

DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY (PHD)

The Developmental Psychology Graduate Program aims to understand and support the healthy development of children, youth, and families. Our faculty specialize in the cognitive, cultural, social-emotional, linguistic, and neural factors that promote typical development and learning in infancy through adolescence. Through research training, coursework, and teaching, students gain the professional skills they need for non-clinical academic or professional careers.

Related Programs

Master's

- Applied Social Psychology (MA) (<https://catalog.luc.edu/graduate-professional/graduate-school/arts-sciences/psychology/applied-social-psychology-ma/>)

Doctoral

- Applied Social Psychology (PhD) (<https://catalog.luc.edu/graduate-professional/graduate-school/arts-sciences/psychology/applied-social-psychology-phd/>)
- Clinical Psychology (PhD) (<https://catalog.luc.edu/graduate-professional/graduate-school/arts-sciences/psychology/clinical-psychology-phd/>)

Curriculum

The PhD in Developmental Psychology requires 60 credit hours, a critical review paper, master's thesis, qualifying examination, and dissertation.

En route to earning the PhD in Developmental Psychology, students complete a master's degree (30 credit hours). An additional 30 credit hours are required beyond the master's degree for the doctoral degree.

Coursework Requirements

| Code | Title | Hours |
|--|---|-------|
| Psychology Core ¹ | | |
| PSYC 420 | Research Methods in Psychology | 3 |
| PSYC 482 | Advanced Statistics | 3 |
| PSYC 435 | Seminar in Cognitive Neuroscience | 3 |
| or PSYC 552 | Neuropsychology | |
| PSYC 491 | Multivariate Analysis | 3 |
| Development Track Requirements | | |
| PSYC 473 | Social Development | 3 |
| PSYC 475 | Cognitive Development | 3 |
| <i>Choose Four Developmental Courses</i> | | 12 |
| PSYC 515 | Infancy | |
| PSYC 540 | Psychology of Language Development | |
| PSYC 545 | Select Topics in Developmental Psychology (Attention Learning and the Media) | |
| PSYC 545 | Select Topics in Developmental Psychology (Parenting) | |
| PSYC 545 | Select Topics in Developmental Psychology (Child Development and Social Policy) | |
| PSYC 548 | Risk and Opportunity in Childhood and Adolescence | |

| | | |
|---|--|-----------|
| <i>Choose One Social or Clinical Course</i> | | 3 |
| PSYC 438 | Principles of Psychological Assessment Child & Adult | |
| PSYC 451 | Psychopathology of Childhood & Adolescents | |
| PSYC 460 | Social Psychological Theory | |
| PSYC 461 | Attitude and Attitude Change | |
| PSYC 462 | Cognitive Social Psychology | |
| PSYC 474 | Research in Group Dynamics | |
| PSYC 477 | The Self and Self-Esteem | |
| PSYC 484 | Prejudice and Intergroup Relations | |
| PSYC 489 | Political Cognition | |
| PSYC 525 | Seminar in Social Psychology | |
| <i>Four Directed Readings</i> | | 12 |
| PSYC 598 | Research | |
| PSYC 597 | Integrative Readings in Psychology | |
| PSYC 599 | Directed Readings (Taken Twice) | |
| <i>Three Electives</i> ² | | 9 |
| <i>Two Minor Area Courses</i> ³ | | 6 |
| Total Hours | | 60 |

¹ All courses in the Psychology Core must be completed with a grade of B or better to be applied to the degree.

² Elective courses may be selected from the Developmental, Social or Clinical Topics courses listed above, or courses in the students' minor area, but each course can count only once toward meeting a requirement (i.e., no double dipping).

³ Minor Areas include, but are not limited to: Statistics and Education. Other courses not listed here might also be acceptable to meet the minor requirement, but student must confer with the Graduate Program Director. All courses must be taken at the graduate level (400 or above).

Minor Area Options

| Code | Title | Hours |
|---------------------------|--|-------|
| Minor Area Options | | |
| <i>Statistics Minor</i> | | |
| PSYC 493 | Structural Equation Modeling | |
| RMTD 484 | Hierarchical Linear Models | |
| RMTD 487 | Factor Analysis | |
| RMTD 488 | Meta-Analysis | |
| <i>Education Minor</i> | | |
| CIEP 401 | The Exceptional Child | |
| CIEP 451 | Psychology of Learning | |
| CIEP 481 | Prevention, Assessment & Intervention: Early Childhood | |

Comprehensive Examination

The doctoral qualifying exam is taken after the student has completed at least two full years in the graduate program. The qualifying examination is a written exam, completed independently, and is the final step before the student begins dissertation research. At this stage, the student should have acquired considerable knowledge of the field of developmental psychology and of one or more specialty areas. Students will write a grant proposal related to their research area, based on guidelines from the faculty.

Thesis and Dissertation

The Master's thesis is an original research project, supervised by a Psychology Department faculty member, written up as a journal article and orally defended. Students who enter with advanced standing should check with the Graduate Program Director to determine if this requirement is met with previous master's degree.

The Dissertation is the product of a large-scale research endeavor undertaken with guidance and supervision of a faculty committee. A public oral defense of the dissertation is required, and after successful completion the final work will be deposited in a publicly available database in accordance with Graduate School policy.

Responsible Conduct of Research

All PhD students and students in thesis-based Master's degree programs must successfully complete UNIV 370 Responsible Conduct in Research and Scholarship or other approved coursework in responsible conduct of research as part of the degree requirements. It is strongly recommended that students complete this two-day training before beginning the dissertation/thesis stage of the program.

Graduate & Professional Standards and Regulations

Students in graduate and professional programs can find their Academic Policies in Graduate and Professional Academic Standards and Regulations (<https://catalog.luc.edu/academic-standards-regulations/graduate-professional/>) under their school. Any additional University Policies supersede school policies.

Learning Outcomes

Students who complete the PhD in Developmental Psychology will:

- Acquire broad understanding of psychological concepts, and advanced knowledge of the cognitive, cultural, social-emotional, linguistic and neural factors that promote the learning and development of children and youth.
- Become versed in various data gathering methods, the ethical conduct of research, and the use of sophisticated statistical techniques.
- Conduct original research that contributes new knowledge and can ultimately support the healthy development of children, youth, and families.
- Learn about available research funding opportunities, and obtain experience with grant writing.
- Produce high quality oral and written presentations, including posters at conferences, and publications in peer-reviewed journals.