Psychological & Brain Sciences

The Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences teaches graduate students who are interested in becoming the next generation of academic researchers and educators in psychological and brain sciences. Graduate study may be undertaken in the following general areas: Behavior, Brain & Cognition; Clinical Psychology; Aging & Development; and Social & Personality Psychology. The traditions of Washington University and the department encourage interdisciplinary graduate study, both between the subfields of psychological and brain sciences and across other disciplines. Therefore, although students must affiliate with at least one of the areas within psychological and brain sciences, they are frequently affiliated with multiple areas within the field. In addition, many graduate students in the department also engage in interdisciplinary learning, scholarship and research. For example, cross-disciplinary opportunities and research are available in the Division of Biology and Biomedical Sciences (e.g., neuroscience, genetics); in the programs of Linguistics and of Cognitive, Computational, and Systems Neuroscience; in African-American Studies; and in Philosophy-Neuroscience-Psychology, as well as in several departments in the School of Medicine and McKelvey School of Engineering.

The Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences admits students for full-time study toward the PhD and does not offer a terminal master's degree. However, students are required to complete a master's degree with a thesis as part of the requirements for a PhD. In addition, the PhD includes required courses (including statistics, methods, ethics and several core content areas), a subject matter exam, at least two semesters of a teaching experience to fulfill the doctoral teaching requirement, and consistently high-quality research productivity that results in publishable findings.

The Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences also offers the Graduate Certificate in Quantitative Data Analysis, which is open to graduate students of various disciplines. Advanced skills and knowledge in quantitative analysis, methods and interpretation are critical assets for scholars in a wide range of disciplines within the social sciences. In addition, many of the important practical, analytical and conceptual skills are shared across disciplines. Many of the graduate programs in the social sciences include basic quantitative analysis skills within the core required curriculum of their department, but many students would benefit from advanced preparation in this domain. The certificate program will provide an organized means for students to achieve an advanced level of knowledge and skill in quantitative social science data analysis, interpretation and visualization that can be applied and shared in a variety of occupational domains.