Behavioral Science
DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Behavioral Science Program ([program website](#)) at the University of North Texas is currently accepting applications for Fall 2025 (application deadline: December 1). Our program immerses students in scientific inquiry to prepare them for roles as researchers and teachers. Though most students aspire to positions in academia (such as faculty at universities), others may seek employment as researchers or consultants in industry, government, military, medical, or mental health fields. We particularly encourage individuals to apply who are members of groups that have been historically underrepresented in PhD programs.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

No single aspect of an applicant's background determines being extended an offer of admission. We consider achievements in context and how well applicants fit with faculty members' research interests. Motivation, ability, and enthusiasm are valued, as are interpersonal skills, research/statistical experience, and writing skills. For general admission requirements, visit the Toulhouse Graduate School website ([tgs.unt.edu](#)), and to initiate the application process, visit [apply.psychology.unt.edu](#)

Common characteristics of successful applicants include:

- Bachelor's or master's degree in Psychology or a related field
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher for undergraduate coursework or a 3.5 GPA for Psychology-specific courses or for the last 60 undergraduate credit hours
- Cumulative GPA of 3.5 or higher for graduate coursework (if applying as a master's student or with a master's degree)
- Research assistantship experience or other experience relevant to research
- Evidence of potential for scholarship, such as involvement in preparing a manuscript for publication or a poster for presentation, undergraduate or master's thesis work, or scientific essay writing associated with coursework

HOW TO APPLY

The following materials must be received by December 1st:

- Graduate School application
- Statement of Goals
- Curriculum vitae (CV)
- Three letters of recommendation
- Official transcript(s)

Please visit apply.psychology.unt.edu to initiate the application process.

PROGRAM FACULTY

Adriel Boals, Professor and Director of the Behavioral Science Program; PhD, North Carolina State University. Research interests: coping with stress and trauma, autobiographical memory, PTSD, and post-traumatic growth.

Heidemarie Blumenthal, Professor; PhD, University of Arkansas. Research interests: maladaptive stress responding and risk behaviors; emphasis on co-occurring anxiety and substance use in adolescence; salivary hormone assessment; laboratory-based/experimental psychopathology techniques.

Casey Guillot, Associate Professor; PhD, University of Southern Mississippi. Research interests: dispositional and emotional vulnerabilities to addiction, substance use and withdrawal, individual differences/demographic characteristics in relation to addictive behaviors, and aggression and self-harm.

Ryan Olson, Associate Professor; PhD, Rutgers University. Research interests: effects of acute and chronic exercise for improving neurocognitive function and mental health, and examining neurocognitive deficits and automatic function in high-risk populations.

Donald Dougherty, Professor/Dept Chair; PhD, Ohio University. Research interests: alcohol and other substance abuse, suicidality, biomarkers, risk factors, remote alcohol monitoring, and intervention accessibility and community interventions.

Kimberly Kelly, Associate Professor; PhD, University of Kentucky. Research interests: immune and endocrine systems involved in the stress response and their relationship with health.

Anthony Ryals, Associate Professor; PhD, Colorado State University. Research interests: explicit and implicit processes in episodic memory, executive functions and memory awareness in relation to behavior and quality of life, and electrophysiology, eye tracking, neuroimaging, and neuropsychological assessments.

Danica Slavish, Assistant Professor; PhD, The Pennsylvania State University. Research interests: the behavioral and physiological pathways linking sleep, stress, and health over time, and the use of ecological momentary assessment, ambulatory psychophysiology assessments, and longitudinal data analysis.