PSYCHOLOGY - EXPERIMENTAL (PHD)

Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology - Experimental
Unit: College of Arts and Sciences (http://louisville.edu/artsandsciences/intro) (GA)
Department: Psychological and Brain Sciences (http://louisville.edu/psychology)
Program Website (https://louisville.edu/psychology/graduate/experimental)
Academic Plan Code(s): EPSYPHD

Program Information

Experimental psychologists conduct research to better understand human and animal behavior. Their scientific findings provide insights that improve teaching and learning methods, promote healthy child development and improve visual and hearing aids, to list a few examples.

The Experimental Psychology doctoral program at the University of Louisville is designed to prepare students for careers in academic, clinical, and applied research settings as well as industry positions involving psychological science, data analysis, and management. Our students are trained in core areas of psychology, research design and methods, data analysis, teaching, and oral and written communication, all of which makes our students highly employable.

Research Training

Students in our program get extensive training in research. From their first day of the program to the last, students are actively involved in research. A student’s specific graduate training experience will depend in part on whom the student chooses as a graduate mentor and the student’s specialized area of interest. Faculty mentors for the Experimental Psychology program are listed on the graduate program website (http://louisville.edu/psychology/graduate/experimental). Areas of special training are:

- Cognition
- Development
- Visual and Auditory Sciences
- Neuroscience

Curriculum

Our curriculum is designed to be flexible and meet the needs of individual students in our program. Students in our program take classes in two of four core areas of psychology (selected by student and mentor), two statistics courses (required of all students in our program), and five electives or specialized seminars on special topics (selected by student and mentor). Additionally, first-year students attend a preseminar on Research Methods in the fall semester, in which Experimental Psychology faculty teaches students about the research methods used in their labs. Students also develop their own presentation skills in a weekly Brown Bag seminar held in both the fall and spring semesters. Finally, students in our program complete a Master’s Research Portfolio (typically right after the second year), a Preliminary Exam (typically in their third year), and a Dissertation.

Professional Development

Professional development is an important piece of our program. Graduate students in our program are highly encouraged to publish, present their research, attend research conferences, and gain teaching experience either as a GTA or instructor of record. They are also encouraged to take advantage of the Graduate Schools’ PLAN workshops, academies, and resources (http://louisville.edu/graduate/plan), which are designed to help graduate students develop their professional skills. Their programs are geared toward students who want to develop their teaching, grant writing, publishing, community engagement, and entrepreneurial skills, just to name a few.

The department offers an intellectually enriching environment with a departmental Colloquium Series (http://louisville.edu/psychology/research/colloquium-series), the Experimental Psychology Brown Bag (http://louisville.edu/psychology/graduate/experimental/brown-bag-series), and the Clinical Psychology Colloquium and Professional Development Series. The department also hosts the Grawemeyer Award in Psychology (http://louisville.edu/psychology/about/copy_of_grawemeyer-award), a large monetary award given annually to a psychologist with a creative, influential idea in psychology.

Financial Support

Financial support for graduate students in the Experimental Psychology PhD program is available in the form of research assistantships, teaching assistantships, and University Fellowships. Most forms of support are for 12 months and include a stipend ($22,000 per year), full tuition, and health insurance.

Admission Requirements

We take a holistic approach to reviewing prospective student applications. Applicants who are admitted to our program typically possess the following qualifications, but they are not required:

- Undergraduate GPAs of 3.0 or higher
- GRE Verbal and Quantitative scores in the 50th percentile or higher
- Strong letters of recommendation that speak to the applicant’s scholarly ability and potential to succeed in a doctoral program
- A match between the applicant’s and faculty mentor’s research interests
- A psychology or neuroscience major

All applicants will be considered without discrimination on the basis of differences in age, ethnic or racial background, gender, physical abilities, sexual orientation or preference, or social background. Our program values diversity and has accepted applicants that vary on the above characteristics.

For more information, please visit our program’s Application Instructions (http://louisville.edu/psychology/graduate/experimental/apply) page.

Program Requirements

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<td>PSYC 631</td>
<td>Sensation and Perception</td>
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Master of Science in Experimental Psychology

Students are required to earn a Master of Science in Experimental Psychology. To earn the MS degree, with an approval of the student’s mentor, the student will prepare a portfolio of written work featuring research efforts and training primarily undertaken as a graduate student in the program at the University of Louisville. The portfolio should demonstrate scope and quality of research commensurate with the degree. The portfolio is typically completed in or after the summer of the second year and must be approved by the student’s Master’s Portfolio Committee.

After approval of the MS portfolio and completion of 45 credit hours of graduate study, including the Statistics and Program Core, the student is awarded the Master of Science degree.

Preliminary Examination

The Preliminary Examination consists of an original written review and critique of a research area. The Preliminary Examination will be evaluated based on the breadth of knowledge, integration of literature, critical thinking, and quality of scientific writing. Students will plan the preliminary examination in collaboration with their mentors and Preliminary Examination Committees. The Preliminary Examination is typically completed by the end of the third year of training.

Dissertation

An original research project conducted and described in a report (the doctoral dissertation) by the student. The dissertation is conducted in consultation with a faculty committee and must be approved by the committee.