

Frequently Asked Questions about our Graduate Application Process:

When is the application deadline?

The department admits for the Fall term only. The deadline for applications is April 15th and applicants are notified by May 30th.

What do I need to submit to apply to the Graduate Program in Psychology?

1. Graduate Application (online)
2. Official Undergraduate transcripts from all Universities attended
3. 2 letters of reference (one must be from a college professor)
4. A personal statement describing your reasons for pursuing a master's degree
5. MAT or GRE Scores (current if taken within the last five years)

Where do I send my application materials?

Graduate Admissions
Auburn University at Montgomery
PO Box 244023
Montgomery AL 36124

What kind of grades and test scores do I need to get accepted?

We have room for approximately 10 new graduate students a year. Generally speaking, an overall 3.00 college grade point average or better is preferred. We prefer applicants to the psychology department to have an MAT score of 375 or better; or GRE scores of 139 quantitative and 146 verbal or better. Meeting the minimal qualifications does not assure acceptance.

What if I did not have a psychology major?

Every year two or three students enter our program without having a psychology major. If you did very well in your other program of study, we will still consider you for admission. Being able to take graduate classes will first require obtaining a background in psychology - and we will give you a list of five undergraduate classes to take in addition to introduction to psychology. These classes will always include research design, research statistics, and principles of psychological assessment, plus several academically-oriented classes from which you must choose two. We require at least a B in each of these classes.

Examples of the additional two classes include cognitive psychology, physiological psychology, social psychology, developmental psychology, sensation & perception, and health psychology.

What if I do not have a psychology degree from AUM?

We have a large pool of graduate students from other universities. Only a small number of our

own undergraduate psychology majors are accepted into the program each year.

What if I don't know the kind of psychology career I would like?

Many students come to us unsure about what they want to do, and even those who are sure often change their minds. A number of students who plan to seek a Ph.D. or a Psy.D. decide against doing so. Some students want to do counseling and therapy, but find they prefer psychological testing and vice versa. We cannot make that decision for you, but by the time you finish the program your inclinations and options should be clearer.

Do I have to know which program I want?

We have two Clinical programs: Thesis and Practicum. You should know which program you are interested in before you apply, but students do switch tracks on occasion. The Thesis program is designed for students who intend to seek a doctoral degree and the Practicum program is for students who intend to stop with a master's degree.

Who should write me a letter of recommendation?

Please secure letters of support from people who know you well. A college professor who earned a Ph.D. is preferable, but any professor who can speak to your academic abilities and performance is fine. A letter from an employer can be acceptable under some circumstances, but we want at least one letter addressing your abilities as a student and potential as a professional.

What should be included in my personal statement?

Your statement of purpose should describe your reasons for seeking a graduate degree in psychology. You should also specify which of the two programs you are interested in.

If you are applying to the thesis program, you should specify your research interests, and what specializations you hope to pursue. Also, please indicate which research program in the department is of the most interest to you. You can find out about research programs by looking at the description of the active research labs on the psychology home page and by looking at the publications of the faculty (in their curriculum vitae) – which can be accessed through the contact us link on the psychology home page.

Who decides whether I get in?

The School of Sciences graduate coordinator will assess your grades and test scores to see if you meet the minimal AUM qualifications for graduate study. Your application then goes to the Psychology Department. Meeting the minimal AUM qualifications does not mean you will be admitted to our program. A committee will study your application materials, including your letters of recommendation, and make a decision about whether to offer you admission.

If I am already a graduate student at AUM, can I switch over to psychology?

No. You have to be accepted into the psychology program. You have to re-apply to the psychology program.

Can I teach my own psychology class while a graduate student at AUM?

Yes. Many of our graduate students teach for us after they have completed 18 hours of graduate course credit and are in good standing. Some of our students teach for us as adjuncts for years after they complete their degree.

What is the purpose of the thesis?

In doctoral programs, many students spend the first two years writing a master's thesis. This process involves designing a study, collecting data, analyzing the data, and writing a detailed report. A thesis is a guided research experience that is supposed to help students learn to write a doctoral dissertation. The thesis at AUM is designed to be the same as a thesis in those kinds of programs.

What if I do not want to do a thesis?

Most of our graduate students choose not to do a thesis. If they do not plan to enter a doctoral program we recommend the practicum program.

What is the difference between the thesis and the non-thesis program?

Both programs have the same number of classes. The thesis program includes 6 hours of independent study and the actual thesis. The non-thesis program includes 6 hours of practicum. The thesis is the more difficult program.

What does the comprehensive exam involve?

All students are required to take comprehensive exams. The comprehensive exam includes six 50-item multiple-choice tests. These tests were designed to allow the student to demonstrate basic knowledge in the field of psychology, and they are also supposed to help prepare students to study for the licensing exam taken by psychologists and psychological technicians. The tests cover Statistics & Design; Ethics; Assessment & Test Construction; Psychotherapy Theories & Abnormal Psychology; Developmental & Social Psychology; and Learning, Cognitive, & Physiological Psychology. The six tests do not have to be taken at the same time. The pass rate for each test is 60%. We have study materials for these tests, and most students score at 70% or better.