Topics may include research methods in psychology, biological bases for behavior, perception, learning and cognition, motivation and emotion, personality, social bases of behavior, psychological disorder, and psychological treatment. 3 s.h.

**186. Mental Health.** A basic course in the psychology of personality devoted to a consideration of healthy or optimal personality. The emphasis is placed upon understanding and developing healthy personality and interpersonal relationships. This course is designed as a service course intended for students who do not necessarily plan to major in psychology. 3 s.h.

**190. Special Topics.** A course not currently listed by the department and offered on an experimental basis. Prerequisites or special permission may be required as needed for admission to the course. 1-4 s.h.

**191, 192. Independent Research and Study.** Research and reading. Open to qualified students. 1-6 s.h. each.

**203. Human Growth and Development.** A review of physical, social, emotional and intellectual growth and development as they occur throughout the lifespan (childhood, adolescence, and adulthood). (Also listed as Education 203.) 3 s.h.

**210. Psychology of Sexual Behavior.** (Not open to students who have received credit for Psy 290N.) An examination of social science theories and research pertaining to human sexuality. Topics may include research methods in sexual science, gender differences, sexual attitudes and behaviors, sexual functioning and treatment for dysfunction, sexual orientation, coercion and rape, and sexuality for profit. 3 s.h.

**240. Drugs, Behavior, and Society.** An introduction to the study of drug use, abuse, and addiction, focusing on the history of drug use, effects of drugs in the nervous system and

on behavior, consequences of drug use in modern society, and strategies for prevention and treatment of drug abuse. (Not open to students with credit in PEHP 263, Psy/Soc 290Q.) (Also listed as Sociology 240.)

**270. Practicum.** (Prerequisite: Consent of Instructor.) Individual work under faculty supervision with evaluation based on appropriate evidence of achievement. 1-4 s.h.

**270E. Selected Human Services Experiences.** (Prerequisite: Consent of Instructor.) A selected experience in a human service agency under the supervision of the department. (Also listed as Sociology 270E and Social Work 270E.) 1-4 s.h.

**282. Social Psychology.** Studies of major psychological ideas, concepts, and research that enable us to think more clearly about human relationships and human interactions. Topics may include obedience to authority, perception and judgment of others, ethnic conflict, relationships, etc. (Also listed as Sociology 282.) 3 s.h.

**290. Special Topics.** A course not currently listed by the department and offered on an experimental basis. Prerequisites or special permission may be required as needed for admission to the course. 1-4 s.h.

**291, 292. Independent Research and Study.** (Prerequisite: Permission, Head of the Department.) Individual projects involving research in various “areas” of psychology. Limited to students in psychology with appropriate qualifications. 1-6 s.h. each.

**300. Basic Statistics.** (Prerequisite: Completion of general education mathematics requirement.) Descriptive statistics, frequency distributions, graphs, measures of central tendency, measures of variability, percentiles, use of the normal curve, two-variable correlation and regression. Hypothesis testing: t-tests, analysis of variance and Chi Square. (Also listed as Sociology 300.) (Credit can not be received for both Psy 300 and Math 140.) 3 s.h.

**301. Human Development and the Social Environment I.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 102.) This course explores the processes of human development and change from birth through adolescence. The student will analyze this developmental period in terms of the human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems that have an impact on individual development and change. (Also listed as Social Work 301.) 3 s.h.

**302. Human Development and the Social Environment II.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 102.) This course explores the processes of human development and change from adulthood to senescence. The student will analyze this developmental period in terms of the human biological, social, psychological, and cultural systems that have an impact on individual development and change. (Also listed as Social Work 302.) 3 s.h.

**325. Psychology and Sociology of Gender.** Sociological and psychological research and theories as related to gender are examined. Other topics may include gender role

development, gender role stereotypes, gender differences in personality traits and mental health, relationship and work issues. (Also listed as Social Work/Sociology 325.) 3 s.h.

**342. Abnormal Psychology.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 102.) An intermediate level course examining ways of understanding, explaining and changing abnormal behavior and experience. Brief consideration of historical and legal issues. 3 s.h.

**349. Research Methods in Behavioral Science.** (Prerequisite or Co-Requisite: Math 140 or Psy/Soc 300.) A comprehensive research methods course that includes a variety of approaches to designing and conducting behavioral science and social work research. Students will gain experience in planning research, conducting research, and reporting research results in the American Psychological Association (APA) style. 3 s.h. (Not open to students with credit in Sociology/Social Work 472.) (Also listed as Sociology or Social Work 349.) 3 s.h.

**350. Learning, Cognition and Memory.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 102.) An overview of traditional learning paradigms is psychology with an emphasis on classical and operant conditioning and observational learning, and the application of learning principles of various types of memory and cognitive processes. 3 s.h.

**360. Group Process.** The purpose of this course is to prepare students to utilize effective group process and leadership skills. A variety of group techniques will be discussed and demonstrated. Students will have the opportunity to experience being members of a group and to practice leading a group. (Cross-listed as Social Work 360.) 3 s.h.

**370A. Practicum in Mental Health.** (Prerequisite: Consent of Instructor.) Individual work in a mental health setting under faculty and staff supervision. 3 s.h.

**374. History and Systems of Psychology.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 102.) A survey of the origins and development of major psychological systems of thought, methods, and ideas. 3 s.h.

**390. Special Topics.** A course not currently listed by the department and offered on an experimental basis. Prerequisites or special permission may be required as needed for admission to the course. 1-4 s.h.

**391, 392. Independent Research and Study.** Research and reading. Open to qualified students. 1-6 s.h. each.

**396. Psychology of Personality.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 102.) The study of major theoretical explanations of personality and of major influences on the development of personality. 3 s.h.

**421. Psychological Assessment.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 300, 349, and 396, or Consent of Instructor.) This course offers the student a thorough grounding in basic

concepts of psychological assessment, introduces the various ways of assessing personality and behavior, and provides practice in interpreting test scores. 3 s.h.

**430. Biological Psychology.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 102.) An overview of the role of the nervous system in the control of behavior. Topics covered include neuroanatomy, mechanisms of drug action, sensory systems, sleep and dreams, motivation and emotion, language, and recovery from nervous system damage. 3 s.h.

**459. Counseling Theories and Techniques.** An examination of the theories, techniques, and process of counseling and psychotherapy. In addition to learning content in these areas, the course includes some development and practice of basic counseling skills. 3 s.h.

**473. Senior Research Project.** (Prerequisite: Psychology 349.) Students will plan and carry out a significant research project related to a professional area of study. (Also listed as Sociology and Social Work 473.) 2 s.h.

**490. Special Topics.** A course not currently listed by the department and offered on an experimental basis. Prerequisites or special permission may be required as needed for admission to the course. 1-4 s.h.

**491, 492. Independent Research and Study.** Research and reading. Open to qualified students. 1-6 s.h. each.

## **F. Psychology Degree Requirements**

To be recommended for degree candidacy, Columbia College Psychology majors must earn an overall final cumulative G.P.R. of at least 2.0 (based on a minimum of 127 semester hours) and a cumulative G.P.R. of 2.5 in Psychology and any optional minor fields. All Columbia College students must also pass standard proficiency tests in English and Mathematics prior to degree candidacy.

Psychology majors must complete the following major requirements in addition to the General Education core (please refer to the *Columbia College Bulletin* for a complete description of the core requirements.)

### **Psychology Major Requirements**

#### **Major Courses (designation: PSY)**

102	Introduction to Psychology
300	Basic Statistics
342	Abnormal Psychology
349	Research Methods
374	History and Systems of Psychology

396 Psychology of Personality  
473 Senior Research Project

**Plus** at least one course from *each* of the following four groups:

Group I: 240 (Drugs, Behavior, and Society)  
350 (Learning, Memory, and Cognition)  
430 (Biological Psychology)

Group II: 301 (Human Development and the Social Environment I)  
302 (Human Development and the Social Environment II)

Group III: 360 (Group Process)  
421 (Psychological Assessment)  
459 (Counseling Theories and Techniques)

Group IV: 210 (Psychology of Sexual Behavior)  
282 (Social Psychology)  
325 (Psychology and Sociology of Gender)

**Plus** one 3 semester-hour Psychology elective numbered above 200.

**Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology:** Using the B.A. checklist in the Appendix of this handbook, follow the General Education Core requirements for a B.A. degree and the above requirements for Psychology (35 semester hours in Psychology).

**Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology:** Using the B.S. checklist in the Appendix of this handbook, follow the General Education Core requirements for a B.S. degree, the above requirements for Psychology, **plus 3 semester hours in PSY 490R (Practicum in Psychological Research)** (38 semester hours in Psychology).

### **Additional Notes**

1. General Education courses may NOT satisfy both general education and major requirements. This applies to PSY 102, 186, 282, and 325, which are listed in the social sciences distribution of the General Education Core Requirements.
2. For the Bachelor of Arts degree, psychology courses may NOT be used to satisfy the liberal arts distribution (9 s.h.) within the General Education requirements.
3. General Education courses may satisfy both general education and minor requirements.

## **G. Recommended Psychology Course Sequence**

The following course sequence recommendation is provided to guide psychology students in the appropriate completion time for major courses. PSY 102 is a prerequisite for most upper-level psychology courses; thus it is best to complete this course during the freshman year. It is also best to schedule PSY 300 during the sophomore year, prior to scheduling PSY 349 and 473 (typically completed during the junior or senior year).

PSY 374 represents a culmination and synthesis of psychological knowledge acquired over the years within the major. It is also the course in which the ACAT (Area College Achievement Test) in Psychology is administered to majors as a program assessment tool. Thus, it is recommended that this course be taken in spring of the senior year.

### **Freshman Year**

Major Goal: complete *PSY 102*

Additional Possibilities: complete an elective from Groups I-IV

### **Sophomore Year**

Major Goal: complete *PSY 300*

Additional Possibilities: complete PSY 342, 396, or an elective from Groups I-IV

### **Junior Year**

Major Goal: complete *PSY 349* (fall) and *473* (spring)

Additional Possibilities: complete PSY 342, 396, or an elective from Groups I-IV

### **Senior Year**

Major Goal: complete *PSY 374* (spring)

Additional Possibilities: complete PSY 342, 396, or an elective from Groups I-IV

## **H. Related Minors and Recommended Elective Courses**

**Minors** - Although not required by the College, psychology majors are encouraged to consider choosing a minor field if there is one that matches their interest. A minor may provide a greater depth of understanding in another field through an approved set of courses. Adding a minor to your program of study makes sense for communicating to potential employers or graduate schools a secondary area of interest and expertise. So, minoring in English writing communicates that you probably have strong writing skills. Minoring in Political Science communicates an interest in the intersection of psychology and public policy. Minoring in Business Administration or Entrepreneurship communicates a leaning toward the business world. However, do not feel obligated to choose a minor just for the sake of having one without a strong secondary interest.

Columbia College offers minor programs in several areas (please see the current *Columbia College Bulletin* for a complete listing). The minor requirements vary for different disciplines, but the minor must be declared by the end of the junior year.

The following is a list of minors offered by various departments at Columbia College (besides Psychology):

Undergraduate Studies

**Women's Studies**

**Leadership**

Department of Art

**Art**

**Art History**

Department of Business and Economics

**Business Administration**

Department of Communication and Theatre

**Communication**

**Theatre**

Department of Dance

**Dance**

Department of English

**English Literature**

**Business and Professional Writing**

**Public Relations Writing**

**Journalism**

Department of History and Political Science

**History**

**International Relations**

**Political Science**

Department of Human Relations

**Child and Family Studies**

**Social Work**

Department of Mathematics and Computing

**Mathematics**

**Computer Systems and Applications**

Department of Modern Languages and Literatures

**French**

**Spanish**

**International Studies**

Department of Music

**Music**

Department of Physical Education and Health Promotion

**Health and Wellness**

Department of Religion and Philosophy

**Religion**

**Philosophy**

Some Psychology majors choose to minor in **Child and Family Studies**, requiring 15 semester hours. The courses are as follows:

SOC 151 or 163	Introductory Sociology or Social Problems
SOC 221	Family Development
SOC 310	Adolescent Behavior and Issues
SOC 318	Aging
EDU 325	Development and Learning in the Early Years

Soc 320 is recommended as an elective.

Some Psychology majors choose to minor in **Social Work**, requiring 17 semester hours. The courses are as follows:

SW 101	Ethical Problem Solving
SW 255	Introduction to Social Welfare
SW 350	SW Practice I (Practice with Individuals)
SW 355	SW Practice II (Practice with Families and Groups)
SW 450	SW Practice III (Organizational and Community Development)

Plus one of the following:

SW 301	Human Development and the Social Environment I
SW 302	Human Development and the Social Environment II
SW 480	Social Welfare Policy and Services
Psy 342	Abnormal Psychology

**Recommended Electives** - The following is a list of recommended elective courses that compliment the goals and objectives of the Psychology program and potentially career plans. Some courses may have prerequisites; check the *Columbia College Bulletin* for the course descriptions.

LEAD 201	Leadership Theories and Strategies
BIO 107	Human Genetics
BIO 325	Anatomy and Physiology I
BUS 302	Principles of Management
BUS 340	Organizational Behavior
BUS 341	Developing Interpersonal Skills
BUS 471	Human Resource Management
COMM 210	Interpersonal Communication
COMM 320	Leadership and Communication
COMM 350	Organizational Communication
COMM 360	Gender and Communication
EDU 230	Learners and Learning

EDU 253	Educational Psychology
EDU 330	American Sign Language I
SLP 258	Survey of Speech-Language Pathology
HIST 215	The American Woman
HIST/POSC 260	African-American Culture and Politics
HIST 340	American Women Leaders
HIST 345	American Culture
HIST/POSC 405	Women of the Third World
HIST 435	Women in European History
POSC 350	Women and Politics
ANTH 131	Introduction to Cultural Anthropology
PEHP 264	Nutrition for Wellness
PHIL 154	Introduction to Philosophy
PHIL 200	Women and Philosophy
PHIL 253	An Introduction to Philosophical Ethics
Any course from SOWK or SOC	
REL 250	Women in World Religions
REL 260	Women in the Bible
REL 322	Women in the Christian Tradition

## **II. Academic Support and Psychology-Related Activities**

### **A. Advisement**

Students who declare the psychology major will be assigned a program faculty advisor. Working collaboratively, the student and advisor will be responsible for course scheduling and assuring the proper progression through Columbia College course requirements. In addition, the advisor will assist the student in exploring career goals and opportunities. Information regarding academic advising can also be found in the *Columbia College Student Handbook*.

The goals of advisement include:

1. Facilitating students' assessment of their aptitude and motivation for a career within or outside psychology.
2. Monitoring students' educational performance in all aspects of the academic program.
3. Discussing students' academic, professional, and personal concerns and linking students with needed services or resources.
4. Exploring employment and graduate school opportunities.

Students are expected to actively engage in the advisement process by:

1. Reading and consulting the *Psychology Program Student Handbook*.
2. Demonstrating initiative, independence, and responsibility in preparation for advising.
3. Preparing course planning forms *prior* to meeting with the advisor.
4. Maintaining a record of academic progress.
5. Demonstrating openness and sharing of ideas and concerns related to academic progress.

Advisors will assist the student by:

1. Being available to meet with students once each semester and other times as requested.
2. Providing information about employment, graduate school, and scholarship opportunities.
3. Facilitating discussion about academic progression.
4. Identifying resources that meet the student's individual needs.
5. Supporting the student in all aspects of course planning.

Psychology majors will be advised using the course checklists located in the Appendix of this handbook. The checklists for the B.A. and B.S. major are NOT identical due to different college and major requirements.

## **B. Specialized Learning Opportunities**

**Independent Study** – Although not required as part of the regular Psychology curriculum, students have the opportunity to pursue areas of special interest while earning college credit through Independent Study. The student is responsible for identifying the area to be researched and, in collaboration with the instructor, planning and carrying out the study. Students can also participate in the ongoing research of a faculty member through Independent Study.

The student must officially register for the Independent Study course (the number of semester hours to be earned will be agreed upon by the supervising faculty member and the student). An *Application for Independent Study* must be filled out with a description of the Independent Study course, course objectives, and evaluation design. The Independent Study course must then be approved by the academic advisor, the department head in which the Independent Study course is undertaken, and the Provost. Evaluation of the Independent Study is usually accomplished through regular meetings with the supervising faculty member and a written product submitted by the student at the end of the semester (APA-style research article or review article.)

Recent Independent Study projects have included:

1. Evaluation of the effectiveness of cognitive-behavioral approach to therapy at an adolescent residential therapeutic facility.
2. Assessment of the relationship between seizure susceptibility and heightened anxiety levels in audiogenic seizure-prone rats.

Notes regarding Independent Study:

- Independent study cannot substitute for required courses in the Psychology curriculum.
- No more than 15 semester hours may be earned by Independent Study.
- A student may earn a maximum of 6 semester hours credit per semester through Independent Study.
- Students are limited to 2 Independent Study projects per semester.

**Practica** – Students have the opportunity to engage in applied or research practica for college credit. Practica are graded on a pass/fail basis.

**Selected Human Services Experiences (PSY 270E)** – experience in a human service agency under the supervision of the department.

For consideration of enrollment into PSY 270E, the student is responsible for identifying a *specific* interest in human services (“working with children”, for example, is *not* specific enough). The student will then work collaboratively with a faculty advisor to plan the practicum experience. PSY 270E is intended for mature students with specific interests who would benefit from hands-on experience in a human service or related agency. Only students that have demonstrated responsible conduct and are willing to make a consistent time commitment to an agency will be considered.

Students must work in an approved agency for 8 hours per week to earn 3 semester hours credit for PSY 270E, or 11 hours per week to earn 4 semester hours credit. One or two semester hours credit will be determined on a case-by-case-basis. It is recommended that, if possible, students complete 270E during the summer. This allows more flexibility with respect to hours worked without the additional burden of traditional course loads. It is not recommended that students attempt 270E during their last semester.

Participation in PSY 270E requires:

1. Supervision by and regular weekly evaluation meetings with an approved supervisor at the agency.
2. Regular (usually bi-weekly) meetings with the faculty advisor.
3. Direct work with clients (clerical work such as filing, typing, or preparation of manuals is not acceptable.)

4. Maintenance of a weekly journal that describes and assesses the experiences for that week.
5. Composition of a reflective paper that demonstrates an understanding of the human service agency in which the student has worked, the clients it serves and its place within the human service network.
6. Additional requirements, as determined by the faculty advisor, may include:
  - a. A process recording of a student interviewing or interacting with one or more clients.
  - b. Creation of an agency booklet that provides information about agencies that are relevant to the client population served by the practicum site.

It is also recommended that students compose a list of objectives for the 270E experience. This list should include goals that will be achieved and/or skills that will be developed. This list may then become a formal contract with the agency supervisor that is approved by the faculty supervisor.

Recent Selected Human Services Experiences have included:

*Child and Adolescent Life Student Intern, Duke Children's Hospital*

In this program, students train under the supervision of Child Life Specialists to become adept at understanding and addressing the needs of hospitalized children and adolescents, and engaging in play therapy.

*Volunteer, Children Unlimited, Inc.*

This agency provides services leading to adoption, reunification, or other specialized services for children with special needs. Volunteers may assist with recruitment and home visits, and observe support groups for families and children.

**Practicum in Psychological Research (PSY 490R)** – experience planning and conducting research in an area of psychology.

This is a relatively new offering within the Psychology curriculum and is required of all Psychology majors seeking a B.S. degree. The student and faculty advisor will work collaboratively to identify a suitable area of research, plan and carry out the study, and possibly present the results at local and/or regional conferences.

**Internships** – Students are encouraged to participate in unpaid, non-credit-earning internships at local mental health agencies. Internships are recommended for students with career interests in the mental health field. The best choices for internships are those agencies and organizations that provide training and ongoing supervision for students. Recent Internships have included the South Carolina State Hospital (KIVA Project/Division of Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services). For potential internship opportunities, consult Section II-F within this handbook on Community Volunteer Opportunities.

**Washington Semester** – Columbia College students have the unique opportunity to earn credit while participating in an internship in Washington, D.C. during the spring semester for the same cost as the standard comprehensive fee. Students are accepted on a competitive basis and spend twelve weeks in an applied setting. Relevant placements for Psychology majors might include the Children’s Defense Fund or various agencies within the National Science Foundation (NSF) and the National Institute for Mental Health (NIMH). See the information brochure in the Appendix of this Handbook.

Interested Psychology majors are encouraged to discuss the Washington Semester option with their advisor and with the coordinator of the Washington Semester program *as soon as possible*. Some Psychology courses are only offered during the Spring semester, so advanced course planning may be necessary.

### **C. Human Relations Student Association**

The Human Relations Student Association (HRSA) is a student-run, informal campus club that meets approximately once a month. The HRSA exists to promote a sense of community among majors in the Human Relations Department, raise awareness on issues within the HR fields, address student concerns, and present information on relevant topics. Planned activities include volunteering at local community centers, information sessions about graduate school and constructing a resume, and strengthening interpersonal and interview skills. All students are welcome to attend.

### **D. Internet Resources for Psychology Students**

Below are several web sites that are either hosted by a national organization or are “mega-sites” consisting of links to other web sites, each indexed according to topic.

**[inst.santafe.cc.fl.us/~mwehr/](http://inst.santafe.cc.fl.us/~mwehr/)** [*Psychology Online*]

**[www.APA.org/students/](http://www.APA.org/students/)** [*American Psychological Association*]

This site by the American Psychological Association (APA) contains information on the mission of the APA, how students could become members of APA, and relevant books, funding opportunities, and conferences. Perhaps of most interest to students, there is information on doctoral programs in psychology, careers in psychology, and data as to salaries within psychology.

**[www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/index.cfm](http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/index.cfm)** [*National Institute of Mental Health*]

This site by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) primarily provides information about various psychological and mental disorders.

**www.psychcentral.com** [*Dr. John Grohol's Mental Health Page*]

This site from an individual clinical psychologist provides information about various psychological and mental disorders as well as links to other relevant sites.

**pmc.psych.nwu.edu/personality.html** [*The Personality Project*]

Based out of Northwestern University near Chicago, this site provides links to numerous other sites having to do with personality theory, assessment, and research. If it has to do with personality, there is probably a relevant link provided at this site.

**socialpsychology.org** [*Social Psychology Network*]

Based out of Wesleyan University, this site provides links to numerous other sites having to do with social psychology and the topics included in social psychology. There are also more general links to professional organizations, information about graduate training, and tools for conducting research.

## **E. Useful Campus Resources**

**The Career Center** – The Career Center is located in the Harrelson Student Center, 2nd floor, room 202A and is open from 9 am – 4:30 pm, Monday Friday. The Center provides students with services such career planning, assessment of career interests, career counseling, and extensive internship and job listings (see the Appendix or go to <http://www.columbiacollegesc.edu/career/index.html>). Additionally, the Center sponsors opportunities to meet representatives from employers, graduate, and professional schools.

**The Academic Skills Center** – The Center is part of the English department and is located in the basement of the library (Room 121) next to the Computer Lab. The ASC offers remedial courses, seminars, and individual tutoring in reading, writing, and study skill development. Videotapes on topics such as note-taking and test-taking, as well as handouts on various study skills, are also available.

**Counseling Services** – The goal of Counseling Services, located on the second floor of Harrelson Student Center, is to assist students in defining and accomplishing personal and academic goals. Services offered include individual and group counseling, all of which are confidential, free of charge for full-time students, and conducted with adherence to the highest professional, legal, and ethical standards.

## **F. Summer Opportunities**

Summer is an ideal time to gain experience in a psychology-oriented setting, external to Columbia College psychology coursework. A number of internship and research programs are available. Instead of flipping burgers, students can gain a competitive edge for future careers or graduate school, make important contacts, and possibly make better money!

Several colleges offer programs in which undergraduate students gain experience in areas of psychology (developmental, cognitive, biological, learning, social, etc.) by conducting research over the summer under the supervision of academic faculty. National organizations also have competitive summer programs, such as the American Psychological Association's (APA) Summer Research Institute. See Drs. Ross or Wiederman for more details.

## **G. Community Volunteer Opportunities**

Psychology majors are encouraged to volunteer in the community, particularly within organizations that emphasize specialty areas within psychology and mental health fields. Some relevant organizations with volunteer opportunities are listed below; others are listed in the Appendix. Keep in mind that the best choices are those agencies and organizations that provide training and ongoing supervision.

*Baptist Medical Center Personal Touch Volunteers* 296-5570  
Volunteers serve patients, their family and staff in providing non-medical care. More information is available at <http://www.palmettohealth.org/body.cfm?id=472>

*United Way of the Midlands* 211 or 733-5487  
The United Way has many community volunteer opportunities in various settings (mediation centers, clinics, shelters). More information is available at [http://www.uway.org/211dev/volunteer\\_opportunities.asp](http://www.uway.org/211dev/volunteer_opportunities.asp)

*Sexual Trauma Services of the Midlands* 252-8393  
STS provides crisis intervention, advocacy and support services to female and male, child, adolescent and adult survivors of sexual assault and abuse and community education. More information is available at <http://www.stsm.org/volunteer.htm>

*Sistercare* 926-0505  
Sistercare is a program of services for battered women and their children residing in Richland, Lexington, Fairfield, Newberry, and Kershaw Counties, SC. More information is available at <http://www.sistercare.com/give.html>

*Volunteer Guardian ad Litem Project* 734-1695  
The South Carolina Guardian ad Litem Program recruits, trains, and supervises volunteers who are court-appointed to represent and advocate for the best interests of children in family court proceedings involving allegations of abuse or neglect. Training is available and required. More information is available at <http://www.govoepp.state.sc.us/children/guardian.htm>

*The Women's Shelter*

779-4706

The Women's Shelter assists women who are in crisis by offering structure and support in a temporary residential environment with the goal of reintroduction to the community as active and contributing members. More information is available at <http://www.midnet.sc.edu/shelter/>

*Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Columbia, Inc.*

691-5700

BBBS promotes youth development and strengthens family support systems by providing one-to-one and group mentoring relationships between adult volunteers and children ages 6 to 18. Volunteers need to be at least 19 years old. Mentors (Big's) spend about 4 hours a month with their Little's. More information is available at <http://www.bbbsgc.org/volunteer.htm>

*Lexington County Community Mental Health Center*

898-4800

*Columbia Area Mental Health Center*

996-1500

These mental health centers provide ongoing counseling and support services to a variety of clients with various mental and emotional needs. Some ongoing programs are aimed at individuals with chronic mental illness. Volunteers are needed to assist in activities with clients. Training is provided.

*Palmetto AIDS Life Support Services (PALSS)*

779-7257

PALSS provides ongoing support to clients infected with HIV/AIDS. Volunteers are needed to provide emotional and practical support to clients. More information is available at <http://www.palss.org>

*Communities in Schools (CIS)*

254-5520

This nonprofit organization attempts to link individuals, schools, and businesses to aid in helping students to stay in school and succeed. Volunteers are needed to serve as tutors and mentors in one of 11 schools serving students ages 6-18 years. More information is available at <http://www.cisnet.org/cissc/default.asp?.=26>

### **III. Career Options**

#### **A. Psychology Specialty Areas**

This section describes some of the specialty areas of psychology. Keep in mind that some of these areas require advanced (graduate) training, so it's never too early to start thinking about preparations for graduate school. Some students know they want to go to graduate school in psychology, but have not determined a specialty area. Selecting a specialty area is important even if you choose not to pursue a graduate degree in

psychology, because it will serve as a guide when selecting among career options with a bachelor's degree. Here are some strategies for determining a specialty area:

- list the courses you most enjoyed and determine why you enjoyed them
- talk to professors and professionals who are engaged in activities that interest you and inquire about becoming involved
- obtain research or practical experience, whether paid or unpaid
- talk to other psychology students and your advisor!

Most Psychology specialty areas can be categorized as being mostly research-oriented or applied/practice-oriented. The following areas are categorized as such. As you read these descriptions, remember that former psychology majors are *everywhere*, and the specialty area you choose does not necessarily dictate one particular work environment. Psychologists can be found in a broad range of settings such as classrooms, laboratories, schools, hospitals, industry, business, government agencies, and private practice.

### **Research-Oriented Sub-Fields in Psychology**

**Biological/Neuroscience:** study of the relationship between nervous system function and behavior. Some topics include movement, memory, sleeping and dreaming, eating, drug use, and the biological causes and treatment of nervous system disorders such as epilepsy, Parkinson' disease, and stroke. May work in colleges/universities, medical schools, hospitals, private industry, and governmental settings.

**Cognitive:** study of mental processes such as reading, language, decision-making, and memory. May also involve the use of computers to model cognitive processes. May work in colleges/universities, private industry, and governmental settings.

**Developmental:** study of normal developmental processes and issues across the lifespan, from infancy through adult development and aging. May focus on one particular period of development, such as infancy, adolescence, or old age. May work in colleges/universities or other research settings and in private industry.

**Experimental:** broad catch-all area that includes research on basic and applied issues in cognition, sensation, perception, learning, memory, emotion, development, or social psychology. May work in numerous settings.

**Human Factors:** study of the interface between humans and machines, such as the design of workspaces, cars, and computers. May focus on how the environment can be constructed so as to maximize human performance. May work in private industry or governmental settings.

**Social Psychology:** study of individual and group behavior in social situations. Topics also include attitude formation, stereotypes, prejudice, attraction, and leadership. May work in colleges/universities or other research settings.

### **Applied/Practice-Oriented Sub-Fields in Psychology**

**Clinical:** diagnosis and treatment of mild to severe mental and emotional disorders. Specific populations of focus may include those with developmental disabilities, neurological disorders, or chronic mental illnesses. Behavioral medicine and neuropsychology may be areas of specialization. May work for governmental or private agencies, hospitals, and mental health centers.

**Community:** improves the quality of life by modifying behavior in natural settings -- the home, the neighborhood, and the workplace. May focus on the prevention/treatment of psychological disorders within these settings. May work for governmental or non-profit agencies.

**Counseling:** uses various interventions to improve human functioning. May involve helping individuals, couples, or families resolve interpersonal problems, adjust to new or difficult situations, or cope with daily stressors. May work for governmental or private agencies, hospitals, and mental health centers.

**Forensic/Criminal:** study of emotional and behavioral issues as they relate to criminal behavior, law, and legal systems. May focus on advising legislators or judges, giving expert testimony, or screening/evaluating the accused, prisoners, or personnel in the legal system. May work in legal, judicial, and governmental settings.

**Health:** promotes the maintenance of health and prevention/treatment of illness. May design and conduct programs to help individuals stop smoking, lose weight, manage stress, prevent dental cavities, or stay physically fit. May work for hospitals or other agencies focused on medical treatment and health maintenance.

**Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology:** examines human behavior in work and other organizational settings. May focus on personnel selection, motivation, training, and job satisfaction. May work for large corporations or agencies that provide consulting to businesses.

**School Psychology:** helps educators, parents, and others promote the intellectual, social, and emotional development of children. May focus on staff and parent training, program assessment, and testing of children in school settings. Typically works for school systems, although may do some private practice work with children.

**Sport/Exercise Psychology:** counsels athletes (including rehabilitating injured and incapacitated athletes), assesses athletic talent, regulates exercise adherence and physical/emotional well-being. May work for sports medicine centers, olympic and professional sports teams, and rehabilitation centers.

## **B. Career Options with a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology**

### **What Can You Do With a Bachelor's Degree in Psychology?**

Answering this question is difficult. In some fields, a bachelor's degree prepares you for a specific job or role within that field. For example, a bachelor's degree in education prepares students for a job in teaching. However, in psychology, most jobs involving counseling, research, or administration (i.e., work as a psychologist) requires a graduate degree. Nationwide, psychology is a popular major, and the large majority of people who graduate with a bachelor's degree in psychology do not go to graduate school. What do they do? Because the answer varies so widely, it is a difficult question. There are career possibilities in research or mental health with a bachelor's degree. However, most psychology majors go into fields other than psychological research or mental health. Some of the career fields to which a psychology degree can be applied are listed in the Appendix.

Outside of the field of psychology, job applicants must market themselves to a potential employer who may not immediately appreciate how someone with a bachelor's degree in psychology would be a good choice to hire. Many jobs in which you might be interested and for which you would be qualified will not include mention of psychology. So, it is up to you to communicate to the potential employer the skills you developed as a psychology major, and how those skills relate to the job for which you are applying.

### **General Job Skills Possessed by Psychology Students**

Students often do not realize some of the important skills they have acquired while pursuing a bachelor's degree in psychology that are desired by potential employers. These skills include:

- critical thinking and analysis
- organization of tasks and information
- research skills
- data interpretation
- computer literacy
- leadership and managerial skills
- effective interpersonal communication
- small-group skills (team building, conflict management)
- sensitivity to individual differences
- crisis intervention (listening, referral)
- basic counseling skills with individuals and groups
- understanding of behavioral and emotional disorders

## Careers Within Psychology

There are certain jobs in mental health or research that require a minimum of a bachelor's degree, such as research assistant or case manager. Psychiatric wards and community mental health centers typically hire people with bachelor's degrees to maintain day-to-day contacts with clients (typically those with severe mental disorders). Other mental health agencies may hire people with bachelor's degrees to manage cases or to coordinate services. For example, an agency that relies on volunteers typically has a "volunteer coordinator," a hired person who oversees and organizes the activities of the volunteers. Or, agencies such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters hires people with bachelor's degrees to match children with partners and to follow up on those cases.

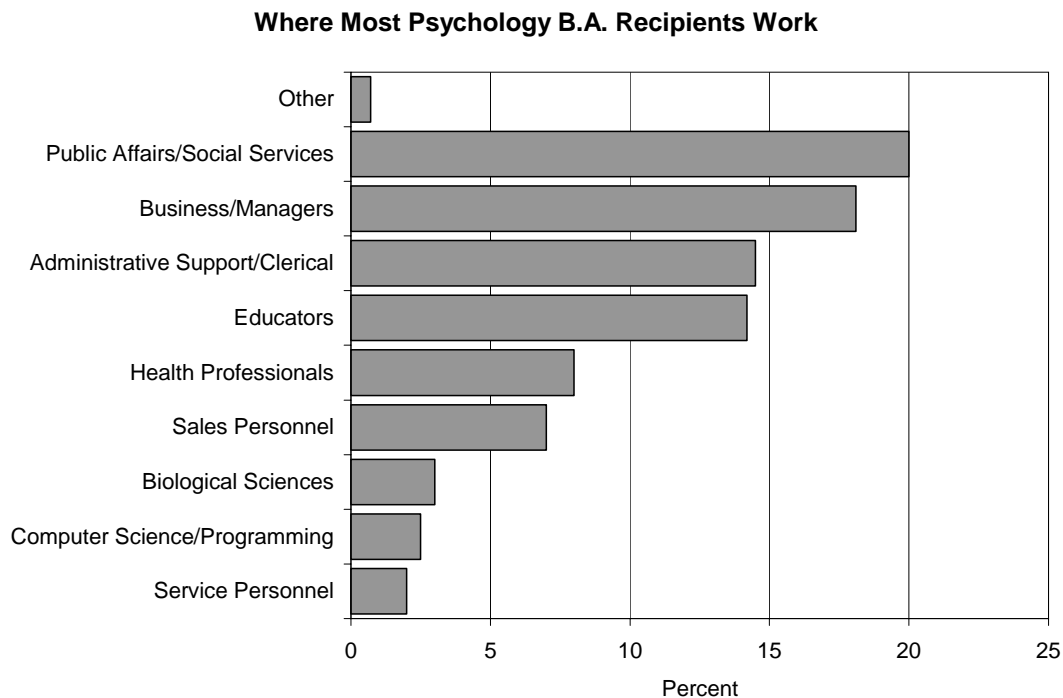
**Note:** Students are encouraged to check out Edens Library for additional resources on careers within psychology and related fields. One good resource is a book entitled, *Career Paths in Psychology: Where Your Degree Can Take You* (1997) by Robert J. Sternberg; the call number is BF76.C38 1997.

## Careers Outside Psychology

Many Psychology majors go on to employment in areas outside of mental health or psychological research. It is difficult to describe the various roles psychology graduates play because they are so varied. The following is a (very) incomplete list of career fields for those with a bachelor's degree in psychology who wish to pursue a career outside of psychology.

- Teaching/Education
- Public Relations
- Politics
- Various Facets of Business
- Human Resources
- Management/Administration
- Advertising/Marketing/Market Research
- Criminal Justice
- Retail/Sales
- Computers and Information Systems
- Law and Law Enforcement
- Medicine/Healthcare
- Social Work
- Public/Community Health
- Advocacy

## Where the graduates really are:



Source: American Psychological Association. (2000). *Psychology, Scientific Problem Solvers: Careers for the Twenty-First Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.) [Brochure]. Washington D.C.: Author.

Students who pursue a career after obtaining a bachelor's degree in Psychology are encouraged to brush up on interviewing skills and prepare answers to questions like those available at [http://www.jobopenings.net/interview\\_tips.htm](http://www.jobopenings.net/interview_tips.htm) or [http://www.quintcareers.com/interview\\_question\\_database/interview\\_questions.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/interview_question_database/interview_questions.html) Preparation of a resume is also necessary and can be accomplished at the Career Center (see the Appendix).

## C. Advanced Training in Psychology

### Types of Advanced Training in Psychology

At the graduate level, there are a few different options with regard to psychology degrees. A master's degree (M.A. or M.S.) in a sub-field of psychology (such as clinical, counseling, or experimental psychology) usually requires two years of full-time study and very often includes completion of a master's thesis (original research project). Students who earn a master's degree in a particular sub-field of psychology may choose to go on to a doctoral program or may enter the job market at the master's level. Most states have provisions for obtaining a counselor's or therapist's license at the master's level, so that the individual with a master's in clinical or counseling psychology can work somewhat

autonomously as a counselor or therapist. However, those licensing requirements vary from state to state and usually include some period of supervised work after obtaining the master's degree before the individual will be licensed to work independently.

At the doctoral level, there are a few options. For students who intend to pursue a research-oriented career in psychology, the only option is a Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Psychology. Students in Ph.D. programs must complete a dissertation, which entails designing and completing a major research project (larger and more in-depth than a master's thesis). Ph.D. candidates are also required to pass written and oral comprehensive exams to demonstrate competence in their research area, as well as a working knowledge of other areas of psychology. A master's thesis or equivalent work is usually required to be accepted into a traditional Ph.D. program. Some Ph.D. programs have embedded within them an opportunity to earn a master's degree "along the way"; some are simply "Ph.D.-track." A common completion time for a Ph.D. in psychology is five years (beyond undergraduate work).

A Ph.D. program in psychology can include training on how to be both a scientist and a practitioner, as it has long been the traditional route for those interested in clinical, counseling, or other applied sub-fields of psychology. However, because some individuals may want to focus more on performing counseling or clinical work, without the scientific training embedded in a Ph.D. program, an alternative doctoral program was developed. The Psychological Doctorate (Psy.D.) degree is for those individuals who want to be eligible for licensure as a doctoral-level psychologist but who do not want the emphasis on research. For example, instead of completing a dissertation, students in a Psy.D. program usually complete a major paper that entails reviewing and evaluating the existing research literature on a particular clinical topic that the student chooses. Typically, students in Ph.D. programs and Psy.D. programs receive comparable clinical training and experiences, although students in Psy.D. programs may receive even more clinical training and experience because they are focused less on research.

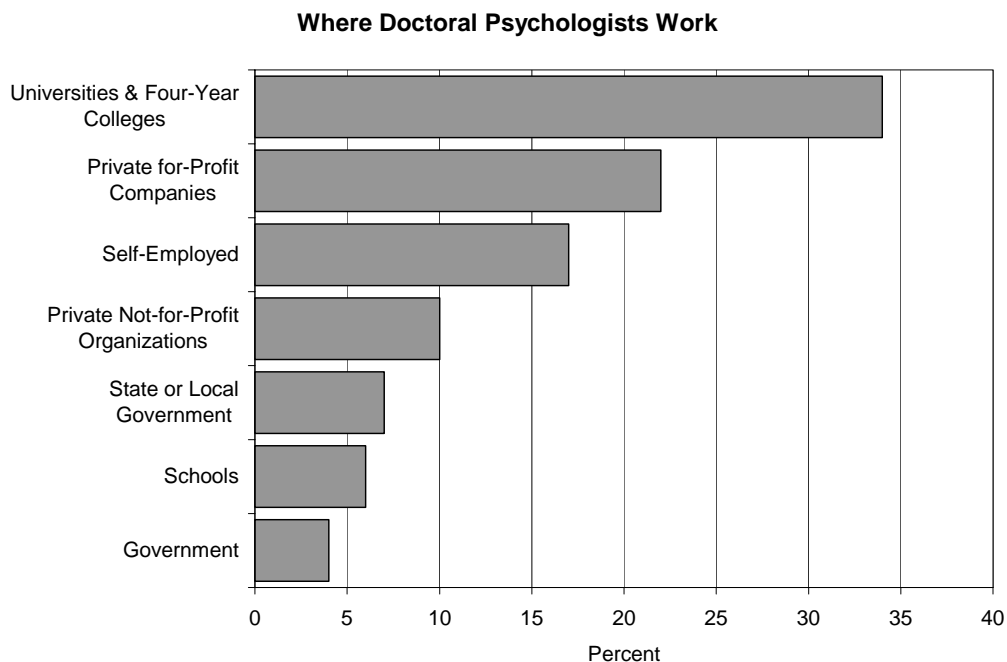
If you are interested in graduate study in psychology, which degree is best for you? It depends. If you want to be a college professor, a Ph.D. degree is necessary. If you want to perform clinical or counseling work, an M.A. or Psy.D. might be appropriate depending on the level at which you wish to function. Those with doctoral degrees typically earn more money and work with greater independence compared to those with master's degrees. However, it is much more difficult to gain acceptance into a doctoral program, and it takes five or more years to earn a doctorate compared to two years for a master's degree. One option is to enter a master's degree program and decide later whether you have the interest and ability to compete a doctoral program afterwards (students typically receive credit for their master's degree when subsequently entering a doctoral program).

What about the Ph.D. degree in clinical or counseling psychology compared to the Psy.D. degree? For many students who are interested in working as a counselor or clinician, the Psy.D. option appears most appropriate. For one, Psy.D. programs accept many more students, so it is easier to gain admission. However, there are some disadvantages.

Psy.D. programs admit more students compared to Ph.D. programs because Psy.D. programs rely on student tuition to keep going. So, getting financial assistance is rare in Psy.D. programs. In contrast, Ph.D. programs typically admit few students because most or all of the students are given financial assistance (usually in the form of a graduate assistantship in which students are given a tuition waiver and a small stipend to live on in exchange for being a research or teaching assistant). Some master's programs also offer financial assistance in the form of a graduate assistantship.

Even Ph.D. programs in clinical or counseling psychology vary widely in the relative emphasis they place on research versus clinical or counseling training they provide. So, when considering a particular program, read their materials closely to determine the type of training they provide and the type of student they are looking for. There is no point in applying to a program whose aim is to train future researchers if you want to become a practicing counselor or clinician.

**Where do doctoral psychologists work?** The following figure can give you an idea.



Source: American Psychological Association. (2000). *Psychology, Scientific Problem Solvers: Careers for the Twenty-First Century* (1<sup>st</sup> ed.) [Brochure]. Washington D.C.: Author.

**APA Code of Ethics** – no matter which track students choose, professionals in the field of psychology and mental health adhere to the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct. To view the complete code, students are encouraged to visit <http://www.apa.org/ethics/>

## Applying to Graduate Schools

See also the Appendix for information on *The Complete Guide to Graduate School Admission*, co-authored by Dr. Wiederman. It is available at Edens Library (call number BF77.K35 2000).

The first general rule when considering applying to graduate schools is START EARLY. By the junior year, students interested in graduate education should be thinking about what *specific* type of graduate training would best fit their personal and career goals. Students who *think* they *might* want to go to graduate school, without serious consideration of career goals, appropriate degree tracks, and appealing fields within psychology should not expect academic advisors to devote a great deal of time to these issues. Allow plenty of time for researching graduate programs on the Internet, again with the idea that it is not productive to read about hundreds of graduate programs without first identifying potential interest(s).

During the initial phase of graduate program investigation, consider these questions:

1. What are my personal and career goals?
2. Do I want to be in an applied or research sub-field?
3. What population(s) do I want to work with everyday?
4. Would it be most appropriate to pursue an M.A., Ph.D., or Psy.D. degree?
5. Do I want to live/work in a particular geographical region?
6. Can I afford to pay for it or do I need to be eligible for graduate assistantships?\*
7. Do I have any personal commitments that will make full-time graduate work difficult or impossible? (Some schools offer part-time master's degrees)

**Note:** although not all graduate programs offer student funding, there are organizations such as the Association for Women in Science (AWIS) (<http://www.awis.org/careers/scholarships.html>) and the American Association of University Women (AAUW) ([http://www.aauw.org/fga/fellowships\\_grants/index.cfm](http://www.aauw.org/fga/fellowships_grants/index.cfm)), among others, that offer graduate and/or predoctoral fellowships. Other organizations offer funding for dissertation research on selected topics, such as the Epilepsy Foundation of America. Keep these possibilities in mind!

Now, after some soul-searching, consider these specific questions about graduate programs (you may not be able to find all of this information on the Internet, but they should get you thinking about what is most important to you):

1. What are the specific degree requirements of this program? Is it feasible to complete these requirements in \_\_\_\_ years?
2. Is there something unique about the graduate program? (e.g. is there a specific psychologist in the program you want to work with? Do they have a special emphasis or work with unique populations that other programs don't?)
3. Does the program have graduate assistantships? How are they awarded?
4. Are summer funding opportunities available?

5. Are graduate students permitted to teach psychology courses as the primary instructor? (important if you would like to teach at the college level)

Application to graduate school is a long, involved process. By fall of the senior year, students should narrow graduate program choices to “the top 10” (more or less) and begin the application process. It is usually recommended that students apply to several graduate programs because they are quite competitive. However, remember these things:

1. Applying to graduate school costs money. Students pay for the GRE test and application fees to graduate programs.
2. Applying to graduate school takes time. There is no standard application procedure; each program has different application requirements, forms, and deadlines.
3. Applying to graduate school requires letters of recommendation from faculty and, if appropriate, other professionals.

Letters of recommendation are more effective if they reflect substantial interaction with the student and an understanding of their personal and career goals (i.e., not “generic”). To facilitate a good letter, be prepared to provide the following:

- a curriculum vita (see the Appendix for a checklist and sample curriculum vita)
- a transcript (if the professor is not your advisor)
- personal statement (even if it’s not a final draft)
- stamped envelopes addressed to the graduate program(s)
- *plenty of time* for the advisor to write the letter(s)

See section III-G of this handbook for a few important words about impression management and letters of recommendation.

The steps for applying to graduate programs are as follows:

**1. Taking the GRE (Graduate Record Examination).** Students applying to graduate programs in psychology are usually required to take the general GRE (containing a verbal, quantitative, and analytical section; most graduate programs use the verbal and quantitative scores), and the GRE subject test in Psychology. More complete information regarding test dates, times, and registration is available at <http://www.gre.org>. The general GRE is available only on computer at specific testing sites and can be taken almost anytime (check the website for details). The GRE subject test is a paper-and pencil test administered only a few times during the year (usually in November, December, and April). The closest administration center for the GRE subject test is USC. Students are urged to prepare for the GRE by reading one of several available preparation manuals. Students may want to take the GRE more than once: it is not uncommon to take the GRE in the spring of junior year and again in the fall of senior year.

**2. Applying to graduate program(s).** The application process is usually completed in the fall and early winter of the senior year. Application deadlines to graduate programs

can be as early as December 15<sup>th</sup>; some programs have much later deadlines or rolling admission policies. The components of the application process are as follows:

- Filling out the application form
- Making sure GRE scores are sent to the program
- Obtaining official transcripts to include in the application packets or, if the program requires, having official transcripts sent to the school(s).
- Writing a personal statement/letter of intent
- Preparing a curriculum vita\*
- Securing letters of recommendation (usually 3 per application)
- Sending the application with the appropriate application fee (this can range from approximately \$25 to \$50 per school)

\*A vita is not usually required but can quickly and effectively summarize your strengths and experiences. Refer to *the Checklist for Preparing a Curriculum Vita* and the *Sample Curriculum Vita* in the Appendix.

### **Writing a Personal Statement**

Most graduate program applications require students to include a short statement, also called a “statement of purpose” or “letter of intent”. In this statement, you will explain your professional objectives and how the particular graduate program fits those objectives. If no guidelines are provided, the statement should be about two double-spaced pages in a presentable font. The statement should be *mature, professional*, and above all, *honest*. Describe career goals and relevant experiences (such as internships, practica, independent study, or jobs). Don’t worry too much if you don’t have many relevant experiences, and don’t try to “milk” what you have done for more than it’s worth!

Your personal statement should stand out from the hundreds of others the graduate search committee members will probably be reading. Search committees want to give their limited slots to those students who really deserve them and will be most likely to use the training in their career. Avoid phrases such as “I love \_\_\_\_\_”, and use “interesting” and “important” sparingly. Some additional pitfalls that should be avoided in personal statements (Appleby & Appleby, 2006) include:

- discussing “personal mental health” (p. 20) or the mental health of someone close
- “excessive altruism” (p. 20; examples: “I want to help everybody” or “Everyone talks to me about their problems”)
- excessive self-disclosure (writing a long narrative about personal struggles) (p. 20)
- statements that are “professionally inappropriate,” “cutesy”, overly humorous, or religious (p. 20)

Source: Appleby, D. C., & Appleby, K. M. (2006). Kisses of death in the graduate school application process. *Teaching of Psychology*, 33(1), 19-24.

In general, it is a good idea to tailor each personal statement to the particular program to which you are applying. The better your stated interests match what the program offers, the more competitive your application. You may be able to write the letter in such a way that only one paragraph needs to be changed to reflect a particular program, such as a paragraph in which you mention the work of professors in the program that interest you. This shows the committee that you've "done your homework." It is also a good idea to have your advisor read over the letter for additional advice before you send it.

The following sections list websites that offer additional information regarding graduate programs in Psychology and related fields.

## **D. Websites: Graduate School Options with a Bachelor's in Psychology**

For general information on graduate schools:

*<http://www.petersons.com/gradchannel/>*

*<http://www.gradschools.com/>*

*<http://www.allpsychologyschools.com>*

### **Applied Psychology**

- \* Clinical Psychology [APA-accredited doctoral programs]

*<http://www.APA.org/ed/doctoral.html>*

- \* Counseling Psychology

*<http://www.counseling.org/students>*

*<http://www.enamp.org/>*

- \* Forensic Psychology

*<http://www.ap-ls.org/students/careersIndex.html>*

- \* Health Psychology

*<http://www.health-psych.org/>*

- \* Industrial-Organizational (I/O) Psychology

*<http://www.siop.org/gtp/Default.aspx>*

- \* Rehabilitation Counseling

*<http://www.apa.org/divisions/div22/homepage.html>*

- \* School Psychology and School Counselor

*<http://www.schoolcounselor.org/>*

*<http://www.nasponline.org/index2.html>*

- \* Sport Psychology

*<http://www.aaasponline.org/index.php>*

### **Basic/Experimental Psychology**

- \* Cognitive Psychology/Cognitive Science

*<http://www.cognitivesciencesociety.org/graduate/>*

- \* Developmental Psychology

*[http://www.gradschools.com/listings/menus/psych\\_devel\\_menu.html](http://www.gradschools.com/listings/menus/psych_devel_menu.html)*

- \* Human Factors

*[http://www.gradschools.com/listings/menus/PsychHumanFactors\\_menu.html](http://www.gradschools.com/listings/menus/PsychHumanFactors_menu.html)*

- \* Biological/Neuroscience

<http://www.andp.org/programs/programs.htm>

<http://apu.sfn.org/>

\* Social Psychology

<http://socialpsychology.org/>

## **E. Websites: Graduate Training Opportunities in/near SC**

### **The Citadel - Clinical/Counseling Psychology and School Psychology**

<http://www.citadel.edu/psyc/index.html>

### **Clemson University**

**Applied Psychology, Human Factors Psychology, and I/O Psychology**

<http://www.grad.clemson.edu/catalog/index.php?college=03>

**Counselor Education (Community Counseling, School Counseling, and Student Affairs)**

<http://www.grad.clemson.edu/catalog/index.php?college=05>

### **Columbia College - Human Behavior and Conflict Management (see Appendix)**

<http://www.columbiacollegesc.edu/graduate/conflict.html>

### **Converse College – Education Specialist (Marriage and Family Therapy)**

<http://www.converse.edu/CoEdGrad/edsMarriage.asp>

### **Francis Marion University - Applied Psychology (Clinical/Counseling or School)**

[http://www.fmarion.edu/academics/PSY\\_MASP](http://www.fmarion.edu/academics/PSY_MASP)

### **South Carolina State University**

**Counselor Education (School Counseling) or Rehabilitation Counseling**

<http://www.scsu.edu>

### **Springfield College (Charleston) – Human Services (concentrations in**

**Organizational Management and Leadership or Community Counseling)**

<http://www.spfldcol.edu/homepage/dept.nsf/D02DEA1C0FC6F99D45256BD800296E8C/EA2E12F2EF47A5F045256CB000392700?OpenDocument>

### **USC**

**Psychology (several)**

<http://www.sc.edu/bulletin/grad/GPsychology.html>

**Counselor Education (Marriage and Family Counseling/Therapy or School Counseling)**

<http://www.sc.edu/bulletin/grad/GColEduc.html>

**USC School of Medicine**

**Genetic Counseling**

*<http://geneticcounseling.med.sc.edu/>*

**Rehabilitation Counseling**

*<http://rehab.med.sc.edu/rehab.htm>*

**Webster University - Counseling Psychology**

*<http://www.webster.edu/gradcatalog/counseling.html>*

**Winthrop University**

**School Psychology**

*[http://www.winthrop.edu/graduate-studies/school\\_psychology.htm](http://www.winthrop.edu/graduate-studies/school_psychology.htm)*

**Community/Agency Counseling**

*[http://www.winthrop.edu/graduate-studies/master\\_of\\_education\\_in\\_counselin.htm](http://www.winthrop.edu/graduate-studies/master_of_education_in_counselin.htm)*

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**Augusta State University**

**Psychology (Clinical/Counseling or General Experimental)**

*<http://www.aug.edu/psychology/gradinfo.htm>*

**Counselor Education (School Counseling or Community Counseling)**

*<http://www.aug.edu/clinical/programs/counseling/Welcome.html>*

**University of North Carolina Charlotte**

**Clinical/Community Psychology**

*<http://www.psych.uncc.edu/clinical.htm>*

**Counseling**

*<http://education.uncc.edu/counseling/default.htm>*

**Health Psychology**

*<http://www.psych.uncc.edu/Healthmain.htm>*

**Industrial/Organizational Psychology**

*<http://www.psych.uncc.edu/iopsychology/industrial.htm>*

**F. Websites: Information About Related Fields**

**Clinical Social Work**

*<http://www.CSWE.org/>*

*<http://www.naswdc.org/>*

**Marriage and Family Studies / Counseling**

*<http://www.AAMFT.org/>*

**Public Health Administration or Education**

*<http://www.aahperd.org/aahe/template.cfm>*

### **Creative Arts Therapy**

<http://www.arttherapy.org/> [art]  
<http://www.adta.org> [dance]  
<http://www.musictherapy.org/index.html> [music]  
<http://www.nadt.org> [drama]

### **Recreational Therapy**

<http://www.atra-tr.org/index.html>

### **Human Resources**

<http://www.humanresources.org/>  
<http://www.astd.org/>  
<http://www.shrm.org/>

### **College Student Development/Student Affairs Administration**

<http://www.studentaffairs.com/web/careers.html>  
<http://www.acpa.nche.edu/>  
<http://www.naspa.org/>

### **Sociology**

<http://www.asanet.org/index.wv>

### **Anthropology**

<http://www.aaanet.org/>

## **G. Impression Management**

In most situations, we prefer to present ourselves in a positive light. This is especially true for important situations such as job interviews, but it should be taken into consideration for everyday settings as well. *Impression management* refers to the (usually) conscious efforts by people to influence how others think of them. There are several modes by which you project a certain image of yourself, especially in appearance, manner of speech, and interpersonal conduct.

Although you may feel very comfortable on campus, consider the impressions you are making on others. Keep these thoughts in mind as you practice impression management in and around campus:

- Will this behavior be evaluated positively by my peers and advisors?  
Example: a personal email address of “hotpants@yahoo.com”
- Would this behavior be acceptable in a professional setting?  
Example: showing up to class in pajamas
- Does this behavior reflect the kind of person I want others to know?

Example: Requesting an exam date to be moved so you can go out the night before for your birthday.

Remember, college students are generally expected to maintain professional and dignified conduct both inside and outside the classroom. The impression you make on your peers, instructors, and advisors *does* count! These same people will be the ones to provide informal support, letters of recommendation, and guidance regarding your future. What these people think of you will affect how beneficial your relationships with them will be.

**Personal Internet Sites (Facebook, MySpace, Friendster, etc.):** Personal Internet sites are increasing in popularity. However, potential employers and graduate school admissions officers may conduct online searches for potential candidates, so it is very important to practice impression management on these sites. Include only professional and dignified information on your site(s), especially when you are applying for a job or to a graduate program.

**Letters of Recommendation:** Impression management is especially important for securing letters of support and/or recommendation. These letters are usually required for employers and graduate schools. Faculty members are often approached by students to write letters of recommendation for them. Has your behavior formed a favorable impression? Will the faculty member be able to generate examples of your behavior that support positive statements about you?

Requests for letters of recommendation may be honored after careful consideration of the student's academic performance, attitude, and levels of dedication and responsibility. They are a *privilege*, not a right, and are not automatically granted.

#### IV. Appendix

## Checklist for Preparing a Curriculum Vita

### General

- \_\_\_ Use quality paper and a quality printer.
- \_\_\_ Use popular, common typefaces such as Times New Roman, Helvetica, or Courier (they're readable). Do not use multiple fonts in the same vita.
- \_\_\_ Use a font size between 10 and 14 points (don't think you need to fit everything on one page). Your name, at the top of the vita, may be larger.
- \_\_\_ Do not use extensive graphics, shading, or underlining.

### Content – include the following:

- \_\_\_ School *and* home addresses (if they are different)
- \_\_\_ Phone number (and email address if applicable)
- \_\_\_ Professional Objective (your career goal; tailor it to the job or program you're applying for)
- \_\_\_ Education (all degrees and dates earned; use "anticipated" if a degree hasn't been earned yet)
- \_\_\_ All relevant experiences, including:
  - \_\_\_ professional experience(work)
  - \_\_\_ research experience
    - any research projects you've conducted or contributed to
    - any research presentations you've made (local, regional, national)
  - \_\_\_ community experience (volunteer or paid)
- \_\_\_ Professional Affiliations
- \_\_\_ Honors/Awards/Co-Curricular Activities (for example, campus activities)
- \_\_\_ Research Interests (if applicable)
- \_\_\_ Reference list (separate sheet containing names and contact information of three reliable references)

Complete instructions for preparing a vita can be obtained by checking out *How To Prepare Your Curriculum Vitae* (1997) by A.L. Jackson, available in the Edens Library (call number HF5383.J24 1997)

(Sample Vita)

**Dawn S. Student**

School Address

MSC 765  
1301 Columbia College Drive  
Columbia, SC 29205  
(803) 714-0000

Home Address

301 Village Road  
Columbia, SC 29205  
(803) 776-0987

Education

2007  
(Anticipated) Bachelor of Arts, Psychology  
Columbia College, Columbia, SC  
Senior Project: *The Presentation of Females in U.S.  
Television Advertising*

Research Experience

Research Assistant: Project on Attachment, Caregiving, and Family Patterns, Columbia College, Spring and Fall 2004. Responsibilities included designing surveys, loading data, forming mailing lists, preparing a subject log, and reviewing an APA-style manuscript.

Professional Presentations

Student, D.S. The presentation of females in U.S. television advertising. Paper presented at the annual South Carolina Psychological Association conference, Myrtle Beach, SC, April 2006.

Student, D.S. The presentation of females in U.S. television advertising. Paper presented at the Columbia College Collaborative Showcase, Columbia, SC, May 2005.

Student, D.S. Gender stereotypic demands. Project presented at the Columbia College Collaborative Showcase, Columbia, SC, May 2004.

Community Experience

2005-present Volunteer, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Columbia, Inc.  
*Responsibilities*: tutoring junior high students once a week in math; directing regular discussions of values and character; chaperoning social activities.

### Professional Affiliations

2004-present            Student member, South Carolina Psychological Association

2004-present            Student member, American Psychological Association

### Activities and Honors

October 2005            Represented Columbia College in the Psychology Bowl, sponsored  
by the South Carolina Psychological Association

2004-2005              Co-Director, Columbia College Psychology Club

2004-2005              Columbia College Dean's List

### Research Interests

Psychology of Women and Gender

Attachment Theory

Geriatrics

Life-Span Development