Department: Psychology

Degree Objective: MS in Forensic Psychology

What can I do with this degree? What kind of jobs do people with this degree typically obtain?

The M.S. in Forensic Psychology option is designed for students whose primary interest is in working or studying in areas of psychology that intersect with the criminal justice system. It is a research-based degree for students whose primary interest is in continuing their education in a doctoral program. The program gives students research training and advanced coursework that help them gain a competitive advantage when applying to doctoral programs at other universities. Those who go into doctoral programs typically become professors, researchers, and sometimes clinical or counseling psychologists (depending on the focus of their PhD).

The program offers includes a 9 month practicum where students receive hands on training and on site supervision in a forensic setting related to their individual interests and career goals (e.g., rape crisis center, Department of Children and Family Services counseling center, the Dependency Courts, the Sheriff's Department, prisons, probation).

Those who complete the MS in Forensic Psychology without entering a doctoral program work in various positions in the settings relating to research, education, and criminal justice. You may teach with an MA or similar degree at a community college or Cal State University, but such degrees are usually not sufficient for tenure-track (permanent) jobs as a college professor.

Will this master’s program prepare me for a Ph.D. program?

Yes, the Master of Science degree in Forensic Psychology is a rigorous program designed to develop research and conceptual skills for students whose primary interest is in continuing their education in a doctoral program.

How do I apply to your graduate program?

Please visit our admission website for application materials:

http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/psych/MA%20grad%20program.html

Applying to the MS program involves a two-step application process:

1. Applicants must submit an online application to the University by February 15, 2019 through Cal State Apply: http://www.calstate.edu/apply. You should also submit one copy of official transcripts from all colleges/universities attended to the University Admissions Office:
   Office of Admissions and Recruitment
   Student Affairs 101
   5151 State University Drive
   Los Angeles, CA 90032

2. Applicants must also submit a separate Psychology MS application directly to the Department of Psychology by February 15, 2019. The Master of Arts application must be printed, completed, and submitted to the department accompanied by: (a) A
Statement of Purpose, (b) Three letters of recommendation and (c) One copy of unofficial transcripts from all colleges/universities attended. Department applications can be mailed or dropped-off in person to the following address:
California State University, Los Angeles
Department of Psychology, Attn: Graduate Assistant
5151 State University Drive, KH C3104
Los Angeles, CA 90032-8227

What are the GPA requirements?
Students are required to have a grade point average (GPA) of 2.75 to be eligible for the program. Students with a GPA below 2.75 will not be considered.

Does your program require the GRE for admissions?
No.

How many recommendation letters does your degree program require?
Each program requires three (3) letters of recommendation, at least two (2) of which should be from academic sources. Make sure you print the Letter of Recommendation Form (found on our website) and have each of your recommenders attach their letters to this form.

Whom should I get the recommendation letters from, professors or employers?
Letters of recommendation should come from individuals who are familiar with your academic and your professional abilities. For example, a professor, lecturer, or advisor. Each of our three programs requires that at least two (2) of your letters be from academic sources. Applicants who have been out of college for more than five years may use either academic or professional recommendations.

Do you have any tips on how to write a statement of purpose?
Your statement of purpose should be 400 to 500 words (two pages, double-spaced, maximum) indicating your reasons for wishing to pursue a research degree, your particular areas of interest, and any experience relevant to your goals and interests.

When do you accept students into your graduate program in Fall or Spring or both?
We only admit students in Fall.

What are the admission deadlines?
If you are accepted into the program the Department of Psychology will send you a letter of acceptance that specifies the deadline by when you will need to accept the offer of the department. Generally the acceptance letters are sent around the third week of March, with a 2-week deadline for formally accepting the offer. You will be asked to notify the Department of Psychology, in writing, of your decision to accept or reject the offer by that date. The Department must know the final decision of all applications by April 12, 2019.
What is the cost to attend graduate school?
You can find information regarding tuition and fees on the Student Financial Services website at http://www.calstatela.edu/sfinserv/cashiers-office

Does your department offer any GA or TA positions? If so, what is the eligibility requirement to apply for a GA or TA position?
The Department of Psychology typically makes available a few Graduate Assistant positions each semester. At the moment, the department does not offer any Teaching Associate positions. In general, graduate assistants work from five to twenty hours a week, assisting professors in laboratory classes or as graders in large classes. Research assistantships as well as graduate traineeships may also be available to graduate students and information of their availability can be obtained by consulting the Department Coordinator or professors who are currently conducting on-going research.

Is this degree program co-horted?
Yes, we typically accept a cohort of 4-5 students per year into the MS in Forensic Psychology program. Classes are planned and scheduled in order to ensure that there will be available seats for all students in the cohort and that all classes will be filled and not canceled. Most students take all classes together as a cohort, but there is some flexibility allowing students to opt out of some of the classes selected for their cohort and instead take other options.

How long will it take me to complete the degree if I enroll in 3 or 6 units per semester?
A total of 33-34 units are required for completion of the MS in Forensic Psychology. Students typically take 3 classes (9-10 units) per semester in the first year and 2-3 classes (6-9 units) per semester in the second year. Students who follow the schedule recommended for their cohort graduate in 2 years. Those who take fewer than recommended take longer.

In addition to coursework, to obtain the MA degree students also must successfully complete a thesis. The thesis comprises a research project, a written paper, and thesis defense via a presentation. The research project will be designed under the supervision of the research mentor. The written portion follows the publication format of the American Psychological Association (APA), describing the results of an original research project developed by the student in collaboration with their mentor. The thesis culminates with a defense, where the student presents the findings of the research project before a committee of faculty.

How long will it take me to complete the degree if I enrolled in 9 or 12 units per semester?
Although students taking this many units could complete their coursework in 2 years or less, they must also finish and defend the thesis in order to complete the degree.

Do you offer any Winter Intersessions classes or any classes during the Summer?
We do not offer any graduate-level classes during the Winter Intersession or Summer session.

When are your graduate classes typically offered during the day or at night?
The majority of our classes are scheduled during the hours from 9am-6pm, although some classes are offered in the evening hours. Typically, we schedule all classes for a single cohort on a 2-day a week schedule (Tuesday Thursday or Monday Wednesday), so that students who work can do so on alternate days.

**Whom can I contact in the department, if I have additional questions?**

For additional questions, contact the Director of the MS in Forensic Psychology Program, Dr. Mitchell Eisen via e-mail at meisen@calstatela.edu or contact the Graduate Coordinator, Marie Bruno at (323) 343-2272 or email her at mbruno@cslanet.calstatela.edu.

**Are there any additional resources or funding opportunities for graduate student at CSULA?**

For resources and funding opportunities, please visit the Graduate Studies webpage at: [http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies/funding-opportunities](http://www.calstatela.edu/graduatestudies/funding-opportunities).