

Information about Graduate Study in the Department of Psychology University of Nevada, Reno

THE UNIVERSITY

The University of Nevada, Reno is a land-grant institution, established in 1864. It has 11 schools and colleges and offers three professional degrees, more than 70 majors for an undergraduate degree, 58 master's degree programs, 16 doctoral programs, and a four-year medical school.

The University's 12,500 students come from all 50 states and 49 foreign countries. The 200-acre main campus, located minutes from downtown Reno, features old, traditional buildings, a tree-lined Quad-angle and Manzanita Lake, and ultra-modern new buildings and facilities.

The University of Nevada, Reno is fully accredited by the Northwest Association of Schools and Colleges, the official accrediting agency of most Western States.

THE REGION

The campus is located just four blocks north of Reno's downtown banking and business district. Reno and Sparks, adjacent cities of approximately 240,000 are bounded on the west by the majestic Sierra Nevada and on the east by the rolling basin and range province. There are four distinct seasons in this cool, dry climate where the sun shines 307 days a year.

The area is noted for its variety of recreational opportunities, which include sailing, camping, hiking, fishing and sightseeing. Within an hour's drive of the campus, for example, are Lake Tahoe in the high Sierra, and Pyramid Lake, a unique prehistoric desert sea. Also within an hour's drive are a number of nationally known ski areas, including Squaw Valley, site of the 1960 Winter Olympics. Other scenic attractions include Virginia City, setting of one of the West's richest mining bonanzas; Genoa, the state's first pioneer settlement; and Carson City, the state capital.

Nevada is one of the fastest growing states in the nation. Its commitment to economic diversification in recent years has spurred a growth in high technology, industry and warehousing, and led several major corporations to establish corporate headquarters in the area. Both full-time and part-time employment is usually available in the area.

Mileage from Reno to:

Carson City, Nevada.....	30
Portland, Oregon.....	539
Boise, Idaho.....	420
Salt Lake City, Utah.....	520
Las Vegas, Nevada.....	443
Phoenix, Arizona.....	730
Los Angeles, California.....	470
San Francisco, California.....	226
Denver, Colorado.....	999

THE DEPARTMENT

The Psychology Department is part of the College of Liberal Arts, the largest academic unit at the University of Nevada, Reno. The Department is relatively small, thus providing considerable interaction between faculty and students, with close, informal working relationships. The various degree programs differ widely in emphases and orientations, making selection of the proper program a crucial step.

Baccalaureate degrees are offered in general psychology and social psychology. The Master of Arts degree is offered in general psychology, including a professional master's track in behavior analysis. Ph.D. programs are available in general psychology, with concentrations in experimental, behavior analysis, or clinical psychology, and in social psychology, and interdisciplinary program offered in conjunction with the Department of Sociology.

The Department has many faculty with national and international reputations. It also served years as the home base for the new American Psychological Society and its progenitor, the Assembly for Scientific and Applied Psychology. It currently houses the offices of the Association of Applied and Preventive Psychology.

THE AREAS OF STUDY

Clinical Psychology

The clinical psychology program follows a clinical scientist model, which blends research training with the acquisition of clinical skills. It is fully accredited by the American Psychological Association, Committee on Accreditation, 750 First Street NE, Washington, D.C., 20002-4242.

The program contains several components: training in basic psychology, didactic training in clinical psychology, practicum training, and research training. An effort is made to expose students to a wide variety of clinical populations and settings: adults, children, families, groups, and communities; inpatient and outpatient; advantaged and disadvantaged. Didactic clinical training includes problems and intervention with adults and children, community psychology, racial and cultural differences, assessment and related courses. The theoretical orientations of the faculty include behavioral and systems perspectives. The predominant orientation is behavior analytic/contextualistic. The program is characterized by its commitment to research and scholarship that grapples with serious clinical, theoretical, and philosophical issues. Students truly committed to both aspects of clinical training and who wish to take a scientific approach regardless of work setting, do best in the program.

In order that students may integrate didactic with practical training, direct clinical work begins in the second semester in the Psychological Services Center (PSC), an in-house clinic. Students work for 2 ½ years in the PSC, supervised by the core clinical faculty. Students normally complete a half-time externship in the Reno area during their fourth year, and a full-time internship at a facility approved by the American Psychological Association their fifth year.

Research training also begins during the first year. In addition to general participation with a research team, research training includes completion of a master's thesis (or for those not desiring an M.A. on the way to a Ph.D., a pre-doctoral research project), and a doctoral dissertation.

The program is demanding in its aspiration and workload, but it attempts to decrease unhealthy competition between students and to foster individual growth. The relationship between faculty and students is friendly and collegial. Attrition rates are low (under ten percent).

Approximately 120 applications are received each year for six or seven slots. Applications are screened by a student and faculty committee on the basis of Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, academic grades, previous applied and research experiences, letters of recommendation, the student's statement of interest, and the fit between the student's goals and the program. Approximately twenty candidates are invited to a daylong interview on campus one Saturday in March. Most applicants invited to interview have combined verbal and quantitative GRE scores in excess of 1100 and a GPA of B+ or better. A list of final acceptance and alternates is then developed by the Admissions Committee.

General Experimental Psychology

The experimental psychology program has an illustrious history, is distinguished presently, and has a promising future. Among the best-known research projects is the well-know "Washoe" project conducted and directed by Allen

and Beatrix Gardner in which communication with cross-fostered chimpanzees was established through the use of American Sign Language.

Currently, in addition to the renowned work of the Gardner's, the program has specialists in memory and speech, statistics, memory, visual cognition, sensation and perception, developmental psychology, conditioning and learning, physiological psychology, comparative psychology, and language. The program maintains close working relations with other units of the University including the Departments of Biology, Anthropology and Computer Sciences, and the Medical School.

The program is research oriented, with the emphasis on laboratory experience. The graduate curriculum has a variety of courses, seminars, research practica, and independent study. Because the program is relatively small (only about 5 students are admitted each year) it is possible to work closely with the faculty in an apprentice-collegial atmosphere.

During the first two years, graduate students complete a core program in statistics, perception, conditioning, cognition, comparative psychology, physiological psychology, and developmental psychology. Students must take qualifying examinations in these areas and comprehensive examinations in their declared specialties.

Behavior Analysis

Behavior Analysis is a sub-field within psychology emphasizing the study of acts in the historical situational contexts. It has technological, methodological, theoretical, and philosophical aspects. It includes basic work in animal and human learning, and applied extensions of this work.

The Department has a long tradition in behavior analysis. The journal **Behaviorism** was founded here, for example. The faculty includes a former president of Division 25 of the APA (Experimental Analysis of Behavior), and a former member of the board of the Association for Behavior Analysis, and one of the world's experts in behavioral approaches to child development. The journal **The Interbehaviorist** is currently edited here.

Graduates teach and do research on basic and applied behavioral processes. Graduates also work in industry as system-level consultants, addressing the behavioral side of business (for example establishing worker motivation programs). They are administrators or consultants for government programs in health or human services. They work in institutional settings such as prisons or mental retardation facilities in the role of a consultant, program developer, program manager, or program evaluator. A number of Nevada state agencies hire doctoral and master's level behavior analysts.

Students in the Behavioral Analysis doctoral area take a basic core, conduct research, and take several courses in behavioral psychology. They also take applied courses in behavioral systems assessment, behavioral management and consultation, and organizational behavior management. During their first three years students participate in applied practica within the program and at local state agencies (for example, an intermediate care facility for the developmentally disabled).

The professional master's in Behavior Analysis is a terminal degree with less emphasis on research and core areas outside of behavioral psychology. Students admitted to the M.A. program do not continue on the Ph.D. degree. Those in the Ph.D. program may receive an M.A. on the way to their degree, but the requirements for this M.A. differ from the in the M.A. program.

HOW TO APPLY

General Requirements

Applicants must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, and must have the following:

1. Credit in a laboratory course in experimental psychology and a course in statistics. (Students in the clinical psychology program must also have a course in abnormal psychology and a course in the theories of personality.)
2. An overall GPA of 3.0 for four years of undergraduate credit.
3. Recommendations from former instructors to the effect that the student is capable of doing graduate study at an acceptable level of performance.

In instances where a student is deficient in the above requirements, it is feasible to make up such deficiencies before entering the program.

Application Procedures

The following should be submitted to the University of Nevada, Reno Graduate School:

1. Completed application for admission and a \$60, non-refundable application fee made payable to "Board of Regents."
2. Two official transcripts from each college or university attended.
3. Graduate Record Examination (GRE) aptitude scores and advanced test scores in psychology. Request that the Educational Testing Service send these scores directly to the Graduate School. For further information, contact: Graduate School, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89557, phone (775)784-6869.

Note that the Department also requires that some materials be sent to it directly or in duplicate (see application forms).

Deadlines for Applications

Applications for experimental are accepted until April 1 for the following fall semester, and November 2 for the following spring semester for experimental psychology only (extensions are sometimes made). Applications for behavior analysis are due January 1 for the following fall semester. Assistantships are normally awarded by April 15.

Applications for the clinical psychology program are accepted until January 1 for the following fall semester, but the entire packet must be sent in at one time. Graduate Record Examinations (GRE) should be taken in the fall to ensure a timely arrival of the scores. The top applicants will be invited to a Saturday "interview day" in March. Initial offers are made by April 1.

Fees and Financial Aid

Assistantships, fellowships and other forms of aid are available. Some assistantships pay salary plus grants, which cover most of the tuition and fees. Graduate students must apply for Work Study their first year in residence to be considered for assistantships (foreign students excepted). Applicants seeking financial assistance should submit an ACT Family Financial Statement to the Office of Student Financial Services no later than February 15 for the following fall semester. The University of Nevada, Reno also accepts a College Scholarship Service (CSS) needs analysis for financial aid applications.

For further information or application forms, contact: Student Financial Services, University of Nevada, Reno, Nevada 89557, and (775) 784-4666.