PSYCHOLOGY - DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (PHD)

The Department of Psychology and Neuroscience at the University of Colorado Boulder offers a PhD degree with five subplans:

- Behavioral, Psychiatric and Statistical Genetics
- Behavioral Neuroscience
- Clinical Psychology
- Cognitive Psychology/Cognitive Neuroscience
- Social Psychology

For detailed information about each field of study, visit the department's Graduate Program Subplans (http://www.colorado.edu/psych-neuro/graduate-programs/graduate-program-areas/) webpage.

Note: The department does not offer a terminal master's degree program.

Requirements

Students are admitted into one of five doctoral subplans in psychology and neuroscience. Throughout the course of study, students must demonstrate that they are proficient in a broad subject of learning and that they can critically evaluate work in their chosen field. Students must also show the ability to work independently in their research domain and must make an original contribution of significance to the advancement of knowledge.

In the first year of graduate study, there is a first-year research requirement that starts the student on an active program of research. First-year graduate students typically enroll in a two-semester graduate statistical sequence and introductory coursework. The student also must enroll in a sequence of courses designed to give exposure to a breadth of research topics and methods. In later years, a variety of advanced research seminars are taught to provide students with a depth of knowledge within their areas of interest.

Students may choose to complete a master's degree (MA) as they work toward the PhD based on research and coursework completed within their first 2-3 years. Before admission to candidacy for the PhD degree, the student must pass a comprehensive examination in the field of concentration and related fields. This examination tests the student's mastery of a broad field of knowledge, not merely the formal coursework completed. Upon completing the comprehensives, students engage in the dissertation research, culminating in a public oral defense.

Learning Outcomes

By the completion of the program, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of major theories, research findings and methodological approaches in at least one of the following content areas within psychology and neuroscience: (a) behavioral neuroscience, (b) behavioral, psychiatric and statistical genetics, (c) clinical psychology, (d) cognitive psychology and cognitive neuroscience and (e) social psychology. (Broad Disciplinary Knowledge)
- Synthesize and critically evaluate the scientific literature and research findings to develop compelling questions related to their primary area of specialization. (Scientific Inquiry and Critical Evaluation Skills)
- Design, conduct and interpret original research that contributes significantly to the advancement of knowledge in their area of specialization. (Independent Research Proficiency)
- Apply statistical and analytical methods to address complex research questions in psychological and neuroscientific research. (Quantitative Expertise)
- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication of their research findings. (Scientific Communication)