

# I. Overview of Our Graduate Programs (2020/2021)

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The Department of Psychology and Neuroscience offers graduate training leading to MSc and PhD degrees in Psychology & Neuroscience, and to a PhD degree in Clinical Psychology. The Psychology & Neuroscience degree can be completed in either the Experimental Psychology or Neuroscience stream. Master's level students in Psychology & Neuroscience typically progress into the PhD program. Students may either write up their M.Sc. thesis, or transfer into the Ph.D. program without writing up the M.Sc. Note that we do not offer a Master's degree in Clinical Psychology.

## A. Psychology & Neuroscience Degree

*Experimental Stream:* The Experimental stream emphasizes training for research. It (like our other programs, see below) is best described as "apprenticeship" program in which students work closely with a faculty member to supervise the student's research. Compared with many other graduate programs, we place less emphasis on course work and greater emphasis on research, scholarship and independent thinking. Candidates for the Master's Experimental stream must have an Honours degree or equivalent in Psychology; candidates for the PhD program must have either a Master's degree, or successfully transfer from the M.Sc. to the Ph.D.

*Neuroscience Stream:* The Neuroscience stream is also designed as an "apprenticeship" program in which students work closely with a faculty member who has agreed to supervise their research. Emphasis is placed on interdisciplinary research, scholarship and independent thinking rather than on course work. Candidates for the Master's Neuroscience stream must have an Honours degree or equivalent in the area of graduate work; candidates for the PhD program must have either a Master's degree, or successfully transfer from the M.Sc. to the Ph.D.

## B. Clinical Psychology Degree

The Clinical Psychology PhD program is administered through the Clinical Program Committee. It is a CPA accredited, structured, five-year program, which follows the "scientist practitioner" model. It considers clinical psychology as part of the science of psychology and therefore emphasizes research. During the first four years of the Clinical Psychology program, students complete required and elective courses, conduct comprehensive and thesis research, and gain clinical experience through in-course practica and field placements. Students are involved in research from the outset, and are expected to conduct research leading to empirical, methodological and/or theoretical advances in their field of study, some or all of which will be included in their dissertation and defended publicly. In the final year of their program, students participate in the APPIC match for a full-year clinical internship.

Candidates for the Clinical Psychology Program must have a 4-year undergraduate Honours degree in Psychology from a Canadian university, or the equivalent training. Our Clinical Psychology Program is a fast-track PhD program in which students entering from the Bachelor's degree are registered in an MSc and then fast-tracked into the PhD before the end of their first year, without completing a Master's thesis or obtaining a Master's degree. Students admitted with a Master's degree in Psychology or a closely related field are eligible for direct-entry into the PhD and may be eligible for advanced standing within the program; such standing is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. All students in the Clinical Psychology Program are required to do two teaching assistantships. Students entering the Clinical Psychology Program with a Master's degree may be exempted from one

teaching assistantship; such exemptions will be decided upon by the Director of Clinical Training on a case-by-case basis.

## C. Research Areas

Primary research strengths in our department include, but are not limited to: clinical psychology; cognition and cognitive neuroscience; development; neuroscience and animal behaviour. Students can pursue any of these research interests within the context of any of our programs. Moreover, clinical students may be supervised by non-clinical faculty and vice versa. The representation of core research interests across programs allows students the opportunity to tailor their dissertation work according to their interests by working with faculty members who have the expertise that the student seeks (e.g., a clinical student interested in specializing in neuropsychology might work with a faculty member with strong cognitive neuroscience or neuroscience interests). Students are also encouraged to collaborate with faculty outside of the department.

## II. Faculty Research Interests

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Faculty research interests can be found on the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience website ([Faculty](#)). Individuals listed as regular Faculty and Cross-Appointed Faculty are eligible to serve as primary dissertation and comprehensive project supervisors, while Adjunct (FGS) Professors are eligible to serve as co-supervisors with a member from the department only. Individuals listed as Clinical Associates are eligible for supervision of clinical practica only.

Individuals eligible to serve as primary dissertation supervisors may elect to supervise students in *either* of our graduate programs. Stated another way, a student may potentially work with any eligible supervisor regardless of the student's intended degree program; Psychology & Neuroscience or Clinical Psychology students can potentially be supervised by any of our eligible experimental, neuroscience, or clinical faculty members.

## III. Admissions Requirements

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### A. Psychology & Neuroscience Degree

*Experimental Stream:* Students with an undergraduate degree who are seeking admission to our Experimental stream in the Psychology & Neuroscience program must apply for the MSc admission, which requires that students have a 4-year Honours Bachelor's degree from a Canadian University or its equivalent elsewhere. The Honours degree should be in Psychology with at least a B+ average over all courses taken.

*Neuroscience stream:* Students with an undergraduate degree who are seeking admission to our Neuroscience stream in the Psychology & Neuroscience program must apply for the MSc admission, which requires that students have a 4-year Honours Bachelor's degree from a Canadian University or its equivalent. The Honours degree should be in the area of intended study with at least a B+ average over all courses taken.

Students outside of our program can apply for the PhD in Psychology & Neuroscience after they have obtained a Master's degree elsewhere.

## **B. Clinical Psychology**

Candidates for the Clinical Psychology Program must have a 4-year Honours Bachelor's degree in psychology from a Canadian university (or the equivalent). To be admitted, the student must have a B+ average over all courses taken.

Our Clinical Psychology Program is a fast-track PhD program in which students entering from the bachelor's degree are registered in an MSc and then fast-tracked into the PhD before the end of their first year, without completing a Master's thesis or obtaining a Master's degree. Students admitted with a Master's degree in Psychology or a closely related field are eligible for direct-entry into the PhD and may be eligible for advanced standing within the program; such standing is evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

## **C. Foreign Applicants**

As the language of study at Dalhousie University is English, candidates whose native language is not English must demonstrate their capacity to pursue a graduate-level program in English before admission to any of our graduate programs. The standard test is the TOEFL. The minimum acceptable score is 580 for the written TOEFL, 92 for the internet-based test. We recommend that potential students taking the non-computer TOEFL test should also take the Test of Written English (TWE) component. The following other tests will also be accepted with the following minimum scores: MELAB, 85; IELTS, 7, CanTest, average of at least 4.5 with no band score lower than 4.0; CAEL, 70 overall, with no band score lower than 60.

## D. General Information for All Applicants

Most admissions decisions for the upcoming academic year are made from mid-December through to April; we therefore recommend that you submit your completed application by December 1 to receive full consideration. Applications received up until about June 30 *may* be considered, but *only* if there is room in the appropriate program; this will not usually be the case. Our programs are relatively small and high caliber; thus, they are highly competitive.

It takes time for us to receive and process your application. From the time your application first arrives at Dalhousie until the time that it appears as "received" when you check its status online may be up to 3-4 weeks. Please do not call or email to inquire about whether your application has been received. We receive hundreds of applications for our programs every year; time spent confirming the receipt of applications is time taken away from the processing of those applications. You should contact us to check on the receipt of your application only if you submitted your application in time for the **December 1 deadline** and the online records fail to show it **as received by January 7**.

Due to the fact that research in our programs is based on a mentorship model, prospective students must correspond with one or more potential graduate supervisors. We will not admit a student unless a faculty member has agreed to supervise that student's graduate research.

Prospective students should also have applied for all external funding for which they are eligible – e.g., NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR. Note that most applications for funding must be completed well in advance of graduate school admissions – usually in October/November of the preceding year for a September start-date.

Prospective students who will be nominated for a prestigious Killam Scholarship may be emailed in mid-to late January and asked to provide: 1) proof of application for external support (required by the Faculty of Graduate Studies; 2) a list of achievements. Applicants are asked to please have this information handy in case we need it on short notice.

Applicants will have a University record created when applying to our Graduate Program. These records will be stored and managed according to the guidelines listed on the current Academic Calendar for Dalhousie under Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy.

## E. Information for Foreign Applicants

Foreign students who are joining our program are urged to contact their local Canadian Immigration Service Centre (CIC) well before entering the country. Recent rulings preclude students from becoming Landed Immigrants but there is some latitude given here. Check with your local Centre.

Most students will be given Student Visas and Non-Resident Employment Visas. The latter is technically appropriate as graduate student TA's are considered employees of Dalhousie.

Finally, all foreign students should carefully check what documents are required by the Canadian Immigration Board before attempting to enter the Country and should have all necessary documents ready to present upon entry. Not having the proper paperwork could possibly prevent entry at the border thus resulting in a delay of your studies.

## F. How to Apply to our Programs

Prospective students applying for a position should submit the following by December 1:

- A completed application form
  - please go to the Faculty of Graduate Studies website for [application information and forms](https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies.html) (<https://www.dal.ca/faculty/gradstudies.html>)
- A \$115 application fee
  - This payment can be made online with a credit card or by way of the other methods listed in the body of the application itself. If you are not able to pay online, please contact the Office of the Registrar (<http://registrar.dal.ca/>) to make payment.
    - Do **not** send your payment to the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience
- At least two letters of reference (three for the Clinical Program at least one of which must focus on the student's clinical experience and/or suitability for work in clinical psychology)
  - letters may be submitted by your referees using the Dalhousie e-ref Electronic Reference System; the referee will be sent an email and directed to a secure website to complete the reference form. It is critical that you supply a university email address for your referee (i.e., not Yahoo, Gmail, Hotmail, etc.). Your referee will not receive an invitation to provide a letter if you do not supply a university address. It will take at least 5 days for referees to receive a link sent to their emails.
  - alternatively, letters may be submitted in signed hard copy directly to our program by providing your referee with a copy of the confidential referee form available on the Faculty of Graduate Studies Website: [Confidential Reference letter Doc](#)
    - This should be signed and sent directly to our department at:  
Psychology Graduate Program Admissions  
c/o Patti Devlin  
Psychology Department  
Dalhousie University  
1355 Oxford Street  
PO Box 15000  
Halifax, Nova Scotia  
B3H 4R2  
CANADA
    - You may also ask your referee to provide you with a hard copy of the letter to include with your application. The letter must be submitted in a sealed envelope with your referee's signature across the back flap.
- Official copies of all undergraduate and graduate transcripts, regardless of the number of courses taken
- GRE requirements differ between the Programs
  - Experimental stream: GRE general scores are *not required* for the Experimental Psychology stream applicants. GRE general scores are recommended for students claiming an 'equivalent-to-Honours', international students, and those who have a relatively weak background in Psychology and/or some relatively weak grades in their undergraduate Psychology courses.
  - Neuroscience stream: GRE general scores are *not required* for Neuroscience stream applicants. GRE general scores are recommended for international students, and those who have a relatively weak background in Neuroscience and/or some relatively weak grades in their undergraduate courses
  - Clinical Fast-Tracked Program: GRE general scores are required for all applicants (GRE subject scores are required for students claiming an 'equivalent-to-Honours',

- international students, and those who have a relatively weak background in Psychology and/or some relatively weak grades in their undergraduate Psychology courses; the GRE subject scores are not required but are nevertheless strongly recommended for other applicants as they help the admissions committee ensure that a student has the necessary undergraduate-level background and training in Psychology)
- please contact ETS if you need to obtain a code for submitting your GRE to our department; ETS sets these codes and does not communicate them to our department
    - we suggest that you try to find the ETS code lists by using Google or other search engine and check the returned links for the most recent academic year
  - A letter from the applicant indicating his/her research and career interests. There is *no* page limit for this statement, but it is usually no longer than 1-2 pages.
    - clearly specify the stream/degree program to which you are applying (i.e., Experimental stream within Psychology & Neuroscience) and mention – by name (preferably in boldface print) – any faculty members with whom you have corresponded and/or with whom you would be particularly interested in working
    - if you have not completed an Honours degree, you must detail the independent research experience and core coursework (e.g., research design, statistics) that you would like to have considered as “equivalent to Honours”
  - Application cover sheet available for download: [Cover Sheet](#)
  - Electronic Supplement found on the Psychology website: [Electronic Supplement #8](#)

## G. Questions about Graduate Applications

Questions about the Graduate Program Applications please contact: [Patti.Devlin@dal.ca](mailto:Patti.Devlin@dal.ca)

## H. Accepting a Position in Our Program

The graduate admissions process starts as early as mid-December and sometimes may continue until late April or beyond. Students who are accepted into one of our graduate programs will receive an email from us; students who are not accepted will receive a letter in the mail from the Faculty of Graduate Studies.

Students who are offered a position in our program will be given a deadline of April 15<sup>th</sup> by which they are asked to accept/reject our offer, although earlier decisions are welcome. A response can be made directly to the graduate coordinator at [gradprog@dal.ca](mailto:gradprog@dal.ca) with a cc to our graduate secretary, [patti.devlin@dal.ca](mailto:patti.devlin@dal.ca).

Our Faculty of Graduate Studies requires that students who accept a position in our program pay a **non-refundable** deposit to secure their position. The amount of this deposit will be credited against tuition/fees due in the Fall term. To pay this fee, students must create an account through Dal Online: <https://dalonline.dal.ca/home.html> and make their payment online; please do not send payments to our department.