



**Graduate Student
Guide
for the
Master's Degree
in
Experimental**

Fall 2008 EDITION

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615-898-2706
Psychology: <http://www.mtsu.edu/~psych>
Experimental Psychology:

Class Schedule book:
www.mtsu.edu/~records/books.html

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Psychology Department
Jones Hall Room 103
(615) 898-2706

Facilities in the psychology department include four computer laboratories, remote access to the university computing facility, animal laboratories, standard apparatus for human and animal research, a library of many standardized psychological tests, and laboratories with 1-way mirrors and videotaping equipment.

The microcomputer labs in Peck Hall, Rooms 204 and 205, and university computer labs are available for student use in the Business School, Learning Resource Center, and the Library. Students need to familiarize themselves with the hours the labs are available to them as soon as possible. (These may change from semester to semester.) Types of software on these computers includes word processing (e.g., Word), spreadsheet (e.g., Excel), presentation (e.g., PowerPoint), data analysis (e.g., SPSS, SAS), and others.

PsycINFO access is available in through the internet <http://www.mtsu.edu/~library/psych.html>). Students unfamiliar with PsycINFO would benefit from learning how to use this. Personnel at the library reference desk should be able to show you how to use it and other library resources.

Mission of the Experimental Program

The goal of the Experimental emphasis in psychology is to prepare the student to be a research psychologist. The primary application is entry into a Ph.D. program in psychology. However, many industries and clinical settings are also interested in students with the analytic and statistical skills of a research psychologist.

Classes

A highly recommended sequence of courses has been developed, but a different sequence may be recommended on a case-by-case basis (for example, if you are part-time or have numerous prerequisites). Some courses are prerequisites for other courses and should be taken early in your program of study. Your advisor will be able to help you develop your plan of study.

Graduate statistics courses should be taken in your first year to aid in your understanding of advanced topics and to assist you in designing and completing your thesis. If it has been some time since you have taken statistics or if you are unsure of your statistics skills, then you may consider taking or auditing the undergraduate statistics course before you begin the graduate sequence.

It is recommended that you maintain notebooks and retain textbooks from all of your required classes, including the statistics courses, to aid you in studying for the comprehensive exam and as the beginning of your professional library.

Administrative Points

Students should familiarize themselves with the Graduate Catalog at the time of admission into the program. Additionally, students need to ensure that they are officially admitted into the program and have filed a Candidacy Form (program of study) with the Office of Graduate Studies by the end of their first year. While you may discuss your program of study with any faculty member, it must be formally approved by your graduate advisor and the Coordinator of the Experimental Program, Dr. Stephen Schmidt. Once your Candidacy Form has been filed, any changes must be approved by the Program Coordinator and filed with the Office of Graduate Studies (changes to the Candidacy Form).

If you were admitted to the program conditionally, you need to make sure that your program of study and your grades fulfill all the conditions of your admission. Conditionally admitted students are advised to take no more than twelve hours a semester. Students with weak quantitative skills should seriously consider taking PSY 3020 in their first semester before taking the graduate statistics sequence.

Registering for classes and paying your fees:

Information on how to register for classes and pay fees is outlined each semester in an MTSU schedule book available from the Scheduling Center or <http://www.mtsu.edu/pipelinemt>.

Summary of Procedures for Graduate Students:

<i>Procedure</i>	<i>Under Direction of</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
Admission to a Degree Program	Dept./Graduate Office	By completion of 9 hours
Candidacy Form	Dept./Graduate Office	By completion of 24 hours
Change in Candidacy Form	Dept./Graduate Office	Every time a change occurs
Intent to Graduate	Graduate Office	First week of semester
Graduate Fees	Business Office/	Dates scheduled each semester
Comprehensive Exams	Dept./Graduate Office	TBA/Exams usually given 1st week of April, July, October
Thesis	Dept./Graduate office	TBA/usually about mid-term

Academic Common Market

The Academic Common Market allows out-of-state students who are admitted to approved academic programs to pay in-state tuition while attending MTSU. The list of programs available through the ACM is updated by higher education representatives from participating states and is periodically subject to change. At the present time, the following Psychology Programs have been approved for ACM status:

PROGRAM PARTICIPATING STATES

ClinicalArkansas

Experimental Alabama

Industrial/Organizational..... West Virginia, & Alabama

In order to participate in the ACM:

- * A student must apply to MTSU and be accepted unconditionally.
- * Then, the student will provide their ACM home state coordinator with proof of acceptance and verification of the major field of study.
- * The ACM home state coordinator will then make a final decision regarding eligibility and notify MTSU in writing.
- * When the certificate of eligibility is received by MTSU, the student will be charged at the in-state tuition rate.

To retain in-state benefits:

- o The student must enroll continuously at MTSU for Fall and Spring semesters.
- o The student must remain in the approved ACM major.
- o The student must maintain a permanent address in the state certifying eligibility.

The Graduate Office will be putting this information, along with phone numbers for the state coordinators, on their web site (<http://www.mtsu.edu/~graduate>). They also plan to include a list of all approved programs when sending out requested materials, such as catalogs.

If you have questions or wish additional information regarding the Academic Common Market Program, please contact Anita Hermes.

Anita Hermes
Graduate Studies Office
615-898-5352
ahermes@mtsu.edu

Experimental Faculty & Areas of Interest

Richard H. Bauer, Ph.D., University of Washington, 1970. Neuroscience, neuropsychology, cognitive deficits.

Janet K. Belsky, Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1976. Clinical gerontology.

Michelle Boyer-Pennington, Ph.D., University of Florida, 1995. Child development, event memory in preschoolers.

Stuart E. Bernstein, Ph.D., Michigan State University, 1996. Cognitive Psychology, reading and spelling.

Thomas M. Brinthaupt, Ph.D., University of Pittsburgh, 1989. Social/personality, psychology of the self, group dynamics.

Teresa L. Davis, Ph.D., University of Florida, 1992. Child development, social cognitive development.

Sharon E. Guttman, Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 2003. Visual perception, cross-modal perception.

Donald Kendrick, Ph.D., Michigan State University, 1982. Experimental, animal learning and cognition, statistics.

William Langston, Ph.D., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1994. Text Comprehension, language.

Glenn E. Littlepage, Ph.D., Kansas State University, 1974. Social, group dynamics, group performance.

Cyrille L. Magne, Ph.D., University of Paul Cézanne, Marseille, France, 2005. Cognitive neuroscience, neural basis of speech perception, influence of musical training on language processing.

Alan D. Musicant, Ph.D., University of Chicago, 1982. Auditory processes pertaining to spatial perception and virtual sensory perception, biopsychology, experimental.

Dennis R. Papini, Ph.D., West Virginia University, 1984. Life-span developmental psychology (adolescent and adult development).

John Pennington, Ph.D., University of Florida, 1994. Social/Personality, Social judgment processes, identity regulation.

Greg W. Schmidt, Ph.D., University of California, Los Angeles, 1988. Social, close relationships, attribution.

Stephen R. Schmidt, Ph.D., Purdue University, 1980. Memory and cognitive processes.

Harold D. Whiteside, Ph.D. Oklahoma State University, 1973. Social, persuasion, sports psychology.

Advisors

When you enter the Experimental Psychology program you are automatically assigned an advisor based on your area of specialization.

Advisors are an important reference source for completing the experimental program. They can help you with your course selection, candidacy form preparation, and any other concerns or questions you might have about the program. It also is suggested that you talk with a number of faculty for “informal” advice throughout your time as a student.

To make an appointment with your advisor, simply call his or her office. To make sure your advisor is on-campus during a particular semester, call the Psychology Office (615) 898-2706.

Obtaining Your Master's Degree

Prerequisites

In order to receive your Master's Degree, you must demonstrate knowledge of the core areas of psychology by completing the following courses at either the undergraduate or graduate level prior to entering the Experimental Program, or during enrollment in the program (relevant courses offered at MTSU are listed in parentheses):

- a. research methods (PSY 3070 or 5070);
- b. social psychology or personality (PSY 2210, 3230/5230, 3590, 6020 or 6030);
- c. learning or cognition (PSY 4040, 4480/5480, or 6190);
- d. developmental (PSY 2300, 4190, 4210/5210, 4610/5610, 6120, 6130, 6410);
- e. brain and behavior, or sensation and perception (PSY 2190, 4030/5030, 4240/5240, or 4780/5780);
- f. statistics (PSY 3020).

Core Curriculum

Candidates for the Master's Degree must:

1. complete a total of 36 semester hours including at least 30 hours in graduate psychology courses. Only 30 percent of the total number of hours may be dually listed (5000 level meeting in conjunction with 4000 or 3000 level) courses;
2. complete PSY 6280, and 6290 (PSY 3020 or equivalent is a prerequisite for both PSY 6280 and 6290);
3. successfully write and orally present a written thesis evaluated by a committee of psychology faculty in conjunction with PSY 6640;
4. pass a written comprehensive examination prepared by the Experimental faculty (may be taken no more than twice).
5. complete the following Experimental Core Courses

PSY 5240	Behavioral Neuroscience
PSY 5420	Experimental Social
PSY 6120	Developmental Psychology: Child (or PSY 6130 if the student has already had a course in Child Psychology, e.g., PSY 4190)
PSY 6190	Advanced Cognitive Psychology
PSY 6600	Independent Research (3 hours total)
PSY 6615	Basic and Applied Research Methods in Psychology
PSY 6640	Thesis (3 hours total)
PSY 66??	Literature Review (3 hours total)
6. complete 6 hours of electives chosen with the approval of the student's advisor.

Candidacy Form

A candidacy form is an official record of your program of study. A graduate records analyst compares it to your transcript to make sure that you have met all of your requirements for graduation.

You must file a Candidacy Form prior to completing 24 hours of graduate course work. You may obtain a candidacy form from the psychology office (JH 103 or 211) or your advisor or use the form on the next page. The forms are already filled out except for electives. Your advisor can help you fill out your candidacy form. Once complete, both you and your advisor must sign it. Make a copy for yourself, then send it to the Graduate Office. They will send a copy to you and to your advisor.

If your program of study changes in any way, you must file a change of candidacy form with the Graduate School. You may get a change of candidacy form from the psychology office. Follow the same procedures as with the candidacy form.

Insert form

Thesis

About Your Thesis

A thesis is a research project that you develop, implement, and write up using the format of a standard empirical research study in psychology. It involves a literature review, a statement of hypotheses, use of standardized psychological tests or other measuring instruments, statistical analyses of the data, and writing your conclusions. The thesis must be written in APA style.

Deciding on a topic for your thesis can be done by researching areas you are interested in at the library. You can make the final decision by approaching those professors with whom you would like to work and finding out if they are interested in working on that topic with you (and have the time and the expertise to do so).

You sign up for variable credit (1-6 hours) when registering for thesis (PSY 6640). You must enroll for at least 1 credit hour of thesis each semester from the time you begin working on the proposal until you finish. You will receive either an "S" (satisfactory) or a "U" (unsatisfactory) grade for each semester you are registered. Keep in mind that it will probably take at least one calendar year to complete your thesis. You need 3 hours with a "S" to complete your thesis. Consult with your advisor before registering for thesis credits.

A few times each semester the Records Office sends out class rolls to each instructor requiring that they identify students who are not actually attending courses for which they are enrolled. The Department Chair then checks with the thesis chairs about the progress of their students. For financial aid purposes, it is important that you are putting in a commensurate amount of effort for the number of thesis credits for which you are enrolled. The bottom line is that if you are signed up for thesis credits, you need to have contact with your advisor on a regular basis and put in the number of hours that are commensurate with your thesis credits. If you sign up for thesis credits and do not meet with your advisor and/or do not put in the required amount of work, not only may you receive a "U" for thesis, but this may have negative implications for your financial aid. We urge you to consult with your thesis advisor about his/her expectations for the number of hours you need to work on your thesis each week.

Thesis Committee & Selection

You must select a thesis committee that consists of a Thesis Advisor, a Committee Member, and a Critical Reader. Your committee can be made up of anyone on the psychology faculty, but either the Advisor or the Committee Member must be a core Experimental Faculty Member. The Thesis Advisor is the person with whom you will work most closely. This person should have an interest in your topic and will give you direction and guidance from your thesis' inception to its final approval. The Committee Member also should have some interest in your topic, but is not as involved in the process as the Thesis Advisor. This person also provides advice and suggestions from beginning to end. The Critical Reader only makes suggestions for revisions or changes on the proposal and is no longer involved once the proposal is approved. It is important to choose faculty for your committee with whom you can easily work, and who are knowledgeable about your topic.

Thesis Timeline

The time needed to complete a thesis and each of its parts will vary depending on the complexity of the study, the form of data collection, and other variables. Plan on about one year of work.

Thesis Proposal

Plan on at least one semester for completing the proposal process. Although there are no formal deadlines for submitting a proposal, there are several factors to consider:

- IRB Review (downloadable forms at <http://www.mtsu.edu/~sponprog>):
During the regular academic year:
 - Expedited reviews generally are completed one week after submission.
 - Proposals for full review are considered once a month. Proposals are due two weeks before the meeting. Consult with your thesis chair or the website above to find out the exact dates for the semester for which you want to submit your proposal.

During the summer:

- It is best to have your proposal reviewed during the regular academic year.
- Obtaining IRB approval is less predictable in the summer and will generally take longer. The procedures for obtaining full review vary from summer to summer.

Note: If you are conducting research at another institution, that institution also will have to give approval. You need to take into account that each place has its own procedures and time for approval may vary.

- Allow at least one week from when your proposal is given to your chair or your committee, before planning to meet with your chair or committee.
- Faculty members have varying schedules in the summer and take their vacations at different times. Additionally, some faculty members are generally not on campus during the summer. Plan accordingly.
- Committees do not always approve a proposal at the first meeting.
- The library is not open as much over the various breaks.

Completion of Thesis

- Dates for the thesis to be submitted to the graduate office vary from semester to semester. Please consult the Graduate catalog for the exact dates. Generally the dates are:

Fall:	middle - late October
Spring:	middle - late March
Summer:	middle June

- Thesis typically are due to the department chair **at least one week (preferably two)** before the graduate school deadline. You will need to make any required changes and, if required, resubmit to the department chair for approval before submitting it to the graduate office.
- The thesis needs to go to your thesis committee **at least one week** before it goes to the department chair. Again, please keep in mind that your committee may (most likely will) require changes in your thesis. These changes will have to be made before the thesis is given to the department chair. Thus, it is better to give your committee a copy of complete thesis **at least three weeks** before planning to give it to the department chair. So, if the deadline for submitting the thesis to the graduate office is March 24, you need to try to get it to your committee by February 25. Do not wait until the last minute.

Thesis Presentation

Once you have completed your thesis, the final step is to present it at a meeting of your thesis committee. The presentation is open to all interested faculty and students, but usually the advisors, presenters, and Department Chair are the main people present. Usually three to five students present in a 90-minute to 2-hour time span. If you are going to present your thesis at a professional meeting, however, you do not have to present it at the meeting described above. Actual presentation of your thesis at a professional meeting is not necessary prior to graduation, as long as you have been accepted for presentation before you graduate. Professional meetings can include the annual meetings of national (e.g., American Psychological Association), regional (e.g., Southeastern Psychological Association), or state (e.g., Tennessee Psychological Association) organizations. Consult with your thesis advisor before you present your thesis.

Suggested Procedure for Thesis

At every stage, consult with your Thesis Advisor, and if necessary, your Committee Member.

- Select a topic; find a Thesis Advisor who will work with you.
- Select a Committee Member and Critical Reader.
- Do a comprehensive and exhaustive literature review of your topic.
- Decide on a hypothesis or hypotheses to test.
- Create a study to test your hypothesis(es).
- Write your proposal.
- Submit it to your Thesis Advisor for review.
- Make changes (repeat as often as is necessary).
- Submit your proposal to your thesis committee.
- Set up a meeting with your thesis committee to get their comments and decision on approval of your proposal.
- Make changes (repeat as often as is necessary).
- When approved, have your committee members sign the Thesis Approval Sheet (can be obtained from the Psychology Office, Jones Hall 103).
- Submit an Institutional Review Board (IRB) form (Research Ethics Committee review sheet) for your study (can be obtained from the Psychology Office, Jones Hall 103 or downloaded to your computer at <http://www.mtsu.edu/~epood/classes/mc660/irb.htm>) to the Chair of the Research Ethics Committee.
- Submit Thesis Approval Sheet with your letter of approval from the Research Ethics Committee to Department Chair for approval.
- After successfully completing the above step, conduct your study and gather data. Note: You may not begin to conduct your study until this point.
- Analyze the data.
- Write up the results.
- Submit completed thesis for review to Thesis Advisor and Committee Member.
- Make changes (repeat as often as is necessary).
- Submit thesis in proper form to the Psychology Department Chair two weeks before the due date for thesis submission as given in the MTSU Academic Calendar.
- Submit thesis to Graduate Office.
- Make any changes that the Graduate School requires before due date in the Academic Calendar (usually six weeks before the end of classes in a semester).
- Resubmit thesis to Graduate Office.
- Present thesis after it is approved by Graduate Office.

Thesis Resources

Here are some books that have been very helpful to students working on their thesis:

1. *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 4th ed.* (Available from Phillips Bookstore)
2. *Dissertations and Thesis From Start to Finish* by J. D. Cone and S. L. Foster. (Available from the APA and from the bookstore)

Questions About Your Thesis

1. **Is any financial assistance available for my thesis?** There are no monies available at MTSU for aiding you with research costs. You must provide for these costs on your own. You might be able, however, to get private foundations to help you. Explore these options with your advisor or other faculty.
2. **Is there travel money available if I present my thesis at a conference?** The Dean of the College of Graduate Studies, upon recommendation of the Graduate Council, will award grants of up to \$500 to graduate students for travel related to presentation of research and creative scholarship at major conferences and venues. Applicants should make a case for need, and present evidence of acceptance of proposals for presentation. Priority funding will go first to graduate students presenting results of research or creative scholarship as either the sole author or the primary author(s) of a multiple authorship work. The applicant must be currently enrolled during the semester of travel. The Student Affairs and Travel Sub-Committee of the Graduate Council will consider applications shortly after receipt and awards will be made until existing funds for the semester are exhausted. Please direct applications or queries to Ms. Ronda Sullivan, College of Graduate Studies (615-898-5897).
3. **Where can I get statistical help for my thesis?** Ask your committee members or your academic advisor for suggestions on how to get help.
4. **Where can I see completed thesis?** The MTSU Library has a collection of theses authored by MTSU students (some who now teach in the Psychology Department). Additionally, your Thesis Advisor or Academic Advisor may have a collection of thesis by students whom they have supervised.
5. **How long does it take to complete a thesis?** It depends. ½ to 6 years has been the range. The median is 1 year.
6. **Do I have to sign up for thesis credit each semester I work on my thesis?** Yes. Once you begin working on a thesis you must sign up for at least one credit every semester (except summer) until it is completed. The grade is satisfactory or unsatisfactory (S/U) each semester.
7. **Is there a time limit in which I must complete my degree?** Six years from the day you begin classes.

Intent to Graduate Form

As stated in the Graduate Catalog: an Intent to Graduate Form is available at the Graduate Studies Office or on-line at <http://www.mtsu.edu/~graduate/forms/forms.htm>. It must be filed with the College of Graduate Studies Office by the student no later than the first week of the semester in which the student plans to graduate or no later than the end of the first week of Summer Session II (for August graduation). Students must also pay graduation fees at the Business Office, and complete the College of Graduate Studies exit survey at the following website: <http://www.mtsu.edu/~graduate/student/survey.htm>.

Comprehensive Examination

Comprehensive exams are taken near the end of your program of study. They consist of two parts: one focusing on course work, and one focusing on research methods and statistical interpretation. Depending on when you entered the program, the comprehensive examination will take one of two forms:

Students Entering Prior to Fall 2007 (2006 and earlier Candidacy Forms)

Comprehensive exams are individually tailored to each student, and compiled by the coordinator of the experimental area in conjunction with you and your major professor. For this reason, you must inform the area coordinator of your intent to take comps during the first week of classes during the semester in which you plan to take the exam. With the help of the area coordinator you will design the two-part test as follows:

1. Three sets of questions concerning your area of specialization as reflected in your course work. You will be asked to identify three courses, and appropriate faculty members will write questions for these courses. You will be given a copy of these questions to help prepare for the exam. A sampling of these questions will then appear on the test.
2. A methods/statistics question to test your understanding of research methodology and associated statistical analysis appropriate for various methods.

Students Entering Fall 2007 and Students Following the 36 Hour Program (2007-2008 Candidacy Form)

Comprehensive exams are designed to test your mastery of the core areas of Experimental Psychology. On the day of the test, you will be given two essay type questions from each of the four core areas: 1) Neuroscience, 2) Social Psychology, 3) Developmental Psychology, and 4) Cognitive Psychology. You will have to select and answer one question from three of these four areas. In addition you will be given a methods/statistics question to test your understanding of research methodology and associated statistical analyses appropriate for various methods. Thus, you will be required to answer a total of four major sections on your test.

Preparing for Comps

The first step in preparing for comps is to have a meeting with the Coordinator of the Experimental Program. The two of you will draw up the basic framework for comps as describe above, and determine who will write questions for each of the sections. It is strongly suggested that you then contact the authors of the comps questions for guidance on how to prepare for each section.

Registering for Comps

We suggest that you do not wait until your last semester to take comps. Meet with the area coordinator to design your exam during the first week of classes of the semester in which you plan to take comps. Also, you must notify the department secretary coordinating comps (currently CoTonya Mitchell 898-2594, Jones Hall 111) so you can be placed on the list. You can register on-line at the Psychology Department website: <http://www.mtsu.edu/~psych/examreg.htm>. However, you must still meet with the area coordinator to design your comps. If you have any questions concerning comps contact the comps coordinator, Dr. Greg Schmidt (898-2864).

Administration & Evaluation of Comps

Comps are administered on a Saturday, usually around the first of April, July, and the last week of October. For specific details, check with the comps coordinator at the beginning of the semester in which you wish to take comps. Comps are graded on a Pass/Fail basis. In order to pass, you must score at least a 70% on each of the two sections described above. At least two faculty members will evaluate each of your essays, and the grades from these readers will be averaged. It generally takes around two weeks for your grade to be reported. The length of time between taking your Comps and receiving your grade will vary, however, according to how many people take the Comps, and how many readers are involved in grading them.

If you fail your comprehensive exams you may take the test one more time. If you only failed one of the sections of comps, you will be retested only on the failed section. If you fail a second time, you may appeal the decision, but it is possible that you may not receive your degree.

Note: If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodation, you need to contact the comps coordinator when you sign up for comps. The comps coordinator will require a letter from the Office of Disabled Students Services (898-2783) verifying the disability and addressing the accommodation that needs to be made.

Re-enrollment and Leave of Absence

Once admitted to the Experimental Program, a student must enroll every semester (excluding summers). If a leave of absence is necessary, consult with your advisor and submit a written request for a leave of absence to the clinical coordinator. This leave must be approved by the experimental faculty prior to the leave. If a student has broken continuous enrollment (i.e., not enrolled in a fall or spring semester), the student must apply to be readmitted to the experimental program. If a student had requested and had been granted a leave of absence, the student must write a letter to the experimental coordinator requesting readmission at least 30 days prior to the semester in which the student wishes to re-enroll. If the student had not been granted a leave of absence, the student must make the request for readmission by April 15 for enrollment in the summer or fall semester and by November 15 for enrollment in the spring semester. Readmission to the graduate college is not automatically granted.

Student Psychology Organizations

American Psychological Association

750 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20002-4242
1 (800) 374-2721

American Psychological Society

1010 Vermont Avenue, NW
Suite 100
Washington, DC 20005-2077
1 (202) 783-2077

Tennessee Psychological Association

530 Church Street
Nashville, TN
(615) 254-7005

PSI CHI/Psychology Club

MTSU P. O. Box 87
Dr. Tom Brinthaup, Advisor
Contact Dr. Brinthaup for membership information.
898-2581

Psychonomic Society

1710 Fortview Road
Austin, TX 78704
(512) 462-2442

Financial Aid/Graduate Assistantships/Awards/Scholarships

1. Financial assistance is extremely limited for master's students. However, those desiring assistance should apply directly to the Office of Student Financial Aid, 212 Cope Administration Building, Middle Tennessee State University, Murfreesboro, TN 37132; phone number, 615-898-2830.
2. **Graduate Assistantships** are available for 10 or 20 hours per week. Applications must be filed by March 1 for fall semester and by October 1 for spring semester. Application found at the following website:
<http://www.mtsu.edu/~graduate/student/gtas.htm>.

Graduate Assistantships in the Psychology Department

You may apply for a Psychology Department graduate assistantship position when you apply for graduate school or after you are in graduate school.

Each year, the Department of Psychology employs several graduate assistants. These graduate students assist faculty members with both teaching and research. Graduate assistants perform a wide variety of duties, depending on faculty needs and on the assistant's skills and background. Graduate assistants cover classes for absent professors; show videotapes to classes; monitor tests; grade homework and tests; enter, code, and analyze data; test subjects in experiments; tutor students; score IQ record forms; keep track of departmental test kits; conduct library searches; assist in teaching laboratory sections of classes; etc. No one graduate assistant is expected to be able to perform all of these duties.

The Curriculum and Graduate Studies Committee in the Psychology Department selects graduate research assistants from a pool of applicants each Spring and Fall. With the approval of the Department Chair, the selected students begin their assistantships the following Fall semester. Several alternates also are selected in the spring to fill any openings that occur during the academic year due to illnesses, resignations, etc. Graduate research assistants are evaluated each semester by the faculty members to which they are assigned and by the Curriculum and Graduate Studies Committee. If these evaluations are favorable (and if positions continue to be available), graduate assistants may serve in the department for up to 4 semesters (2 years).

To be a candidate for the graduate assistant position you need to submit the following to Karen Knunley, P. O. Box 87, Jones Hall 104, Graduate Program Secretary, by:

March 1 for the Fall semester and October 1 for the Spring semester.
Failure to submit all these materials on time may jeopardize your chances for being hired.

You must fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)
(www.fafsa.ed.gov)

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE FOR FEDERAL LOANS?

SUBMIT:

1. The MTSU Application for Graduate Assistantship can be found at <http://www.mtsu.edu/~graduate/student/gtas.htm> or use the form on the next page. Please be sure to include a current telephone number & email address on this form.
2. An unofficial transcript from your undergraduate institution(s).
3. If you have received grades in a graduate program, an unofficial transcript from your graduate institution(s).
4. Copy of your GRE scores.
5. A complete VITA (see example on next page).
6. Three letters of reference from individuals noted on your VITA. If you choose to use the same letters from your graduate program application, you must notify Karen Knunley in writing or email (knunley@mtsu.edu).
7. A cover letter describing the skills you have which are relevant to the graduate assistantship. This letter should include the following:
 - a. An explanation of financial need.
 - b. Whether you prefer 10 or 20 hour a week assistantship.
 - c. List your proposed classes for the next term.
 - d. State what hours you have available during a typical week. Be sure to mention your availability for evening class assignments. Be as specific as possible.
 - e. Include whether you have outside employment and whether you will be doing an internship. If so, please explain how these will not interfere with your graduate assistantship and your availability.
 - f. Include your email address if you have one.

Selected students will be notified by the Department. Questions about the status of your application should be directed to Dr. James Rust at 615-898-2319 or at jorust@mtsu.edu, Chair of Graduate Studies Committee.

Insert form

("SAMPLE VITA")

Ima Good Student

Address:

123 Anywhere Street
Murfreesboro, TN 37130
615-898-0000
Email: Ima2b@mtsu.edu

Personal Data:

Date of Birth: January 1, 1969
Place of Birth: Murfreesboro, TN

Educational Experience:

<u>Degree</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Institution</u>
B.S.	June, 2001	Middle Tennessee State University
M.S.	Expected, May 2005	Middle Tennessee State University

Professional Affiliations:

Psi Chi
Southeastern Psychological Association, student member

Appointed and Elected Offices:

President, Psi Chi local chapter 2001

Honors:

Outstanding Psychology Undergraduate Award 2000

Research Experience:

2000 Honors thesis research, The Effect of Social Skills Training on Acceptance into a Group. Independent research conducted under the guidance of Dr. J. Thompson.

2001 Assisted in three research projects
a) Effect of Room Color on Test Performance with Dr. Pat Kemp.
b) Effect of Room Size on Test Performance with Dr. Leslie Stevenson.

Publications and Presentations:

A) Published Articles

Kemp, P. & Student, I. G. (2002). Effect of room size on test performance. *Journal of Irreproducible Results*, 23, 100-101.

B) Presentations

Stevenson, L. & Student, I. G. (March, 1998). *Effect of room color on test performance*. 35th annual meeting of Southeastern Psychological Association, Atlanta, GA.

References:

Dr. Pat Kemp
Department of Psychology
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Dr. Leslie Stevenson
Department of Psychology
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Dr. Kelly Weber
Department of Psychology
Middle Tennessee State University
Murfreesboro, TN 37132

Psychology Department Awards

The department has a few awards for outstanding students. These awards are given only once each year and are competitive. The awards are the Prytula Memorial Scholarship (\$500.00) and the Outstanding Graduate Student in Experimental Psychology.

Scholarships available through the College of Graduate Studies

There are scholarships for graduate students available through the College of Graduate Studies. Below you will find information and guidelines for some of those scholarships. Information about these and other possible scholarships, including deadlines and application forms, is available online at <http://www.mtsu.edu/~graduate/student/scholarship.htm>.

Mary W. and Chester R. Martin Graduate Academic Scholarship

The Martin Scholarship, in the amount of \$500 will be awarded each fall and spring semesters as a tuition grant.

Eligibility requirements are:

- applicant must be a Tennessee or Kentucky resident;
- applicant must have graduated from an accredited, undergraduate institution with a minimum 3.5 cumulative grade point average;
- applicant must be a newly admitted student;
- applicant must be enrolled for nine hours of preferably graduate coursework,
- applicant must provide three letters of reference; scholarship is awarded for one semester only and is non-renewable.

Graduate Minority Scholarship

Graduate Minority Scholarships carry a cash value of approximately \$8,000 per academic year and are awarded annually on a competitive basis. The awards are for up to two semesters and are non-renewable. Recipients cannot receive both a minority scholarship and a graduate assistantship, nor may they be faculty members at MTSU. Priority will be given to new graduate students. To be eligible, applicants must:

- be African-American Tennessee residents;
- be enrolled as full-time students, taking at least nine graduate hours in courses pertaining to their graduate program;
- meet admission requirements for their intended degree, and their application must be approved by the major department and the College of Graduate Studies;
- complete the Application for Tennessee Residency for Fee-Paying purposes;
- maintain a grade point average (GPA) of at 3.00 while in Graduate School.

The awards are for up to two semesters and are non-renewable. Recipients cannot receive both a minority scholarship and a graduate assistantship, nor may they be faculty members at MTSU.

Albert L. and Ethel Carver Smith Scholarship for Graduate Students

Applications for the Albert L. and Ethel Carver Smith Scholarship for Graduate Students are accepted for the fall and spring semesters. The amount of the award is \$1,000 for the first semester and is renewable for one additional semester contingent on satisfactory academic progress. The scholarship committee will evaluate each application for scholarly merit and financial need. Requirements are:

- applicant must be admitted to a graduate program;
- applicant must have completed at least 12 graduate hours;
- applicant must provide a financial need statement with the application and a brief narrative supporting the application.

Graduate Assistantships Offered by MTSU Non-Academic Offices

The following MTSU offices have graduate assistantship positions. However, this does not mean there are assistantships available at any given time. Students can check with the individual offices about whether they have graduate assistantship positions available by calling those offices directly at the telephone numbers given below (area code 615).

<u>Department</u>	<u>898-</u>
Adult Services	5989
Athletics	2450
Business Office	2540
Career and Employment Center	2500
Campus Recreation	2104
Center for Dyslexia	5642
Continuing Studies	2462
Developmental Studies	2568
Disabled Student Services	2783
Greek Life	5996
Housing	2971
Instructional Technology Support	5191
Instructional Media Resources	2740
Multicultural Affairs	2987
Office of Information Technology	2512
Payroll Services	2186
Student Life	2750
Student Publications	2815
Tennessee Livestock Center	5575
Women's Center	2193

Contact Information

Experimental Coordinator	Office	Office Phone	Email
Stephen Schmidt, Ph.D.	JH 206	898-2556	sschmidt@mtsu.edu

Relevant Departmental Secretaries

Comps Records: CoTonya Mitchell	JH 111	898-2594	cpmitche@mtsu.edu
Graduate Assistantships: Karen Nunley	JH 104	898-5192	knunley@mtsu.edu
Main Psychology Office: Nancy Preston	JH 103	898-2706	npreston@mtsu.edu

Graduate Studies Office

Vice Provost for Research and Dean Michael D. Allen, Ph.D., P.E.	CAB 114	898-2840	mallen@mtsu.edu
Graduate Coordinator Anita Hermes, Ph.D.	Cope 114	898-5352	ahermes@mtsu.edu