APPLIED DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY
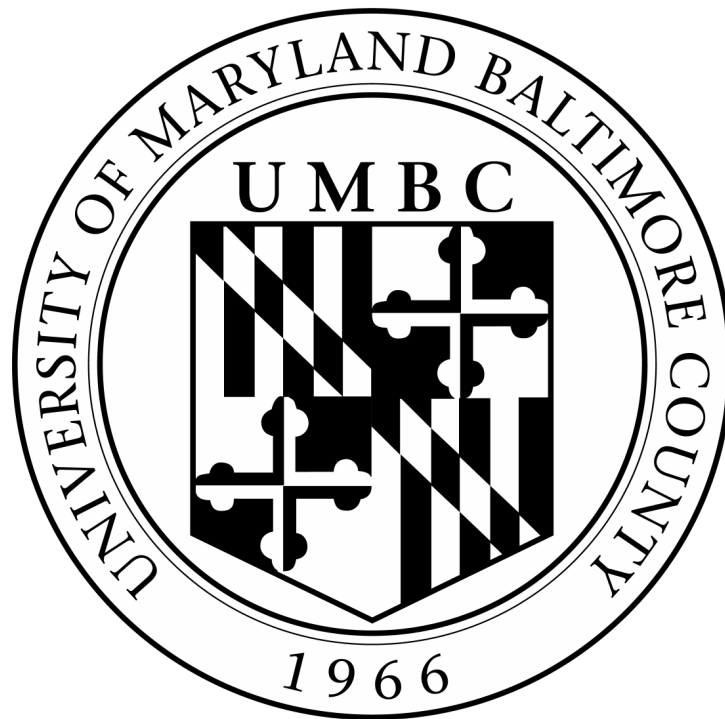
DOCTORAL PROGRAM
Student Handbook

2025-2026

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, BALTIMORE COUNTY

Table of Contents

Doctoral Program in Applied Developmental Psychology

This handbook provides an overview of the program and its requirements, resources, and faculty interests. Detailed information about courses and general requirements can be found in the University of Maryland, Baltimore County Graduate School Catalog, and the Applied Developmental Psychology program website.

Program Description

The field of Applied Developmental Psychology reflects the intersection of developmental psychology and applied science by considering questions of developmental import within the social context of children's everyday lives. Some of the themes addressed within Applied Developmental Psychology include: 1) the reciprocal influence of culture, neighborhoods, school climate, and families on children's social, emotional, and cognitive development, 2) the complexity of public health concerns such as living in poverty, teen parenthood, and learning to read, and 3) developing interventions and assessments based on developmental theory.

Graduates from the Applied Developmental Psychology program will have received a strong foundation in developmental psychology, research methodology, and promoting healthy child development via families, schools, and communities. The core courses provide students with an in-depth understanding of social, emotional, and cognitive development and the family, community, cultural, and societal influences on these. Through taking courses in methods and statistics and engaging in research, students will acquire the analytic tools to design studies addressing important research questions, to analyze and interpret their findings, and to disseminate these findings to others. Through completing courses in policy, prevention and/or intervention along with hands-on experiences doing practica, students will have first-hand familiarity with the practicalities of intervention in the real world.

Topics of current research interest to faculty in the program include the role of parenting, parental beliefs, and family emotional climate in fostering individuals' cognitive and social growth; the social, emotional, and cognitive/educational development of individuals in different socio-cultural environments; early family intervention to support healthy infant and toddler development; young children's peer conflicts; the effects of educational innovations such as the internet; environmental predictors of parenting and child-parent relationships and early sibling and peer relationships; the processes involved in children learning to read, write, and do arithmetic; the role of motivational and affective factors in cognitive development and academic achievement; the role of ethnic-racial and religious identity in adolescent development, and child and family social policy. Our research involves work with both typically developing children and children with learning or behavioral and emotional challenges, families representing a variety of racial/ethnic identities and incomes, immigrant children, and adolescent mothers and their children.

Program Objectives

The program is designed to prepare its graduates for careers as practitioner researchers: people concerned with the design, evaluation, and improvement of effective ways of enhancing the quality of human life. Although many of the opportunities for this kind of career are likely to be found in close association with existing health and education services, the roles of an applied developmental psychologist are more varied than those of a school psychologist or therapist and are likely to be more innovative. In consultation with their advisor, students enrolled in the program develop a program of coursework, research, and practicum experiences tailored to the needs of their career aspirations that build on and complement their previous studies and work experiences. Students interested in careers involving teaching can also obtain teaching experiences relevant for pursuing an academic career.

In addition to obtaining employment as a faculty member at a college or university, graduates will be well-prepared to:

- Aid curriculum designers in matching educational programs to the developmental needs of children
- Work with pediatricians and family practitioners in detecting early precursors of sensory and learning disabilities
- Provide technical advice to government and human-service agencies on effective strategies for enhancing human development opportunities among disadvantaged sections of the population
- Develop and evaluate intervention programs
- Consult for community-based organizations concerned with problems faced by children and youth (such as substance abuse, school violence, teenage pregnancy, and parenthood)
- Participate in the work of advocacy organizations concerned with the rights and welfare of individuals and of individuals with special needs (such as those arising from developmental delays, learning disabilities, and sensory or motor impairments)
- Develop and administer parent advice and training programs for families with a disabled child/youth
- Consult with courts and lawyers
- Develop and evaluate media programs directed at children and families
- Design and evaluate primary prevention programs.

ADP Specializations

The program has strength in four general areas. Students can specialize in one of these areas OR tailor a program that combines elements from more than one area.

- The **Early Development/Early Intervention** concentration focuses on genetic, biological, and environmental factors that impede and promote development in the early years and on established and innovative intervention approaches for infants and young children at risk. Students specializing in this area will be prepared to conduct and supervise research on factors that affect development in infancy and early childhood and to develop, tailor, and evaluate

intervention programs designed to foster development. Students will also be trained in the assessment of cognitive, socioemotional, and linguistic development of infants, toddlers, and children, and parent-child relationships. They will be prepared to work in interdisciplinary settings to evaluate young children and their families, to assist in formulating intervention plans to promote development, and to facilitate parenting in families at risk. Graduates with this concentration may opt for careers in academia, research and program evaluation institutes, child development and pediatric settings, social policy/child advocacy organization, government, and foundations or in other contexts concerned with the development and welfare of infants, young children, and their families.

- The **Socioemotional Development of Individuals** within and across cultures concentration focuses on the interactions between individual, peer, and parenting/family factors in the social emotional, including identity, development of individuals in different socio-cultural contexts. Students specializing in this area will be prepared to conduct and supervise research on factors that affect the social emotional development of individuals from not only ethnic minority and immigrant families in the U.S. but also families in different cultures around the world.

- The **Learning and Educational Development** concentration focuses on the cognitive, social, and motivational factors that impact on different aspects of individual's learning. Topics of interest range from cognitive/academic content, such as literacy and mathematics, to socialization of cognitive skills, such as the impact of parents, teachers, and peers as socialization agents, to the effects of educational interventions on students' outcomes. Students specializing in this area will learn about the effects of families, neighborhoods, and cultural contexts on individual's learning, and about individual differences, such as learning and developmental disabilities. Graduates with this area of emphasis may pursue careers in academia and/or in settings to assess individuals for learning difficulties and other developmental disabilities, to collaborate with schools and school systems to evaluate the efficacy of different educational programs, and to design individual and group interventions. They will also be prepared to work in educational and social policy settings to help interpret research findings and translate research results into relevant policy. As well, they can work in government settings to help formulate policy about educational issues.

- The **Contexts of Development** focuses on how the contexts within which children live—such as income, neighborhoods, and cultures—impact development. For example, do children tend to have different educational or social-emotional trajectories depending on whether they live in lower-income, middle-income, or higher-income households? Or, how are parenting styles similar and/or different across different ethnicities and cultures? Graduates with this area of focus will be well-prepared to conduct research, understanding the entire ecological system within which children live, and apply their knowledge working within diverse communities.

- The **Community Psychology** concentration focuses on how the social, cultural, economic, and political environment influences development. Community psychologists typically conduct research to understand and address community problems, often involving community members in the research process. It aims to reduce social inequalities, empower marginalized groups, and promote social justice.

Program Requirements (effective Fall 2017)

ADP Core Courses		Credits
Cultural Aspects of Human Dev	PSYC 653	3
Social and Personality Development	PSYC 781	3
Cognitive Development	PSYC 651	3
Total ADP Core		9

Methodology		
Data Analytic Procedures I	PSYC 611	4
Data Analytic Procedures II	PSYC 711	4
Research Methods	PSYC 710	3
Elective in statistics or methods		3
(e.g., Measurement of Behavior, Qualitative Methods,		
Program Evaluation, Advanced Quantitative Topics courses)		
Total Methods		14

Basic Psychology Core Courses		
Learning, Development, and Biological Bases	PYSC 602	4
Individual Differences, Social, and Diversity	PSYC 603	4
Total Basic Core		8

Other ADP Program requirements		
Public Policy Issues OR Prevention OR Intervention[1]	e.g., PSYC 736	3
Assessment	PSYC 720; PSYC 721	3
Ethical and Professional Issues	PSYC 686	3
Topics in ADP[2]		no credit
Diversity (when offered)		no credit

Field Experience[3]	PSYC 690	3
Total additional		12

Specialization courses   9
At least 6 credits must be from regularly taught courses. Additional credits may come from courses, practica, or independent study. Courses that are used to fulfill the general requirements for ADP may not count as part of the specialization. Additional measurement and statistics courses may not count towards specialization unless the student is specializing in one or both of those areas.

Total Course Requirements   **52**

Research Requirements

Master's thesis (or research competency)	PSYC 799	6
Dissertation	PSYC 899	18
Total research		24

Total number of credits for Ph.D. degree   **76**

[1] Based upon consultation with their advisors, students must choose a minimum of one course in Public Policy, Prevention, OR Intervention. Of course, students can choose to take a course in each of the 3 domains.

[2] Both *Topics in ADP* and *Diversity* are no-credit, required courses. Students must "take" *Topics* in their first and second years, and attendance is optional in subsequent years. If/when it is offered, students must take *Diversity* once, in their first or second year.

[3] Up to 12 credits of field experience (practica) can be taken in partial satisfaction of degree requirements, 3 credits of which are required. Practica are typically taken in 3-credit blocks (150-180 hours). To receive credit for practica beyond the 3-credit minimum, each practicum experience must be uniquely defined, in consultation with one's academic advisor and on-site practicum supervisor. If the circumstances warrant, a student may be given permission to register for a 2-semester practicum at the same site; advance approval of the program director is necessary. No more than 6 credits of practicum are permitted prior to the completion of the master's thesis. Under most circumstances, a student taking more than 6 practicum credits will graduate with more than 54 course credits.

Students may decide to take more than the 76-credit minimum to acquire the background and experience they seek for their own career goals. It is possible to complete the program within four years, but students often take more time to acquire practicum experiences beyond the minimum requirement.

Students are assigned to an academic advisor based on mutual research interests. Students will work with their advisors to develop their program of study, and they will work with their advisor during the first year on various research-related tasks. If a student's research interests change, a student may change advisors in subsequent semesters.

Requirements for the M.A. Degree in Applied Developmental Psychology

1. PSYC 611	Data Analytic Procedures I	3 credits
PSYC 611L	Data Analytic Procedures I Lab	1 credit
2. PSYC 711	Data Analytic Procedures II	3 credits
PSYC 711L	Data Analytic Procedures II Lab	1 credit
3. PSYC 710	Research Methods in Psychology	3 credits
4. PSYC 651	Cognitive Development	3 credits
5. PSYC 781	Social and Personality Development	3 credits
6. PSYC 653	Cultural Aspects of Human Development	3 credits
7. PSYC 602	Core Course I: Learning, Bio, & Dev.	4 credits
8. PSYC 603	Core Course II: Individual Differences, Social, and Diversity	4 credits
9. PSYC 601	Topics in Applied Developmental Psychology	0 credits
10. PSYC 799	Master's Thesis Research	6 credits
		TOTAL	30 credits

We attempt to offer all of the above courses in the student's first two years, and, if available, students should take these classes. But, based on the faculty's sabbatical schedules and other commitments, we cannot guarantee that we will offer all of these classes in the first two years.

The ADP program does not require a formal master's degree, nor is it a terminal master's program. Students in the program are encouraged to receive a master's degree en route to their Ph.D., but in some cases, a research competency may be sufficient. On occasion, a decision is made either by the student or by the ADP faculty that a student will leave the program with a terminal master's degree and not pursue the Ph.D.

Course or Master's Thesis Waivers and Transfer of Credit

Students entering the ADP Program with a graduate degree from another program may be able to waive particular courses and/or program requirements. Students should discuss this with their mentor as soon as they arrive at UMBC. To be eligible to waive any of the above requirements via previous course or thesis transfer, students must request these transfers within the first month of their first academic year (i.e., by October 1st of their first year).

Ordinarily, course waivers will be granted on the basis of satisfactory completion of comparable coursework done elsewhere. If the faculty member who teaches the course at UMBC is a full-time member of the ADP program, in most cases, they make the judgment of comparability. Waivers for courses taught by part-time instructors or for other program requirements (with the exception of Research Competency, as described below) are granted only by the ADP graduate program director.

At a minimum, the following conditions should be met regarding "course" waivers:
1. A copy of the course syllabus from the semester the student passed the course.
2. The course content should be comparable to the course offered at UMBC.
3. Credit for the course in question must have been earned within five years of entry into ADP.
4. The course must have been accepted for graduate credit toward a graduate degree at the school at which it was taken, and the student must have earned at least a grade of B in it.
5. We will only consider waiving courses taken for credit and that are regularly scheduled courses and/or seminars. Students may not waive courses defined as independent readings, research (including thesis credits), or practica.

If a student would like the ADP program to consider a Master's thesis from a previously completed graduate program to count toward the UMBC Master's thesis requirement, the student will provide a copy of their Master's thesis to their mentor by October 1st of their first year. The mentor and one other ADP faculty will read the Master's thesis and determine if it is sufficiently "developmental" in nature and follows acceptable research methodology (e.g., is empirical).

Agreements on waivers should be in writing. Contact the ADP Graduate Program Coordinator for a DocuSign link. A copy of the signed agreement (and relevant syllabi or Master's thesis) will be placed in the student's permanent file.

Transfer of credit for courses taken prior to admission to ADP is rarely relevant or possible (see below).

Transfer of credits that are external to UMBC/USM

It is extremely rare, and typically unnecessary, for students to transfer credits earned at other eligible graduate institutions to UMBC. Transfer of credits only applies to courses taken: 1) at a USM institution or other regionally accredited institutions, and 2) before matriculation to the Graduate School at UMBC. The maximum number of credits that can be transferred is six semester-hours of coursework; these credits may apply toward the master's degree earned at UMBC. The

same five criteria for waiving courses defined above must be met. Note that earned grades in transferred credits do not contribute to GPA earned at UMBC.

After discussing possible transfer of credit with the mentor and ADP GPD, a request for transfer of credit should be completed within the first two months of the student's first semester (i.e., by October 31st). The Transfer of Credit form is available on the Graduate School website, must be approved by the student's mentor and GPD, and submitted to the administrative offices of the Graduate School. Official transcripts of the courses for which credit is requested must be attached to the form and sent to the administrative offices of the Graduate School.

Courses taken external to UMBC while a student is in the program.

After consultation with their advisor, students may elect to meet some course requirements at other institutions while they are a student in the ADP Program. Any courses taken by a student outside the program to which they have been admitted requires the informal approval of the faculty mentor and the formal approval of the ADP GPD. The USM Inter-Institutional Enrollment form must be completed and signed. Note we can only cover tuition at other University System of Maryland (USM) institutions. And, even at USM institutions, additional fees *may* apply. This is the most typical instance in which a course taken at a different institution (a USM institution) will be used to *transfer* credit. It is done this way so the course may be listed on the student's transcript. Technically, transfer of credit for such courses taken at other institutions is not *required* of doctoral students.

Specialization Courses

As part of the requirements for the Ph.D. in Applied Developmental Psychology, students are required to take certain foundational courses in psychology and, more specifically, developmental psychology. These include (but are not limited to) content courses such as *Cognitive Development* (PSYC 651) *and Social Development* (PSYC 781) and analytic courses such as *Data Analytic Procedures I and II* (PSYC 611, 711). In addition, students are required to take at least 3 courses in an area of specialization. This enables students to acquire more expertise in a subtopic within the field. The specialization requires completion of a cohesive set of courses. Courses that are used to fulfill the general requirements for ADP may not count as part of the specialization. Additional measurement and statistics courses may not count towards specialization unless the student is specializing in one or both of those areas.

A student's area of expertise typically will fall within one of the following five areas: 1) early development/early intervention, 2) socio-emotional development, 3) learning and educational development, 4) the contexts of development (e.g., culture, income, neighborhoods), or 5) community psychology. In some cases, however, a student's area of expertise will cross areas or not be well-captured by these areas. Students should consult with their mentor about potential areas of specialization and which courses are pertinent. For students interested in community psychology, the following courses constitute the community psychology specialization: 1) PSYC 635: Community Psychology I: Theory, 2) PSYC 695: Community Psychology II: Practice, and 3) one

of four elective courses: PSYC 636 Primary Prevention, PSYC 695 Community-Based Participatory Research, PSYC 695 Program Evaluation, or PSYC 736 Applied Psychology and Public Policy. For the community psychology specialization, students are allowed to count either PSYC 636 Primary Prevention or PSYC 736 Applied Psychology and Public Policy for both the specialization and the other ADP program requirements.

Thesis or Research Competency

All students are required to demonstrate competence in all phases of the conduct of research prior to beginning work on their doctoral dissertation. Students entering the program with bachelor's degrees typically satisfy this requirement by completing a master's thesis. Alternatively, students may write a research competence paper. More information about this is available on the ADP Box site. As described previously, students entering the program with master's degrees may possibly waive the research competency requirement by submitting a research-based master's thesis completed at another university. The thesis must be approved by the student's mentor and one other UMBC reader.

Practicum

Practica are opportunities for students to apply what they are learning in the classroom, to network, and to test whether vocational aspirations are appropriate. Students are expected to complete at least 3 credits (PSYC 690) of practicum. They may do this in any year of the program but typically do it in the 3rd year. More information about practicum is available in the ADP Box folder. In brief, students prepare a contract, signed by their site supervisor and UMBC supervisor, which specifies what the student will do during the practicum. For all psychology practica, students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner, consistent with the ethical principles of the American Psychological Association and relevant state regulations governing the practice of psychology.

Comprehensive Exam

The purpose of the Comprehensive Examination is for students to develop a professional identity and demonstrate professional competencies prior to embarking on a doctoral dissertation. Students will create a portfolio that contains: 1) a précis, which describes the student's area of interest, career aspirations, and relevant experiences at UMBC, 2) a 1st authored publishable manuscript, 3) a grant proposal, and 4) an article review. More information about this is available on the ADP Box site. Students must have completed their course requirements, including the master's thesis or research competency, before the comprehensive examination.

Admission to Candidacy

Students officially become candidates for the Ph.D. degree upon acceptance of their application for admission to candidacy by the UMBC Graduate School. The application form for admission to candidacy is available from the Graduate School. It is the student's responsibility to submit this form promptly when all the requirements for candidacy have been fulfilled. To be eligible for doctoral candidacy within the ADP program, the student must have successfully completed the Comprehensive Examination. University guidelines require that students be admitted to candidacy within 5 years after admission to the doctoral program, that they remain in candidacy for at least two semesters before receiving the doctoral degree, and that they complete all requirements for the doctoral degree within 4 years after advancement to candidacy.

Dissertation

The doctoral dissertation, demonstrating the student's ability as an independent scholar and scientist, represents an original piece of research. Planning for the dissertation begins with the selection of a dissertation advisor who is knowledgeable about the student's area of research interest. Dissertations are expected to be on topics consistent with the goals of the ADP program and relevant to the student's future career. Students should consult the Graduate School catalog and web pages as well as the ADP website for further details on dissertation requirements. In brief, students have two choices of dissertation formats. One involves a set of three related papers, written as journal articles. Alternatively, students may complete a more traditional length single paper that includes one or several studies on a topic. For more information on these dissertation formats, see the ADP Box site. Students should consult with their mentor as to which choice is the better one for them.

Beyond the research undertaken to satisfy the thesis or research competence requirement and the dissertation, we strongly encourage students to engage in other research projects, either independently or in collaboration with faculty or other students. This is particularly important for students considering traditional academic or research careers.

Graduate School Timeline Requirements (Candidacy and Doctoral Degree)

University guidelines require that students be admitted to candidacy within five years of admission to the doctoral program. All students must be in candidacy for at least two semesters before receiving the doctoral degree (including time on internship). Students must complete all requirements for the doctoral degree within four years after advancement to candidacy.

ADP Expectations for Progress Toward the Degree

Continuation in the program and receipt of financial support from the department are contingent on a student making good progress. Good progress is defined as follows:

- End of the first year: The student has earned at least a 3.0 average in coursework (required by the graduate school), with a minimum of two taught courses taken for a letter grade each semester. The student has identified a thesis topic and started hypothesis development.
- End of the second year: The student continues to maintain a 3.0 average and has successfully defended their master's thesis proposal or has had their research competency proposal approved by the committee. By the end of the summer, the student has defended their thesis. The student has completed at least 7 of the 9 required ADP Core courses, Methods courses, and Basic Psychology Core courses.
- End of the third year: The student continues to maintain a 3.0 average, has finished the comprehensive exam, and has decided (with mentor) which type of dissertation to pursue.
- End of the fourth year: The student continues to maintain a 3.0 average and has been admitted to candidacy. The focus in year 4 should be on dissertation research and, if warranted, additional practica and specialization courses.
- End of the fifth year: The student conducts and completes dissertation.

Evaluation of Student Progress

The progress and performance of all students are evaluated annually, at the end of the spring semester, by the ADP faculty. First year students and those perceived as experiencing difficulties are also evaluated at the end of the fall semester. Advisors provide students with a written report of these evaluations and meet with students to discuss the evaluation.

Evaluations are based upon:
a) Academics: Quality of academic achievement in coursework
b) Progress: Timely progress toward the completion of a degree
c) Research: Quality of research and scholarly skills and abilities as reflected through high quality work and participation in research activities, publications, and presentations
d) Professionalism & Ethics: Professional demeanor in interpersonal relations and professional activities with faculty, peers, and colleagues
e) GA Performance
f) Misc. Writing, Health, Personal adjustment
g) Collegiality/Citizenship: Contributions to Department, University, and Lab

1. If a student is doing poorly in a course (i.e., likely to get a C or poorer), the problem should be brought to the attention of the ADP faculty so that measures can be taken to provide extra support, writing assistance, recommend remedial tutoring or background courses, etc. Whenever

possible, this should be done by mid-semester to maximize opportunities to help the student successfully complete the course.

2. A student who receives a letter grade of C in a class will be reviewed by the ADP faculty during the end of semester student evaluations to determine whether remediation or other intervention is needed.
3. The Graduate School requires that students maintain a GPA of 3.0 or better. If a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, the student will be placed on probation at the end of the semester in which the substandard GPA was achieved.
4. If the student's cumulative GPA does not reach or exceed 3.0 by the end of the subsequent semester, the student may be terminated from the program.
5. Receiving a letter grade of D or F in any course is sufficient grounds for termination from the program.
6. All decisions regarding termination from the program will be made by the ADP faculty.

Research (Master's, Dissertation, and Independent Study)
The following lists describe the membership of Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation examination committees.

Master's Thesis

1. Formed at least two months prior to final defense.
   a. Important: the proposed date of final defense is approximate (just two+ months after submission of the form); simply provide an estimated date
2. Minimum of three members (this is most typical)
3. At least three members must have graduate faculty status.
   a. This is at the time the committee is formed. Be mindful if there are outside members
4. The Chair of the committee must have at least Associate Graduate Faculty status
5. Can be Co-Chaired by someone with Special Graduate Faculty status
6. ADP: The Chair (or one+ Co-Chairs) must be an active member of the ADP Faculty

Dissertation committee

1. Formed at least six months prior to final defense (same observation re: defense date)
2. Minimum of five members. All members must have a terminal degree in field.
3. At least three members must have Regular graduate faculty status. This necessarily meets the requirement that:
   a. At least three members must have graduate faculty status.
4. Must be at least one outside member (i.e., not ADP faculty; technically, HSP counts). Outside member does not need graduate faculty status (assuming #3). If the outside member does not apply for graduate faculty status, a current CV is uploaded when the student forms the committee (#1)
5. The Chair (or one of the Co-Chairs) must have Regular graduate faculty status
6. Can be Co-Chaired by someone with Special Graduate Faculty status
7. ADP: The Chair (or one + Co-Chairs) must be an active member of the ADP Faculty
8. The candidate designates the two Readers when submitting the form (neither Chairs nor Co-Chairs are eligible to be Readers). The Readers are typically determined in advance (in consultation with the Chair and the committee members).

For both the Master's Thesis committee and Doctoral Dissertation committee, as soon as you and your mentor have determined the committee membership, please schedule a meeting with the Graduate Program Coordinator to go over the steps and forms involved. Both the Master's and Dissertation degrees require the use of multiple forms available at the Graduate School website (https://gradschool.umbc.edu/graduation/forms/). Most forms are now submitted via DocuSign (older/paper versions might not be accepted). Note that some of the forms have lengthy due dates (e.g., the Dissertation Examination Committee form must be submitted at least six months in advance). However, it is never too early to submit a form if all information is known. The Graduate School website also provides due dates for submission of the approved document, application for graduation, and so forth. There is one form internal to the Department of Psychology, the proposal defense form. This will also be completed via DocuSign.

Note: It is ultimately the student's responsibility to keep up with the forms and due dates. A "how to" document cannot easily be generated, as Graduate School policies and due dates are always subject to change in the future. This is one of the primary reasons for scheduling a meeting(s) with the GPC.

When scheduling both the Master's Thesis and Doctoral Dissertation proposal and final defense committee meetings, students need to schedule two hours of time.

Post-Master's Certificate in College Teaching and Learning Sciences and Teaching Fellowships

For students interested in pursuing a career that involves teaching, two options exist for students to receive advanced training. They can either complete the Post-Masters Certificate in College Teaching and Learning or conduct a teaching fellowship. The Post-Master's Certificate involves taking five courses on teaching and learning. More information is available here. Alternatively, students may teach their own course and receive mentoring in its creation and implementation.

Graduate School Registration Policies

The Graduate School policy is that all graduate students must maintain continuous enrollment. The Graduate School indicates that failure to register for a single semester, without permission of the ADP GPD in advance, is evidence that the student has terminated their enrollment in the program.

All graduate students who are receiving a GA (Graduate Assistantship) must be registered as full-time students (9 credits/semester); this is true regardless of whether the GA is full-time or part-time. Note that full-time registration is also necessary to defer interest on student loans.

Students meet full-time status in the first two years simply by registering for the aforementioned recommended courses. After completing the master's thesis but before becoming a doctoral candidate, students maintain full-time status by taking additional courses of interest and signing up for PSYC 600, 601, and/or 603 (see description below). Once a student is a doctoral candidate, full-time status is met by registering for PSYC 899 (dissertation research), which is 9 credits.

Non-resident GAs (full-time or part-time) are charged tuition at in-state rates. This may affect out-of-state students who need to register for courses while on an internship or out-of-state students who elect to forgo funding for any reason. See below on declaring residency.

Graduate School "Maximum" Credits

The Graduate School has an internal policy that graduate students must receive permission to register for more than 11 credits. It is a typically straightforward for credit excesses in the 12-15 credit range. The department website describes the process of requesting permission. For example, imagine a fully funded GA registers for 8 credits. As they are funded for 20 hours, they are eligible to take GRAD 601 (see below). GRAD 601 counts as 5 credits, which puts the student over the 11 credit maximum. They therefore need permission. Alternatively, imagine a fully-funded GA registers for two courses (e.g., PSYC 715 and PSYC 695) and is a PhD candidate and therefore should register for PSYC 899. These courses would total 15 credits, and again, they would need to ask permission.

Currently, only the Graduate School can grant permission, and the student (and not the mentor or program director) must initiate the request for permission from the Graduate School.

PSYC 799, PSYC 899, and Other Courses to Consider

Below, we describe other credits students sign up for that are not traditional courses. Three of these are research courses (e.g., master's research) and are associated with a reduced rate of tuition. The other two are used to maintain full-time status but under different circumstances than the GRAD 60*x* courses (described below).

PSYC 799. Master's research. This is a variable credit course (2-6 credits) that is billed at 1/2 the rate of traditional courses. Students need 6 credits of PSYC 799 in (or before) the semester of the final defense of their Master's thesis. More than 6 credits is NOT needed *unless explicitly recommended by the mentor* (e.g., a different thesis project) or to maintain full-time enrollment (typically not relevant at this phase). Students intending to defend their thesis in the spring of their second year typically begin registering for 2 credits of PSYC 799 in the second semester of their first year. An *exception* to this recommendation is for students who will serve as a TA in at least one summer prior to the final defense of the master's thesis.

PSYC 898. Pre-candidacy dissertation research. This course is intended for students who: 1) have not declared doctoral candidacy and 2) need credits to maintain full-time status (beyond any GRAD 60*x* courses, as relevant). PSYC 898 is a variable credit course (3-9 credits) that is charged at 1/3 the rate of traditional courses. This course is not required. As noted, it is used to maintain full-time status when the overall credit load is less than 9 credits. The course is predictably only needed for students who have not declared doctoral candidacy and are ALSO not taking any courses.

PSYC 899. Dissertation research. This is a fixed credit (9 credits) course intended for students who: 1) have declared candidacy and 2) are working on their dissertation. A minimum of 18 credits (two semesters) of PSYC 899 is required. Students should register in PSYC 899 each semester following admission to candidacy.

GRAD 601, 600, and 603

Students who are GAs, have **not** declared candidacy, and are intending on registering for fewer than 9 credits of traditional courses may sign up for GRAD 60*x* courses to maintain full-time status. Note that these courses are only available for funded GAs. The rationale of these courses is that the duties and responsibilities associated with a GA are both a learning opportunity and a time commitment.

Consider these as "placeholder" courses that have no cost. Specifically, each course counts as a fixed number of credits toward full-time status. They will **be listed** as 0 credits on the *class schedule,* but for the given semester, they will count for a fixed number of credits. These courses will NOT be listed on the transcript at all. The specific course a student may register in depends on whether they are funded full- or part-time and whether they are attempting to maintain full-time status in the summer (not typical; see below). IMPORTANT: These courses probably ***do not*** count toward full-time status with respect to student loans. *You must check*.

GRAD 601. This course is designed for full-time GAs (20 hours/week) and counts 5 credits toward full-time status. Thus, if a student had planned on registering for 6 credits (not full-time), if they **also** register for GRAD 601, they will be considered as full-time (11 credits). A GA is considered full-time if they are funded 20 hours from a single source (e.g., department) or if they are funded from different sources (e.g., 10 hours from a grant, 10 hours from the department).

GRAD 600. This course is designed for part-time GAs (10 hours/week) and counts 3 credits toward full-time status. Thus, if a student had planned on registering for 6 credits (not full-time), if they **also** register for GRAD 600, they will be considered as full-time (9 credits)

GRAD 603. This course is designed for GAs who are funded in the summer and wish to be considered full-time status; 603 counts 2 credits toward full-time status. To meet full-time status in the summer, a student must register for at least 3 credits. Thus, if a student wishes to meet full-time status in the summer, they would also need to register for at least 1 course credit. The primary reason students wish to be designated full-time in the summer is to retain the

FICA-exemption with respect to their summer funding.

Summary (taken from the Graduate School website)

a) GAs are not billed tuition or fees for GRAD 600, GRAD 601, or GRAD 603;
b) GAs receive credit towards full-time status from GRAD 600 and GRAD 601;
c) GRAD 600, GRAD 601, and GRAD 603 are not eligible for financial aid, nor are they considered when determining financial aid eligibility;
d) GRAD 600, GRAD 601, and GRAD 603 do ***not*** appear on transcripts or in the schedule of classes;
e) GAs should register for their respective course, GRAD 600, GRAD 601, or GRAD 603, for each semester as needed;
f) GRAD 600, GRAD 601, and GRAD 603 will appear at registration to be for 0 credits. However, GAs are receiving the proper number of credits (3, 5, and 2, respectively);
g) Class numbers for the GA courses are posted on the Graduate School's website. Students must register for GA courses by class number.

Maryland Residency

Though not required, it is strongly recommended that all students declare Maryland residency. The Graduate School assumes students will declare Maryland residency, and we cannot be aware of all issues that might arise for students who are not Maryland residents. If not a Maryland resident, students who elect to forgo being a GA yet still register for credits will be billed at out-of-state tuition rates.

Important: If you were a Maryland resident when you applied to UMBC, you still need to complete and submit the Residency form to the Graduate School in order to have your residency status be considered "in-state." Even if you grew up in Maryland, do not assume that UMBC will automatically classify you as "in-state." Information on confirming residency can be found online.

If you were not a Maryland resident at the time of your application to UMBC, but received in-state tuition benefits as a GA, you will automatically revert to out-of-state status when you are no longer a designated GA. To avoid paying out-of-state tuition, you must officially establish residency in Maryland; this involves an extensive residency petition process. Students should apply early in their graduate career.

Graduate Student Association

The Graduate Student Association (GSA) represents all graduate students in the Graduate School at UMBC. The GSA is important to you for several reasons. It represents your interests as students, as well as teaching assistants and research assistants. The GSA has a small fund of money from which it makes awards to graduate students to defray the costs of their research and their travel costs to professional meetings at which they may be participating. It also sponsors an annual Graduate Student Research Day (GEARS), at which there is typically an interesting keynote speaker, and students have an opportunity to present posters and papers, and for which they may receive special recognition and cash awards. Joining the GSA gives you an opportunity to meet students in other disciplines and to participate in the functioning of the organization, which

The Psychology Graduate Student Organization (PGSO, pronounced "PIG-so") is a graduate student-led organization, founded in January of 2011 with the goal of promoting a sense of community among psychology graduate students. With the help of funding from the Graduate Student Association (GSA), PGSO organizes social events, promotes psychology graduate students' voices on campus, and addresses graduate student needs within the department. All psychology graduate students are encouraged to participate in PGSO events throughout the year, including the following: the Mentorship Program (first year graduate students are paired with a more advanced graduate student to serve as a mentor); holiday parties (e.g., Halloween party, Ugly Sweater Holiday Party, Winter Social); group fitness and health activities (e.g., group fitness classes at the RAC, hiking, meditation); group soup (graduate students bring in homemade soup to share with other students during the winter months); midterms and finals snacks; and other events such as pizza and game nights. PGSO also collects and distributes helpful information for students, such as a list of local healthcare providers and off-campus housing. PGSO is entirely led by graduate students, so there are many opportunities to be involved with this organization. Being a member of PGSO is easy and gives you a chance to lend your voice to issues that matter to psychology graduate students and take on a leadership role within the department.

Forms

There are numerous forms you will need to complete throughout your tenure as a graduate student in the ADP Program.

1. Some of these forms are defined by time (e.g., annually), whereas others are defined by your individual progress through the program (e.g., master's thesis forms).
2. Forms may apply to a) all graduate students at UMBC, b) all graduate students in the Psychology Department, c) all funded graduate students in the department, and/or forms that arise on an "as-needed" basis (e.g., waivers of course requirements).
3. In keeping with who needs to complete them, forms may be required at the: Graduate School level, b) department level, or c) program (ADP) level.
   In keeping with who requires them, forms may be obtained from and/or provided to you by the: Graduate School website, b) department website, or c) GPC (Graduate Program Coordinator) and/or GPD (Graduate Program Director).
4. Form modality may be in: a) DocuSign (increasingly true), b) fillable documents (e.g., PDF or Word; often a step between c and a), and c) hard copy (phasing out)

NOTE: Form requirements, including who requires them, who has them, who initiates them, due dates, and modality, can CHANGE over time. In combination with (2) and (3) above, it is quite possible your classmates will have differing form requirements from you. Your classmates may not be the best information source regarding forms. One constant across forms is that the GPC and GPD should be your first contact regarding forms if it is not otherwise clear from the Graduate School website. They will be able to provide you with all the necessary information and/or resources to move forward. This may be a simple clarification, directing you to the appropriate person in the department (e.g., with respect to questions about tuition coverage, fee reimbursement, travel) and/or at the Graduate School. Most importantly, if they do not know the answer, they will be able to track this down with the appropriate sources and provide it to you (as well as document this information for future graduate students).

Seriously. Questions about forms? Please contact the GPC and GPD. Contact them first (it can save a lot of effort)

This Handbook is NOT the recommended resource to obtain forms. The four main sources of/for forms for you will be:
1. Graduate School website (https://gradschool.umbc.edu/graduation/forms/)
2. Psychology Department website (https://psychology.umbc.edu/graduate-students/)
3. GPC and/or GPD (typically a DocuSign link that the student partially completes)
4. "Via email" – if the form is DocuSign, but is NOT initiated by you, you will receive a DocuSign notification/email

Below, the types of forms are listed/described. To a certain degree, the type of form (e.g., MA and Dissertation) is linked to the source of the form (Graduate School). There are MANY exceptions to this concept, however. We attempt to note this below.

Master's and Doctoral degrees

The processes and flow provided below are current as of August 2025. It is NOT expected to change, but it is also NOT guaranteed to remain as described.

Strongest recommendation: schedule an appointment with the GPC to consider the process (a scheduled meeting is preferred over a drop-in meeting to ensure there is enough time). The ideal time for such a meeting is after you have confirmed your thesis committee but before you have held the proposal defense. This affords plenty of time to address anything that arises (even including whether one or more committee members do not have Graduate Faculty status).

Though similar, there are enough distinct (and important) differences between the Master's degree and doctoral degree that the processes are provided independently.

Master's Degree Forms

Most forms pertain to the master's thesis (one required component of the degree). There is one form that should be completed on your behalf in your second semester if you have not waived research competency. This form will "enroll you" in the Master's (MA) program for HSP. Technically, students apply to (and are accepted into) the doctoral program. To earn a master's degree, students need to be in the MA program.

The list below is in the suggested order of completion by the student:

1. **Nomination of Committee Members** DocuSign (GS; Graduate School forms page).
   Due date: at least 2 months prior to final defense. Requires signatures of student, mentor, and GPD. Recommendation: file this AS SOON AS you know the committee FYI: It requests a proposed examination date. This is NOT EXPECTED to be correct. Just estimate something in the middle of the month/year you are hoping for. You do NOT need to complete an updated form if the date changes (More information about Committees (graduate faculty status, numbers, etc.) is provided elsewhere in this Handbook)

2. **Proposal Defense Form** (Psychology Department page)
   This is an internal (Departmental) form: / This begins with a Google Forms document found in the Graduate Student Resources tab of the Psychology Department web site. This will generate a DocuSign form for which the student is responsible for completing all of the form with the exception of the signatures (e.g., title, date of proposal defense, committee members, etc.). DocuSign will be directed to the mentor who initiates signing procedures following the defense (as relevant).
   Due date: At least two weeks before the scheduled proposal defense.
   Recommendation: Request this as soon as you schedule the proposal defense with the committee. You can complete and provide to your mentor prior to defense date

3. **Certification of Readiness to Defend form** DocuSign (Graduate School forms website)
   Due date: at least two weeks prior to final defense
   The defense date on this document must be correct (i.e., scheduled defense date)
   Requires signatures of student, mentor, and GPD
   Recommendation: file this AS SOON AS you have scheduled the final defense
   FYI: your program code is ADPS

   IMPORTANT: Submission of this form is what "generates" the final defense paperwork (i.e., indication of whether the student passed). The student is only provided the final defense paperwork after all signatures are provided. Defenses have been CANCELLED because this paperwork was not submitted on time. Just follow the recommendation above.

4. **Approval sheet**
   DocuSign (Graduate School forms website) (it must be submitted using DocuSign)
   Due date: consider this as one aspect of uploading your thesis to ProQuest
   Can be completed after final defense has been passed AND any revisions to the document have been approved (if relevant).
   Requires signatures of student and Chair (and Co-Chair, if relevant)
   Recommendation: file this right as (just before, same time, just after) you upload your thesis to ProQuest
   FYI: this is a required page of the submitted thesis.

5. **Submit thesis (to ProQuest)**
   Link to portal is from Graduate School website

   Due date: see due dates on Graduate School pages (they vary by term). The due date is the same for the thesis and the approval sheet.
   FYI: if you do not meet the due date it will NOT impact whether you have (or have not) passed the thesis defense (within reason). It CAN (and has) impact your ability to graduate in a given term

Doctoral Degree Forms

Much of the below looks the same as above. There ARE differences, however. Please simply assume at least <something> has changed since your MA degree.

The majority of forms pertain to the Dissertation. The list below is in the suggested order of completion.

1. Nomination of Committee Members DocuSign (Graduate School forms website)
   Due date: at least 6 months prior to final defense
   Form requires you to identify two Readers (neither Chair nor Co-Chair can be a Reader). Please work with your mentor(s) at determining the Readers. It is not required to submit

the form, but it is strongly recommended you confirm the individuals are willing to be identified as the Reader

Requires signatures of student, mentor, and GPD

Recommendation: file this as soon as you know the committee AND have confirmed who will be the Readers

> FYI: same issue with proposed examination date (this is not expected to be correct). The Reader role is distinct and was partially addressed above
>
> The rules for Committee composition are NOT the same as for MA. Please see information about Committees elsewhere in this Handbook

2. Proposal Defense Form

   This is an internal (Departmental) form.

   This begins with a Google Forms document found in the [Graduate Student Resources](#) tab of the Psychology Department web site

   This will generate a DocuSign form for which the student is responsible for completing all of the form with the exception of the signatures (e.g., title, date of proposal defense, committee members, etc.).

   Due date: At least two weeks before the scheduled proposal defense

   Recommendation: provide to your mentor prior to defense date

4. Certification of Readiness to Defend form DocuSign (Graduate School forms website)

   Due date: due to the Graduate School at least two weeks prior to final defense

   IMPORTANT: The   Readers must ALSO sign off on this form in order for it to be completed. The Readers will ALSO need at least two weeks to read and indicate the dissertation is ready for defense. Therefore, the form should be   initiated/created at least four weeks prior to defense.

   The defense date on this document must be correct (i.e., scheduled defense date) Requires signatures of student, mentor, both readers, and GPD

   Recommendation: file this at least four weeks in advance of defense date.

   FYI: As with the MA, submission of this form generates the final defense paperwork (i.e., indication of whether the student passed). The form can be incomplete if it is missing any of the above signatures (which is why the dissertation needs to be ready four weeks prior to defense; for the Readers).

5. Announcement of Defense DocuSign (Graduate School forms website)

   Due date: two weeks prior to final defense (presumably after the Readiness to Defend form has been completed)Does not require specific signatures, but must include dissertation abstract, title, date and location of defense

   Not submitting the form CAN result in the defense being cancelled.

   Recommendation: prepare this announcement at the same time the Readiness Form is submitted. When everyone signs the Readiness Form, the student is notified; at that time, the Announcement can simply be submitted.

   FYI: the full announcement (title, abstract, date and location of defense, etc.) is made publicly available (linked from the [Graduate School website](#))

6. Approval sheet
DocuSign (Graduate School forms website) (must be DocuSign; cannot be a scanned pdf)
Due date: consider this as one aspect of uploading your document to ProQuest
Can be completed after final defense has been passed AND any revisions to the document have been approved (if relevant).
Requires signatures of student and Chair (and Co-Chair, if relevant)
Recommendation: file this right as (just before, same time, just after) you upload your thesis to ProQuest
FYI: as with MA, this is a required page of your submitted thesis.

7. Submit thesis/dissertation (to ProQuest)
Link to portal is from [Graduate School website](#)
Due date: see due dates on Graduate School pages (they vary by term). The due date is the same for the thesis and approval sheet.
FYI: if you do not meet the due date it will NOT impact whether you have (or have not) passed the thesis defense (within reason). It CAN impact your ability to graduate in a given term.

8. Apply to Graduate (aka apply for degree) Completed from your my.umbc portal
Due date: see Graduate School website. These dates are EARLIER than the thesis submission and/or   certification of requirements forms above
Instructions for application available on Graduate School website
FYI: on the Graduate School webpage, this is currently referred to as "[Online Application for Diploma](#)" (which is obviously part of it).

Financial Forms (Funding Packages and Fee Remission)

It is VERY PROBLEMATIC to consider the Handbook as the best source of information. Below are observations regarding funding based on reported experiences of students.
- Funding packages make use of DocuSign. Please check email regularly
- Please make sure you understand information you are "selecting" with respect to health insurance
- Students pay for fees when they register.
- The amount that is paid is reimbursed by the department if the student is eligible. It is not easily possible to do this in other ways.
- Pay attention to the information that is requested to substantiate the payment of fees. If the information is not in the correct format, it can delay the reimbursement of fees.
- Fully funded (20 hours) GAs are not allowed to take other funded positions at USM (University System of Maryland) without special permission. Even then, it is typically only allowed for an additional 5 hours a week
- Prompt attention to ALL requests pertaining to funding (from the mentor, the business specialist, the GPD, the GPC) is very important to make sure any/all issues are addressed well in advance.

UMBC Campus Policies

Non-Discrimination Policy

UMBC values safety, cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility, lifelong learning, equity, and civic engagement. Consistent with these principles, UMBC (including the ADP Graduate Program) does not discriminate in offering equal access to its educational programs and activities, support for degree completion, or with respect to Graduate Assistantship offers, terms and conditions on the basis of any factors that are irrelevant to the individual's success in graduate training or the profession, including a UMBC community member's race, creed, color, religion, sex, gender, pregnancy, ancestry, age, gender identity or expression, national origin, veterans status, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or genetic information. It is an expectation that HSP students and faculty will demonstrate respect for human diversity in all its manifestations, including age, disability, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, language, national origin, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status.

Below are some resources for someone experiencing discrimination:
- Accessibility Resources
- Anti-Racism Resources
- Campus Resources
- LGBTQIA+ Resources
- Pregnancy and Parenting Resources
- Student Support and Academic Accommodation and Resources
- Aging Community Resources

To file a complaint or make a confidential report/ referral related to hate, bias, discrimination, harassment, sexual misconduct, you may access ECR's private online report and referral form or contact our office directly:

Email us or call us:
Office of Equity and Civil Rights ecr@umbc.edu
410.455.1717

Contact:
Leah Reynolds, Interim Title IX Coordinator and Director lreynol1@umbc.edu

Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, and Gender Based Violence and Discrimination

UMBC Policy and Federal law (Title IX) prohibit discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex, sexual orientation, and gender identity in University programs and activities. Any student who is impacted by sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking,

sexual exploitation, gender discrimination, pregnancy discrimination, gender-based harassment or retaliation should contact the University's Title IX Coordinator to make a report and/or access support and resources. The Title IX Coordinator can be reached at titleixcoordinator@umbc.edu or 410-455-1717.

You can access support and resources even if you do not want to take any further action. You will not be forced to file a formal complaint or police report. Please be aware that the University may take action on its own if essential to protect the safety of the community.
If you are interested in or thinking about making a report, please use the Online Reporting/Referral Form. Please note that, if you report anonymously, the University's ability to respond will be limited.

Notice that Faculty and Teaching Assistants are Responsible Employees with Mandatory Reporting Obligations

All faculty members are considered Responsible Employees, per UMBC's Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Harassment, and Gender Discrimination. Faculty are therefore required to report any/ all available information regarding conduct falling under the Policy and violations of the Policy to the Title IX Coordinator, even if a student discloses an experience that occurred before attending UMBC and/or an incident that only involves people not affiliated with UMBC. Reports are required regardless of the amount of detail provided and even in instances where support has already been offered or received.

While faculty members want to encourage you to share information related to your life experiences through discussion and written work, students should understand that faculty are required to report past and present sexual assault, domestic and interpersonal violence, stalking, and gender discrimination that is shared with them to the Title IX Coordinator so that the University can inform students of their rights, resources and support. While you are encouraged to do so, you are not obligated to respond to outreach conducted as a result of a report to the Title IX Coordinator.

If you need to speak with someone in confidence, who does not have an obligation to report to the Title IX Coordinator, UMBC has a number of Confidential Resources available to support you:

Retriever Integrated Health (Main Campus): 410-455-2472;
Monday – Friday 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m.;
For After-Hours Support, Call 988.

Center for Counseling and Well-Being (Shady Grove Campus): 301-738-6273;
Monday- Thursday 10:00a.m. – 7:00 p.m. and Friday 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. (virtual)

Pastoral Counseling via The Gathering Space for Spiritual Well-Being: 410-455-6795;
i3b@umbc.edu; Monday – Friday 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 p.m.

Other Resources

Women's Center (open to students of all genders):
410-455-2714; womenscenter@umbc.edu;
Monday – Thursday 9:30 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. and Friday 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Child Abuse and Neglect

Please note that Maryland law and UMBC policy require that faculty report all disclosures or suspicions of child abuse or neglect to the Department of Social Services and/or the police, even if the person who experienced the abuse or neglect is now over 18.

Pregnant and Parenting Students

UMBC's Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Sexual Harassment, and Gender Discrimination expressly prohibits all forms of discrimination and harassment on the basis of sex, including pregnancy. Resources for pregnant, parenting, and breastfeeding students are available through the University's Office of Equity and Civil Rights. Pregnant and parenting students are encouraged to contact the Title IX Coordinator to discuss plans and ensure ongoing access to their academic program with respect to a leave of absence, returning following leave, or any other accommodation that may be needed related to pregnancy, childbirth, adoption, breastfeeding, and/or the early months of parenting.

In addition, students who are pregnant and have an impairment related to their pregnancy that qualifies as disability under the ADA may be entitled to accommodations through the Office of Student Disability Services.

Religious Observances & Accommodations

UMBC Policy provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs, and that students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time for any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of any intended absences or requested modifications for religious observances in advance, and as early as possible. For questions or guidance regarding religious observance accommodations, please contact the Office of Equity and Civil Rights at ecr@umbc.edu.

Hate, Bias, Discrimination, and Harassment

UMBC values safety, cultural and ethnic diversity, social responsibility, lifelong learning, equity, and civic engagement.

Consistent with these principles, UMBC Policy prohibits discrimination and harassment in its educational programs and activities or with respect to employment terms and conditions based on race, creed, color, religion, sex, gender, pregnancy, ancestry, age, gender identity or expression,

national origin, veterans status, marital status, sexual orientation, physical or mental disability, or genetic information.

Students (and faculty and staff) who experience discrimination, harassment, hate, or bias or who have such matters reported to them, should use the online reporting/referral form to report discrimination, hate, or bias incidents. You may report incidents that happen to you anonymously. Please note that if you report anonymously, the University's ability to respond will be limited.

Professional Behaviors and Expectations

Students are expected to handle all professional commitments in a responsible manner. Professional commitments include:
- Fulfilling TA and RA responsibilities in a timely manner;
- Providing quality and timely clinical or community services, reports, and administrative documentation;
- Attending and actively participating in all classes, which includes arriving on time, being fully prepared for class, completing assignments on time, and refraining from distracting or interfering activities during class (e.g., texting, web surfing, or other non- class-related activities); and
- Checking UMBC email regularly and responding to communication about professional responsibilities promptly as appropriate to one's duties/roles.

Professional development will be evaluated as part of students' annual evaluations or more frequently if concerns are brought to the attention of the faculty.

Stress Management

Graduate education can be stressful. This tends to diminish as students move beyond their first year of training, but it is a fact of life that our best efforts cannot fully eliminate. There are some things, however, that students can do that should help them in coping with this stress.

1. Don't try to face it alone. Evidence suggests that peer support can help buffer the effects of stress. Discovering that you are not alone in your experiences of uncertainty, fear, anger, and so forth, by sharing these with your fellow students, can go a long way toward mitigating their effects. Forming study groups, informal socializing, and discussing your concerns with your fellow students are important ways of gaining peer support and developing a sense of community in the program. We recommend them highly.

2. Turn to the faculty. Remember that the faculty is highly invested in your success in the program. You wouldn't be in the program if the faculty did not believe that you could succeed. Make an effort to become acquainted with the faculty. They can be an important source of support--both informational and personal--and want to be.

3. Know what to expect and plan for it. There are two peak periods of stress for students in the program. The first is your first year, when you feel overwhelmed by the demands of the program and by the changes that have occurred in your life upon entering the program, and the second is when you are preparing for the qualifying exam. To feel anxious during these two periods is normal, although nonetheless uncomfortable. In the case of first-year stress, it can help to get to know some second-year students--they successfully completed their first year; find out how and recognize that they are not so different from yourself. Also, despite all the work you have, set aside some time for socializing and recreation; these are essential to your mental and physical health.

4. Maintain some balance between your life as a student and the rest of your life. In particular, if you are married, have a family, or a significant other, make time for them. This is a period of strain for them, just as it is for you; they need your affection and attention to their needs and concerns, just as you need theirs. Remember, your career is only one part of your life and will mean more with the rest.

5. Check out rumors. Rumors are inevitable and can at times be sources of stress. The best way of dealing with them is by confronting them directly by discussing them with your advisor, specialty program director, or the ADP Program director, to learn the facts. The facts are usually less ominous than the rumors cast by their shadow.

6. Consider the source. Information regarding process, guidelines, and policy is best obtained from faculty advisors, GPD, and/or GPC. Whereas questions regarding budgeting, neighborhoods to live, and attention to coursework can be best addressed by classmates. Finally, insights on maintaining work-life balance can be provided by students, staff, and/or faculty.

Managing Difficult Course Content

Some of your courses (e.g., Diversity and/or Ethics) or specific practicum experiences may require you to self-disclose and examine your personal beliefs and values in a class discussion or group supervisory meeting context. Although some of these discussions may be uncomfortable, we believe they are crucial to your personal and professional growth as a psychologist. Please be assured that we strive to create a safe and supportive environment for self-examination in the context of academic inquiry. (We do not require, nor do we provide, group therapy for our trainees.) If you have any concerns with the nature or content of course discussions, we encourage you to talk with your instructor, advisor, or the ADP GPD.

ADP Faculty

The Department of Psychology at UMBC includes 34 full-time faculty members, many of whom play an active role in the Applied Developmental Psychology program. The faculty offer a broad background in the psychological and behavioral processes associated with practical problems of development. A brief description of interests and a list of representative publications are included for the ADP core program faculty. Although core ADP faculty members typically serve as mentors to graduate students in the program, students also take courses with other members and, sometimes, can work with them as well. Reprints for articles cited below are available on request, by writing or e-mailing the faculty member. In some cases, links to publications are available on a [faculty member's website](#).

Core Program Faculty

Dr. John C. Borrero is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and Licensed Behavior Analyst whose research focuses on :(a) the assessment and treatment of severe problem behavior, (b) the assessment and treatment of pediatric food refusal, and (c) programming effective learning environments for typically developing preschoolers.

E-mail: jborrero@umbc.edu

Borrero, J. C., Rosenblum, A. K., Castillo, M. I., Spann, M. W., & Borrero, C. S. W. (2022). Do children who exhibit food selectivity prefer to save the best (bite) for last? *Behavioral Interventions, 37*(2), 529-544.https://doi.org/10.1002/bin.1845

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(2021). Accumulated and distributed response-reinforcer arrangements during the treatment of escape-maintained problem behavior. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, *54*(4), 1566-1585. doi.org/10.1002/jaba.870

Dr. Mirela Cengher is a Board Certified Behavior Analyst and a Licensed Behavior Analyst. Her research focuses on (a) variables that foster language development and concept formation, and (b) the assessment and treatment of problem behavior in individuals with developmental disabilities.

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Website: abaatumbc.com

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