

FAQ – Psychology

General Information

How long does it take to get a Ph.D. in Psychology at Stanford?

The Ph.D. program is designed to be completed in five years of full-time study. Actual time will depend on students' prior background, progress, and research requirements. The minimum residency requirement for the Ph.D. degree is 135 units of completed coursework and research units, which takes approximately four years. The fifth year is typically spent working on the dissertation.

What are the requirements for the Ph.D. degree?

Please consult [this page](#) to learn more about the program requirements.

What are the different subfields within the graduate program in Psychology?

- Affective
- Cognitive
- Developmental
- Neuroscience
- Social

What is the teaching requirement in the Department?

Students must complete five quarters of teaching assistantship, working as a teaching assistant (TA) under the supervision of a faculty member. Students are required to attend a TA training workshop in their first and second year. In addition, students are encouraged to take advantage of department and university teacher training programs. Students for whom English is a second language are expected to acquire sufficient fluency in English. All international students must be approved by Stanford's EFS department. More information can be found [here](#).

Can I apply to enroll in a Master's program in Psychology?

No, we do not offer a terminal Master's degree in Psychology. Current doctoral students within the department or in another Stanford graduate program may apply to be awarded a Master of Arts in Psychology during the course of their Ph.D. program.

Financial Support

What is the annual cost of attending your program?

Tuition for the 2015-2016 academic year can be found [here](#).

What type of financial support do you offer?

To date, the department has been successful in providing full financial support for graduate students in the form of a living stipend, tuition, and health insurance, which is covered through spring quarter of their fifth year. Department financial aid assignments are made at the beginning of each academic year. Continued financial support is contingent on satisfactory academic progress. Students are encouraged to pursue fellowships offered by the university and by national organizations, such as the National Science Foundation.

Do you offer support for the summer months?

Yes, assistantships and/or fellowships are guaranteed during the summer months for first through fourth year students.

Preparing for Admission

When is the application deadline?

The application deadline for the 2016-17 academic year is Tuesday, November 24, 2015, 11:59pm PST. Applications will NOT be accepted after this date. Please be aware that you must submit the online application by the application deadline. Incomplete applications cannot be completed or submitted after the application deadline.

I have taken the GRE more than once. Which score will be considered for my application?

Your highest GRE score within the most recent five years will be considered.

Will you accept my GMAT score?

No. Only the GRE is accepted for consideration.

Do you have a minimum GRE or GPA score?

We do not require applicants to have a minimum GRE score or GPA for admission consideration, and we do not release information about average GRE scores or GPAs of accepted students. As a guideline, successful applicants typically score in the 90th percentile or higher on the three sections of the GRE and earn undergraduate cumulative GPAs among the top of their class. However, please keep in mind that admission to our graduate programs depends on a combination of factors, and all areas of a student's application are weighed similarly when applications are reviewed. If our research areas meet your educational goals, we encourage you to submit an application.

I am an international student currently enrolled in a degree program in the U.S. Do I need to submit a TOEFL score?

The TOEFL score requirement is waived for international students who have received a Bachelor's or Master's degree from an institution in the United States or other English-speaking country.

Am I eligible to apply if my undergraduate major is not in psychology?

An undergraduate major in psychology is not required; applicants from other backgrounds can be and are admitted. All applicants should have sufficient foundational knowledge and research experience prior to the program to allow them go straight into graduate level course work and conduct research.

Do I have to submit GRE scores if I already have a Master's degree?

Yes. Scores from the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) General Test are required of all applicants.

Is there a department code for ETS to use in order to send in my scores?

No, there are no individual department codes; use the Stanford University score recipient code 4704 to send your scores.

Can official transcripts arrive after the application deadline?

Yes. As long as your uploaded unofficial transcripts are submitted by the application deadline, official transcripts can be sent at a later time (but postmarked no later than December 31, 2015). Please note that letters of recommendation *must* be uploaded to the system by December 7th, 2015 for the admissions committee's review.

If I have prior graduate work, can it be transferred to the Ph.D. program?

No, our psychology department does not allow transferring unit credits from your previous program.

What is the admissions committee's expectations of prospective students?

Admission to our program is highly competitive. About 10-15 students, chosen from a pool of approximately 450 applicants, enter the program each year. These students are selected on the basis of a strong academic background as demonstrated by previous coursework, test scores, research experience, and letters of recommendation. Please be assured that the department reviews each application very carefully and makes decisions on an individual basis.

The Application Process

How do I apply?

Instructions on how to apply to the Psychology Ph.D. Program, along with the link to the online application, can be found [here](#). Please visit [this page](#) to learn more about the graduate application requirements.

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

The fee to apply for graduate study at Stanford is \$125. Acceptable form of payment is by credit/debit card (Visa or MasterCard only.) We do not accept electronic check payments or checks by mail. The fee is non-refundable and must be received by the application deadline. If you believe you qualify for a fee waiver, please visit [this page](#) to review the requirements. <https://graddiversity.stanford.edu/graduate-fee-waivers>

Can I submit another application to a different department within the University?

You may apply to only one degree program per academic year. However, you may apply concurrently to one departmental program and to a professional school program (law, medicine or business).

Educational History/Transcripts

My institution does not report GPAs on a 4.0 grading scale. How should I report my GPA on the application?

Please do not convert your GPA to a 4.0 grading scale. You should enter "0.00" for the GPA and use the "Unconverted GPA" and "Unconverted GPA System" fields instead. A link to detailed instructions for reporting GPA is located near these fields on the application.

I attended multiple undergraduate institutions. In what order should I list them on the application?

The institution where you earned or expect to earn your bachelor's degree should be listed as "Post-Secondary Institution 1." The remaining institutions do not have to follow a particular order. Please note that you must submit a transcript for all courses taken towards your undergraduate degree, including those from your non-primary institutions.

When should I submit my transcripts if my degree will still be in progress at the time of the application deadline?

Please send the most current version of your official transcript by December 31st, 2015, even if the grades from your fall semester are not available. The absence of these grades will not have a negative impact on the review of your application. If you are admitted and enrolled, we will ask you to submit your final transcript showing all grades and proof of degree conferral.

May I send the official transcripts from my own address, or do they need to be sent directly from my institution?

Either option is acceptable. However, if you send the transcripts from your own address, the transcripts must be in institution-sealed envelopes.

Do I need to include a cover sheet with my identifying information when sending the transcripts?

A cover sheet is not necessary unless your transcript displays a different version of your name from what you entered on the application. Transcripts are matched to applications based on the applicant's full name.

How do I check the status of my official transcripts?

Log in to your application account. It may take up to six weeks after submitting your application or sending the official transcripts (whichever occurs later) for your official transcripts to show as received. Processing may be delayed or halted if the name on the transcript does not exactly match the name on your application.

Do I need to submit official transcripts from an institution where I studied abroad?

If the coursework and grades are reflected on the transcript of your home institution, you do not need to submit official transcripts from the study-abroad institution.

GRE/TOEFL

When should I take the GRE and/or TOEFL?

The GRE and TOEFL must be taken by the November 24th deadline.

What is the minimum TOEFL score required for admission?

Please visit [this page](#) on Stanford's Office of Graduate Admissions website for more information on the University's minimum requirements.

If my TOEFL score falls below the University's minimum, am I still eligible to apply?

Yes, you may still apply. If your TOEFL scores fall below the university's minimum requirements and you are admitted, Stanford may require you to take an English placement exam and/or English classes.

May I submit the IELTS instead of the TOEFL to demonstrate English proficiency?

The IELTS is not accepted at Stanford University; only the TOEFL is accepted to provide proof of proficiency in English.

How do I request a TOEFL exemption or waiver?

For all questions related to TOEFL exemptions or waivers please refer to [this page](#) on Stanford's Office of Graduate Admissions website. Please note that the central office makes all final decisions regarding TOEFL waivers; our department is not involved in the approval of TOEFL waivers.

How do I check the status of my official test scores?

Log in to your application account. It may take up to two weeks after submitting your application or sending the scores (whichever occurs later) for your official scores to show as received. Processing may be delayed or halted if the name or birthdate on the score report does not exactly match the information on your application.

Why does my TOEFL status show as “Not Applicable” even though I submitted a TOEFL score?

This may be because you listed English as your first language in the application. Please note that “first language” refers to your native language.

Statement of Purpose

How long should my statement of purpose be?

We strongly recommend that your statement of purpose be around two pages in length.

Letters of Recommendation

My recommender will not be able to submit his/her letter by the application deadline. Will my application still be considered?

Letters of recommendation are due by December 7, 2015. As such, we strongly encourage you to contact your recommenders directly to remind them of our deadline and review timeline.

Can my recommenders submit their letters via email or fax?

No; recommenders must submit their letters via Stanford’s online recommender system.

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

Should any of your recommenders experience technical difficulties with the online letters of recommendation process, please refer them to our application database provider's [letters of recommendation help page](#) or have them submit a [Help Request Form](#) directly to our application database provider.

Additional Materials/Updates

May I submit a resume/CV, list of publications, etc. as part of my application?

Applicants are permitted to upload one (1) additional document to the online application, under the “Document Uploads” section.

Should I mail any additional materials besides my official transcripts?

No; any additional documents we receive will be discarded. This includes letters of recommendation, GRE/TOEFL score reports, bank statements, certificates, etc. Please do not mail any hard copies of materials, with the exception of official transcripts.

I need to make a correction to my already-submitted application.

Please send an e-mail to psych-admissions@lists.stanford.edu with the details of your request. We are unable to upload additional documents or replace previously uploaded documents (including the statement of purpose or additional information). If you need to change your recommenders, please use the [Activity Status Page](#). (Note: The order of recommenders cannot be changed).

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

The Department of Psychology aims to issue all offers of admission to PhD degree applicants by early March.

Reapplying

Applicants who were previously not admitted are welcome to reapply if they can demonstrate significant progress made since they last applied. However, all documents (including official transcripts) must be resubmitted with a new application. We do not keep records from past applications.