

Combined BA/MA Degree Program in Psychology

Wesleyan University

General Guidelines, Application Materials & Student Forms

All materials are available at: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/psyc/about/BA-MA.html> .

Please direct questions regarding this program to the Psychology Department's administrative assistant, Cathy Race, 860-685-2343, Judd Hall Room 107-B, crace@wesleyan.edu.

The Department of Psychology only accepts applications from

Senior Psychology Majors in the Fall Term.

Application deadline: December 1st.

Only students graduating in **December** can apply in the spring of their junior year.

Application deadline: March 1st.

BA/MA Program in the Sciences

The science programs at Wesleyan offer a variety of excellent research opportunities. In fact, the opportunity to carry out significant research is one of the strongest features of the sciences here. Many undergraduates carry out research in close collaboration with a faculty member, and those who do often report that it has been the most valuable part of their education. However, in recent years, as the opportunities to do high quality research have multiplied, some students have felt the need for a more intensive involvement in research than is possible in the traditional undergraduate setting. In consultation with their major department, a number of such students have constructed programs through which they have been able to obtain the MA (Master of Arts) degree after an additional year of study following the BA (Bachelor of Arts). This additional year has provided them with the opportunity to devote a greater deal of time to completing the research projects they began as undergraduates.

Wesleyan has the formal curricular option for those undergraduate students who feel the need for the intensive research experience that an additional year of study can afford. The program has a strong research orientation. However, it also includes coursework, seminars, and, in some cases, teaching. Although it is anticipated that most individuals who enroll in the program will go on for further graduate study, the program also provides strong professional background for either further advanced study or employment in industry. Completion of both BA and MA requirements requires careful planning of one's schedule of courses and research for the last two years of the program. A student hoping to enter this program is expected to declare the intention to do so early enough in his or her academic career to permit the design of an acceptable program for the last two years with both the major department and a research advisor within that department.

Program Faculty and Staff

Graduate Program Committee: Hilary Barth, Robert Steele, Royette Tavernier, Barbara Juhasz in the spring

Graduate Program Support: Cathy Race, Administrative Assistant

Professors: Lisa Dierker, Matthew Kurtz (Department Chair), Jill G. Morawski, Andrea L. Patalano, Scott L. Plous, Patricia M. Rodriguez Mosquera, Charles Sanislow, Robert S. Steele

Associate Professor: Hilary Barth, Barbara Juhasz, Anna Shusterman, Steven Stemler, Clara Wilkins

Assistant Professors: Kyungmi Kim, Psyche Loui, Alexis May, Mike Robinson, Royette Tavernier, H. Shellae Versey

Assistant Professor of the Practice in Psychology: Sarah Carney

Visiting Professor: Sarah Kamens

Major Areas of Research

Faculty	Area of Expertise	Interests/Research
Hilary Barth	Development, Cognition	Perceptual and cognitive development: perception and representation of space, time, and number; development of mathematical thinking; development of social cognition.
Sarah Carney	Social, Personality	Law and Psychology, social/cultural narratives of responsibility, death penalty mitigation, intersection of race, class, and gender on cultural conceptions of blame and exoneration.
Lisa Dierker	Developmental, Psychopathology	Development of nicotine dependence; Group-based statistical methods; Psychiatric and substance use comorbidity.
Barbara Juhasz	Cognition	Word recognition; eye movements during reading; sentence processing.
Sarah Kamens	Clinical	Psychosocial marginalization; psychotic experiences; structural disadvantage; diagnostic alternatives; social justice work; global mental health.
Kyungmi Kim (spring sabbatical)	Cognition	Learning and memory; the role of “self” in cognitive and affective processes; the influence of prior experience on subsequent learning and perception.
Matthew Kurtz	Psychopathology, Human Neuropsychology	Measurement and treatment of neurocognitive deficits in patients with severe psychopathology. Rehabilitation in severe psychopathology.

Faculty	Area of Expertise	Interests/Research
Psyche Loui (year leave)	Cognition, Neuroscience	Cognitive neuroscience, auditory perception, music cognition, creativity and aesthetics, music and the brain.
Alexis May	Psychopathology, Clinical	Suicide risk and prevention; cognitive behavioral interventions; clinical trials; meta-analysis, micro-longitudinal designs
Jill Morawski (fall sabbatical)	Social, Gender Studies	History of psychology, social psychology, psychology of gender, science studies, feminist studies.
Andrea Patalano	Cognition	Decision making, judgment, reasoning, planning, and categorization; numeracy and decision making; decision deferral and indecisiveness.
Scott Plous	Social	Prejudice and discrimination; ethical issues relating to animals and the environment; action teaching; the use of information technology for social change.
Patricia M. Rodriguez Mosquera (fall sabbatical)	Cultural	Cultural and social influences on emotions; the psychology of honor and social image; emotions in the context of insult and devaluation; ethnicity; culture and gender; cultural values.
Mike Robinson	Behavioral Neuroscience	Using animal models to investigate risky decision-making and desire in gambling, drug addiction and diet-induced obesity.
Charles Sanislow	Psychopathology, Personality, Clinical Neuroscience	Assessment and diagnosis, cognitive and neural mechanisms of psychopathology.
Anna Shusterman (year leave)	Developmental	Language and conceptual development; language and thought; spatial and numerical reasoning, bridging research and practice; early childhood.
Robert Steele	Social, Personality, Psychopathology	Cultural psychology (race, class and gender); modern myth.
Steven Stemler	Educational, Quantitative	Educational psychology, assessment of creativity, cultural competence, ethical reasoning, and social intelligence.
Royette Tavernier	Developmental	Sleep and psychosocial adjustment among adolescents and emerging adults; sleep in relation to academics, emotional wellbeing, interpersonal relationships and technology use.
H. Shellae Versey (spring sabbatical)	Health, Developmental, Community	Aging and adult development, health psychology, intersectionality. Place and health.
Clara Wilkins (year leave)	Social	Prejudice, stereotyping and the self; perceptions of anti-White bias; variation in minorities' physical appearance.

Facilities and Resources

Research facilities in the department include active, well-equipped laboratories for the study of behavioral neuroscience, child development, human cognition, cultural psychology, psycholinguistics, and social psychology. There are substantial library resources on campus totaling over a million volumes. Campus and departmental computing facilities are readily available. A colloquium series also affords students an opportunity to hear and meet informally with speakers from around the country.

Combined Degree

Students enrolled in this program, upon successful completion of the degree requirements, receive a BA after three/four years and an MA at the end of the additional year. From the perspective of the University, students are considered undergraduates during their first year of the program (the senior undergraduate year) and become graduate students in their second year of the program. However, because this is a combined degree program, in order to complete the two degrees, the student must submit a carefully devised and integrated study plan for the two years of the program at the time of application to the program. *Note that certain requirements of the Psychology BA/MA program differ from requirements of BA/MA programs in other departments at Wesleyan University. A detailed description of the BA/MA program in Psychology follows.*

How the Psychology Department's Graduate Committee Assess Applications to the BA/MA program

The Psychology Department's Graduate Committee will evaluate applicants' potential to successfully graduate from the BA/MA program in Psychology. To assess this potential, the committee will take into consideration the following aspects of applications:

- Strong academic record.
- Evidence of advanced academic coursework.
- Evidence of substantive research experience.
- Motivation to conduct independent research.
- Motivation to work collaboratively with the BA/MA mentor.
- Clarity and quality of the proposed research program.

Mentor Relationship

The BA/MA program involves a close working relationship between a student and a faculty mentor. *Before applying to the program, a student must have identified a faculty mentor in the Psychology Department who has agreed to direct the candidate's two-year BA/MA research.* Once a student has been admitted to the program, this mentor will officially become the student's graduate advisor. The student should seek advice from the advisor regarding course selection and program of research. Any questions or problems that cannot be resolved by the faculty advisor should be brought to the attention of the Graduate Program Committee. The student may only change advisors in consultation with the old advisor, the new advisor, and the Graduate Program Committee.

Credits and Course Requirements for a BA/MA in Psychology

In the BA/MA program, the MA degree requires a minimum of 6 credits in addition to the 32 needed for the BA degree. These 6 credits should be distributed as follows:

- **PSYC 549 & 550:** Thesis Research/Advanced Research Seminar (2 credits; one credit per term of second year).
- **Four credits for advanced coursework:** Any other graduate tutorials (PSYC 501/502, 503/504, 511/512; these can be taken during the undergraduate or graduate year), undergraduate tutorials taken for graduate credit (specifically, 401/402, 411/412, or 421/422; these can be taken only during the undergraduate year), undergraduate non-tutorial courses in any department (usually 200- or 300-level courses) taken for graduate credit, or graduate seminars. **No more than two of these four credits may come from tutorials; teaching assistantships of any kind may not be used for graduate credit.**

In order for any course to be counted towards the graduate degree, the following conditions must be met. First, **it must not have been counted towards the undergraduate Psychology major as declared on the Major Certification Form or towards any Wesleyan undergraduate graduation requirements.** Second, it must be taken for graduate credit (see later discussion). And third, a grade of a B- or better must be earned in the course. Courses taken Pass/Fail cannot be counted towards the degree. Finally, the course needs to be related to the MA thesis' research.

Because students are ordinarily still earning BA credits in their first year of the program (the undergraduate year), typical schedules have most credits being earned during the second year (the graduate year). No more than *two* courses may be taken for graduate credit during the first year of the program (the undergraduate year). Two sample plans of study are shown at the end of this document.

Students may elect, but are *not* required, to take the Graduate Pedagogy course (PSYC 500) coordinated through the University's Office of Graduate Student Services (OGSS) for .5 credits. Furthermore, psychology students may choose to attend a one-time three-hour pedagogy session at the start of their graduate year (see OGSS for date and time).

At the beginning of *each* of the four semesters of the program (by the end of the third week of classes), a Graduate Course Verification Form (available at <http://www.wesleyan.edu/psyc/about/BA-MA.html>) must be submitted to the advisor, listing the courses being taken for graduate credit that semester (only if they are undergraduate courses being taken for graduate credit). Each course must be approved by the course instructor and by the student's advisor. The signature of the course instructor indicates that he or she is informed that the course is being taken for graduate credit and is aware that he or she may wish to impose more rigorous coursework or more stringent grading standards on the student in exchange for the graduate credit. Any graduate requirements must be negotiated by the instructor and the student at the beginning of the course. The signature of the graduate advisor indicates that these courses have been approved towards the MA requirements.

Additionally, after receiving all appropriate approvals on the Major Certification Form, the student is responsible for reviewing and discussing this with his or her advisor.

Research, Thesis, and Other Requirements

A major expectation of this program is that students will spend at least 20 hours per week engaged in research. The research experience will culminate with an MA thesis demonstrating a student's original contribution to knowledge, which the student will carry out in partial fulfillment of the degree requirements. Many students will choose not to write an undergraduate honor's thesis during their last undergraduate year because they will be writing this more substantial MA thesis during their graduate year. While there is no prohibition against writing an undergraduate thesis should the student wish to do so, it cannot substitute in any way for the student submitting an MA thesis in their graduate year.

The research that you will be conducting for your MA thesis needs to receive ethics approval from either the *Psychology Ethics Committee* or the *University Institutional Review Board (IRB)*. Ethics approval is required prior to initiating data collection for your research. If your proposed research poses minimal or no risk to participants, does not involve vulnerable populations, or does not include the collection of sensitive data, then you may submit a protocol for your proposed research to the *Psychology Ethics Committee* (via Cathy Race). For information on what you will need to submit to receive approval from this committee please visit [Psychology Ethic Committee Guide](#) If you plan to conduct higher risk research, study vulnerable populations, collect sensitive data, or if your research involves other complications, then you are required to submit your protocol to the [University IRB](#).

Thesis

Work on the MA thesis should progress as follows under the guidance of the faculty advisor.

First Year. By the first week in April of the first year of the program (the senior undergraduate year), an MA thesis committee must be established and must include the advisor and two or more additional faculty (the student must submit the Establishment of Thesis Committee Form to the faculty advisor by this date; this form is available at <http://www.wesleyan.edu/psyc/about/BA-MA.html>). Both the advisor and at least one of the additional faculty members must be in Psychology. By the first week of May, the student must set the date for the committee meeting to discuss and approve the proposal (Scheduling of Thesis Proposal Meeting Form submitted to the advisor; this form is available at <http://www.wesleyan.edu/psyc/about/BA-MA.html>). The thesis proposal should be given to the committee at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting. While the date must be agreed upon by the first week of May, the actual meeting may be held anytime before the end of June as long as the thesis proposal is approved by the committee by the end of June (student should take the Thesis Proposal Approval Form to the thesis proposal meeting, and must return it and a copy of the proposal to the faculty advisor by the end of June; this form is also available at <http://www.wesleyan.edu/psyc/about/BA-MA.html>).

Second Year. During the second year of the program, the student must complete the thesis. Unlike most other rules and requirements of the program, the rules governing the completion of an MA thesis are largely determined by the University's OGSS. The student needs to complete an Oral Exam Schedule Date form and submit this form to OGSS in April. The exact date on which this form needs to be submitted to OGSS is posted in the MA Exit Packet. A copy of the Oral Exam Schedule Date form should be turned in to the faculty advisor. A variety of other forms must also be obtained from and returned directly to the University's OGSS. All forms are included in the MA Exit Packet that can be found at <http://www.wesleyan.edu/grad/academics/grad-requirements.html>

The **final copy** of the written thesis should be given to committee members by the student at least two weeks before the oral defense date; specific timing is up to the student's committee.

Oral Defense. The oral defense/examination must be held during the oral exam period designated by the OGSS. This period is usually 3.5 weeks long and begins in mid-April and ends the first week of May. The specific dates for the beginning and end of the oral exam period are posted on the University's Academic Calendar as well as in the MA Exit packet. The student should bring to the oral defense two forms required by the OGSS: the Oral Examination Form and an Approval of Thesis Form to be filled out by committee members.

The exact format of the defense has varied in the psychology department. You and your advisor should decide a format that works for you and your research. The basic flow is:

You give a talk presenting your research.

- The length (somewhere between 15 and 45 minutes) is negotiable.
- Open (to your friends, faculty, public) or closed (just your committee) is also negotiable.
- Open question period after the talk.
 - You leave the room while the committee discusses.
 - You return to the room to receive your grade, feedback, and (assuming things have gone as planned) congratulations.
 - Your committee will let you know what revisions or corrections **MUST BE MADE** in order for the thesis to be complete and ready for submission.

You will receive separate grades for your written thesis and oral defense. These do not go on your transcript. They do stay in your file. You may decide, at some point in the future, to authorize someone (e.g., another graduate program) to find out your grade.

Exit Interview

An exit interview will be scheduled with the OGSS following receipt of forms and the scheduling of the oral defense. It takes place 48 weekday hours after the oral defense. The forms completed at the defense are due at this appointment. The OGSS has a number of formatting guidelines for preparation of the thesis; these guidelines and exit paperwork are part of the MA Exit Packet that can be found at <http://www.wesleyan.edu/grad/academics/grad-requirements.html>. Copies of the thesis should be corrected and perfect at this time, and must be formatted according to the guidelines. Submission of thesis is now done electronically through

the process in the exit packet. The student should ask their advisor if s/he would like a copy of their thesis to keep in the lab, for other students to use as reference.

Evaluation and Review

An evaluation of BA/MA students is conducted by the Psychology Graduate Faculty Committee in the spring term of each year of the program. Maintaining “good standing” in the program is contingent on obtaining at least a B- in each course being applied towards the MA, the meeting of all above requirements (except in extenuating circumstances as determined by the Committee), as well as majority approval of the department faculty. A student who is not in good standing can be asked to leave the program at the discretion of the Psychology Graduate Faculty Committee.

Graduate Council

The BA/MA program is under the administrative supervision of the University-wide Graduate Council, which monitors the progress of all graduate students towards completion of degree requirements. The University’s OGSS maintains a list of those enrolled in the program and administers the academic record of BA/MA students during their graduate year of the program.

Tuition

Wesleyan does not charge tuition for the second year of the program. Students who continue beyond two semesters of the MA in order to complete the thesis are charged \$250 per semester continuation fee. Students are not allowed to continue coursework beyond the two semesters of the MA.

Financial Support

BA/MA students receive no financial compensation for teaching apprenticeships, and credits for serving as a teaching apprentice are not counted towards the MA degree. The university provides tuition remission in the second year of the program. In addition, students can apply for a meal plan stipend for the second year of the program (i.e., the two semesters of MA work). The meal plan is only available to students who have completed the BA requirements and received Wesleyan grant aid during the final year of the BA program. The meal plan stipend provides the all points plan free of charge for the second year of the program. The stipend is not available in the summer. Although students who receive the meal plan stipend are not eligible to receive further Wesleyan aid, they are allowed to (1) participate in the Middletown Cash program, and (2) find financial support either from research grant funds or serving as teaching assistants during the second year of the program.

Some students in their second year of the BA/MA program may also be able to find support from other sources, such as a faculty member’s research grant funds. Because students are not supported during the summer between the two years of the program, they are not required to be

on campus at this time. However, every effort should be made by both the advisor and the student to facilitate progress during the summer.

Limited funds are also available to help with graduate student research needs (e.g., equipment, travel, participant payments). Students needing funds may make requests to the department through their faculty advisors.

Student Loans

Technically speaking, students graduate with their class and then become a student again in September of their second year of the BA/MA program. Students with loans should place a call to Barbara Schukoske in the OGSS and arrange to have the student loan companies notified that they are continuing as students if they wish to defer repayment until after the MA is completed.

Health Insurance

Student status can also affect your health insurance. Please be proactive about finding out about this as individual circumstances and general policies change from year to year.

Housing

BA/MA students are eligible to apply for Wesleyan graduate student housing. Graduate student housing generally becomes available in late August. For more information please see <http://www.wesleyan.edu/grad/degree-programs/ba-ma.html>

Application

Potential applicants are encouraged to declare their interest in the program to potential advisors as early as the sophomore year, but application to and acceptance into the program occurs at the end of the junior year or the first semester of the senior year (through the petition process stated above). The admission process is administered by a committee of the Graduate Council. Admission to this program is based on recommendations made to the Graduate Council by the Psychology Department, the academic records of each applicant, and the availability of limited BA/MA slots.

Throughout the program, please submit a copy of all paperwork records to the faculty advisor, to assist in communication between the department and OGSS.

BA/MA Timeline

Note: For additional dates of deadlines, please see the University's Academic Calendar

First year of the BA/MA program

- At the beginning of *each* semester (by the end of the third week of classes)– fill out Graduate Course Verification Form
- September – Complete Major Certification Form in e-portfolio
- October – Meet with someone in the Wesleyan Career Center
- First week in April – Committee of three faculty members established.
Fill out the Establishment of Thesis Committee Form
- First week in May – Deadline for setting a date for thesis proposal meeting.
Fill out the Scheduling of Thesis Proposal Meeting Form (The thesis proposal should be given to the committee at least two weeks before the scheduled meeting)
- Mid-May – Undergraduate commencement
- June 30th – Deadline for Thesis Proposal Approval Form

Second year of the BA/MA program

- At the beginning of *each* semester (by the end of the third week of classes)– fill out Graduate Course Verification Form
- April – Submit to Barbara Schukoske in the OGSS the following forms (many, but not all of these forms are now electronic. For a complete list of required forms both paper and electronic and specific submission dates to OGSS please consult the MA Exit packet):
 - Approved Final Title
 - Participation in Commencement
 - Degree Verification
 - Full legal name for diploma
 - Response Form for Oral Defense/Examination
- Mid April till first week of May– Oral defense/examination takes place. The committee should receive thesis at least two weeks before oral defense's date)
- 48 Hours after Oral Defense – Exit Interview. Bring the following to the interview:
 1. Oral Examination Form
 2. Approval of Thesis Form
- Mid-May – Commencement for MA Degree

Sample Plans of Study

Note: The *italicized* items are fixed and may not be moved or replaced.

First Year, Fall Term

No graduate credits earned

First Year, Spring Term

Other Elective Course – 1 credit

Second Year, Fall Term

Advanced Research, Graduate (PSYC 549) – 1 credit

Individual Tutorial for Graduate Student (PSYC 501) – 1 credit

Second Year, Spring Term

Advanced Research, Graduate (PSYC 550) – 1 credit

Individual Tutorial for Graduate Students (PSYC 502) – 1 credit

Other Elective Course – 1 credit

First Year, Fall Term

Other Elective Course – 1 credit

First Year, Spring Term

Other Elective Course – 1 credit

Second Year, Fall Term

Advanced Research, Graduate (PSYC 549) – 1 credit

Individual Tutorial for Graduate Students (PSYC 501) – 1 credit

Second Year, Spring Term

Advanced Research, Graduate (PSYC 550) – 1 credit

Individual Tutorial for Graduate Students (PSYC 502) – 1 credit

Online Information and Resources

Office of Graduate Student Services – BA/MA Program and all necessary information

<http://www.wesleyan.edu/grad/degree-programs/ba-ma.html>

Psychology Department BA/MA information

<http://www.wesleyan.edu/psyc/about/BA-MA.html>

Gordon Career Center

<http://www.wesleyan.edu/careercenter/>

University's Academic Calendar

<http://events.wesleyan.edu/f?p=173:9:0::NO::>