

## **Clinical Program**

### **Frequently Asked Questions**

#### **Is this the counseling psychology program?**

No. The UMKC counseling programs are handled through the UMKC School of Education. Please see their website at <https://education.umkc.edu/> for more information. For additional career information please visit APA's career development page: [www.apa.org/careers/resources/index.aspx](http://www.apa.org/careers/resources/index.aspx)

#### **What will this program train me to do?**

Clinical health service psychology is an empirically-based discipline and our clinical program emphasizes continuous involvement in both research and practice. For this reason, students primarily interested in psychotherapy and clinical or counseling practice without a strong interest in the scientific aspect of the scientist/practitioner model would be better served by other programs.

#### **What is the application deadline?**

The application deadline is December 5th. All application materials must be received on or before December 5th.

#### **Notable clinical practica and internship information:**

Please note that all students who are admitted to the program are required to complete clinical practica and an internship and that some practicum and internship sites may require criminal and other background checks before allowing students to participate.

#### **When can I begin the program?**

The program begins in fall semesters only. New students are not admitted at any other time of year.

#### **What do I need to submit for my application?**

Please review the information on our Department's Graduate Admissions page.

#### **Do you keep the previous academic year application materials?**

Although we do keep application materials filed for a required amount of time, we do not re-use these materials and thus we require previous applicants to submit new, complete applications.

#### **What do I need to submit for my international application?**

Please review the information on our Department's Graduate Admissions page for information on how to submit your application for the Psychology PhD program. You must also contact the [International Student Affairs Office](#) for the application process to UMKC for international students.

### **When do I find out if I've been accepted?**

The admissions process proceeds through April 15<sup>th</sup>. We make every effort to notify students as soon as possible if they are being offered admission, are an alternate for an offer of admission, or will not be receiving an offer of admission. However, it may take the full admissions period to make decisions and notify applicants so please do not inquire about the status of your application unless you have not heard from us by April 16th. The university reserves the right to notify the applicant by e-mail, so please make sure your current e-mail is noted on the application materials. If it (or any other contact information) changes during the admissions process please notify the department of those changes immediately. The program follows the American Psychological Association Guidelines for Graduate School Offers and Acceptances.

### **What are the admission criteria?**

The program normally accepts 4 students each year. Applicants are evaluated based on the following dimensions: (1) academic potential; (2) research potential; (3) professional identity and involvement; and (4) interpersonal skills and other indications of potential for clinical work. The program follows a mentorship model. Therefore, applicants whose research interests are similar to those of a clinical faculty member will be given higher consideration. Faculty interests and research are described on our Department's faculty research page.

### **What is the GPA requirement?**

Undergraduate GPA of 3.0 and minimum graduate GPA of 3.5. Alternative criteria may be accepted at the discretion of the admissions committee if there is good reason to believe the regular criteria do not adequately portray the student's potential to do quality work in the program. However, admission to the program is highly competitive and we seek to admit students with a general history of excellence.

### **What are the GRE score requirements?**

Competitive Graduate Record Examination General Test scores (GRE Quantitative + Verbal greater than 300). Students whose scores fall below this recommended minimum may present alternative criteria that indicate their capacity to do quality doctoral-level work. These alternative criteria will be considered and may be accepted at the discretion of the Clinical Admissions Committee. For specific information on submitting your official GRE scores as part of your application packet, please go to the Please review the information on our Department's Graduate Admissions page. Please note that GRE scores cannot be more than 5 years old.

### **How do you consider multiple GRE test scores?**

It is not unusual for applicants to have taken the GRE on more than one occasion and in these cases applicants are to submit all GRE scores for the admissions committee to consider together.

### **What undergraduate courses do I need to have in order to be considered?**

A bachelor's degree is required for admittance. A B.A. / B.S. in psychology is preferred but not required. In order to ensure that students are properly prepared for graduate work in psychology, applicants are

expected to have satisfactorily completed at least 9 hours of foundational courses in the field. Completion of undergraduate courses in the following areas is required:

- Introductory / General Psychology
- Experimental Methods / Research Design
- Statistics / Quantitative Methods

Completion of courses in at least two of the following seven areas is also strongly recommended:

- Abnormal Psychology
- Biopsychology
- Child Psychology
- Cognitive Psychology
- Learning
- Motivation
- Personality
- Sensation and Perception
- Social Psychology

Please [click here](#) for descriptions of the above courses.

### **How do I strengthen my application?**

The process of preparing for a graduate application to a Clinical Ph.D. program generally needs to begin years rather than months before applying. Applicants that are competitive generally have excellent GRE's (at least above the 50th percentile), an excellent academic record/GPA, and research experience demonstrated in the form of presentations and publications, excellent letters of recommendation, and well-written applications. In addition, students often have practical or work experience in psychology related settings that informs their interest in clinical psychology. These accomplishments are generally indicative of academic potential, research potential, professional identity and involvement, and interpersonal skills and other indications of potential for clinical work which represent the criteria for admission. Therefore, anything you can do prior to applying that would address these aspects of your preparation (e.g., gaining research experience, performing to the best of your ability on the GRE, achieving good grades etc.) would likely strengthen your application, although it is difficult to do this in a short period of time. In light of the competitiveness of the program (which is similar to many clinical programs around the country) it is wise to apply to a number of programs and to consider Master's programs as alternative. There are also numerous resources available on how to apply to graduate school that may be useful to you in preparing your application.

### **Do I have to have a Master's degree before I apply to the PhD program?**

Having a Master's degree is not a requirement for entry into the program and many students are competitive without having completed a prior graduate degree. On the other hand, completing a Master's degree may be advantageous to you if it contributes to any of the key criteria used for evaluating student applications. For example a Master's degree may provide evidence of high academic ability, increase research experience (including presentations and/or publications) and provide clinical experience.

**When are the courses scheduled and could I complete the program if I could attend only for limited time periods (e.g. evenings, one day a week etc.)?**

Courses are scheduled throughout the day (and sometimes vary year to year in when they are scheduled). It is not feasible to complete the program on a part-time or time-limited basis. In addition to course requirements students are typically intensively engaged in research, clinical, and other professional development activities both on-site and in the community.

**How many credit hours is the program and what courses will I be taking while I am in the program?**

Please refer to the handbook for the program curriculum.

**Are we required to take courses during the summer?**

Although there is not formal coursework during the summer, students typically remain at UMKC and engage in research during this time. In addition, some students teach courses and many remain at their clinical practicum sites to continue their training. There is sometimes funding for students in the summer but these opportunities vary widely depending on faculty grants, etc.

**What if I have completed prior graduate coursework at another institution?**

Students who enter with a Master's degree or prior Psychology coursework may request to waive up to two courses (6 credit hours) that can be counted towards their degree. Further, students who completed an empirical thesis project as part of a Master's degree elsewhere can request to waive the thesis requirement. These waivers are considered on a case-by-case basis by the faculty, who will determine if a course/thesis are comparable to the requirements of the program. Students who waive the thesis requirement are required to complete a comparable research project in their first two years (the "second year project"). Please note that waiving courses and/or thesis generally does not impact a student's time to degree completion.

Please refer to the handbook for the program curriculum.

**Do I need a mentor for the program?**

The program is based on a mentorship model. Applicants who share the research interests of our faculty will be given greater consideration. Please visit the Department's Faculty Research page to view accomplished department faculty and identify prospective mentors.