MA IN PSYCHOLOGY (APPLIED BEHAVIOR ANALYSIS)

Total units required for MA: 30

Program Description
The Master of Arts program in Psychology is designed to provide specialized education in the field of psychology. With a MA in Psychology, one can qualify for positions similar to those associated with a BA, though at a higher level of responsibility. Advisors play an active role in the planning process, and students are strongly encouraged to consult with faculty on a continual and intensive basis as soon as they begin their studies in the program. MA students can prepare for doctoral study in any area of Psychology or specialize in areas such as Applied Behavior Analysis or Industrial-Organizational Psychology. The Graduate Brochure contains the department application procedures, including GRE requirements and the departmental application form.

Although the program is based on a core set of requirements, the structure of the program allows for flexibility. While much material is covered in regular course offerings, the Department recognizes that specialized study and the development of certain types of skills must take place on a one-to-one student-instructor basis. This includes research activities in the laboratory, field, or library; teaching activities; and volunteer work in community mental health agencies, government agencies, schools, and/or businesses. Academic credit under individualized study or fieldwork designations is available for these purposes.

Applied behavior analysis (ABA) is the field of Psychology concerned with understanding the environmental variables that reliably influence human behavior, as well as developing procedures to modify socially significant behavior. The ABA program prepares students to work as behavior analysts in a variety of settings including schools and agencies providing services to individuals with disabilities. The ABA program coursework fulfills the requirements to sit for the national certification exam in Behavior Analysis (BCBA). Students should note that this degree option is also appropriate for those planning to enter doctoral programs in Applied Behavior Analysis, Experimental Analysis of Behavior, or Special Education.

Applied Behavior Analysis is a scientific approach aimed at understanding environmental variables that reliably influence socially significant behavior and developing behavior-change technologies based on this understanding. Applied Behavior Analysis procedures have been used in many areas including developmental disabilities, education, rehabilitation, community psychology, self-management, child management, and sports psychology. The program at Sacramento State prepares students to practice as M.A. level board certified behavior analysts, as well as enter doctoral (Ph.D.) programs in Applied Behavior Analysis or Experimental Analysis of Behavior. Our graduates are extremely marketable in California and are typically employed by school districts, private schools, or agencies providing services to individuals with learning, emotional, or developmental disabilities.

Research and Clinical Opportunities
Our research facilities include human and animal (rats) operant laboratories and research rooms for data collection with children and adults. We have also established research partnerships with different schools and agencies in the region.

Clinical training is also an integral part of our program. There are numerous funded internships and job opportunities for behavior analysis students in Sacramento.

Certification
The ABA option coursework should fulfill the new requirements to sit for the national certification exam in Behavior Analysis. For more information visit www.bacb.com.

Admission Requirements
Admission to graduate study in Psychology is selective. The Department equally weighs the candidate's overall grade point average (GPA) and scores on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). An overall GPA of 3.0 is recommended. When making admissions decisions, the Department takes into consideration the candidate's combined GPA and GRE score, letters of recommendation, previous (research and/or practical) experience, the candidate's interest in a particular faculty member's research agenda, and additional materials as required by each program option (ABA, General MA, and I/O).

Applicants are required to have completed upper division undergraduate psychology courses in statistics and research methods, with at least "C" grades in those courses, as well as a balanced and academically strong group of upper division courses covering at least five different core academic areas of psychology (e.g., biological, clinical, cognitive, developmental, social). The upper division psychological research methods/statistics requirement is met by PSYC 121 and PSYC 102 taken at Sacramento State, or their equivalents at other universities. Upper division research methods/statistics courses from other four-year universities must be reviewed and approved for equivalency by the Department’s Graduate Coordinator.

Please visit www.csus.edu/psyc/grad-students/graduate-program-dev.html for information on each option's additional requirements.

Admission Procedures
All applicants, including Sacramento State graduates, must apply to both the University and the Psychology Department. Please submit the following to the Sacramento State Office of Graduate Studies:

- an application for admission—via CalState Apply (https://www2.calstate.edu/apply)
- two sets of official transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, other than Sacramento State, should be sent to:

  California State University, Sacramento
  Office of Graduate Studies
  River Front Center 215
  6000 J Street
  Sacramento, CA 95819-6112

- Official Graduate Records Exam (GRE) scores (be aware that it takes approximately six weeks from the test date for scores to be forwarded); for more admissions information and application deadlines please visit http://www.csus.edu/gradstudies

At the same time, each applicant must file on-line with the Psychology Department:
• a completed application form;
• one set of unofficial transcripts from all colleges and universities attended, including Sacramento State transcripts;
• unofficial copies of the General GRE scores*;
• three letters of recommendation, from individuals who can evaluate the applicant’s potential for successful graduate study. At least two letters from faculty are preferred. See application brochure for link—available from www.csus.edu/psyc/grad-students/graduate-program-dev.html;
• additional materials, as required by each specific option (General MA, ABA and I/O).

*The General GRE must have been taken by the application deadline.

**Minimum Units and Grade Requirement for the Degree**
Units required for the MA: 34-36

Minimum Cumulative GPA: 3.0. All units must be completed with a grade of "B" or better.

**Advancement to Candidacy**
Each student must file an application for Advancement to Candidacy, indicating a proposed program of graduate study. This procedure should begin as soon as the classified graduate student has:

• removed any deficiencies in admission requirements;
• completed at least 12 units of 200-level courses in the graduate program with a minimum 3.0 GPA;
• selected a Thesis or Project committee;
• obtained the committee’s approval of a proposal for the thesis or project (as indicated by committee members’ signatures on the Department’s thesis/project approval form); and
• taken the Writing Placement for Graduate Students (WPG) or taken a Graduate Writing Intensive (GWI) course in their discipline within the first two semesters of coursework at California State University, Sacramento or secured approval for a WPG waiver.

The student will complete the Advancement to Candidacy form after planning a degree program in consultation with a Psychology advisor and members of the student’s thesis/project committee. The completed form is then returned to the Office of Graduate Studies for approval.

**Program Requirements**

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<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PSYC 200</td>
<td>Methods in Empirical Psychology ✔️</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 202</td>
<td>Survey of Contemporary Statistical Methods in Psychological Research</td>
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<td>PSYC 271</td>
<td>Advanced Applied Behavior Analysis</td>
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<td>PSYC 272</td>
<td>Research Methods in Behavior Analysis</td>
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<td>PSYC 274</td>
<td>Theoretical Foundations of Behavior Analysis</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>PSYC 281</td>
<td>Advanced Experimental Analysis of Behavior</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 284</td>
<td>Assessment and Treatment of Behavior Problems</td>
<td>4</td>
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<td>PSYC 242</td>
<td>Seminar in Learning and Behavior</td>
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<td>PSYC 275</td>
<td>Applied Behavior Analysis in the Workplace</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC 291</td>
<td>Professional Issues in Behavior Analysis</td>
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<td>PSYC 294</td>
<td>Cooperative Research</td>
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**Culminating Experience (4-6 Units)**

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<td>PSYC 500B</td>
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<td>Total Units</td>
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¹ Students must enroll in PSYC 500B if thesis/project is not satisfactorily completed while enrolled in PSYC 500A.