

**FALL
2015**

Psi Chi Newsletter

WELCOME BACK!

Brought to you by Rutgers-Camden Psi Chi | Produced by Madeliene Alger

The educational journey of the board and a few of our members inspired this issue of Psi Chi. It was written

as a way to bring awareness to the opportunities students can utilize throughout their undergraduate career here and to highlight different options for further study.

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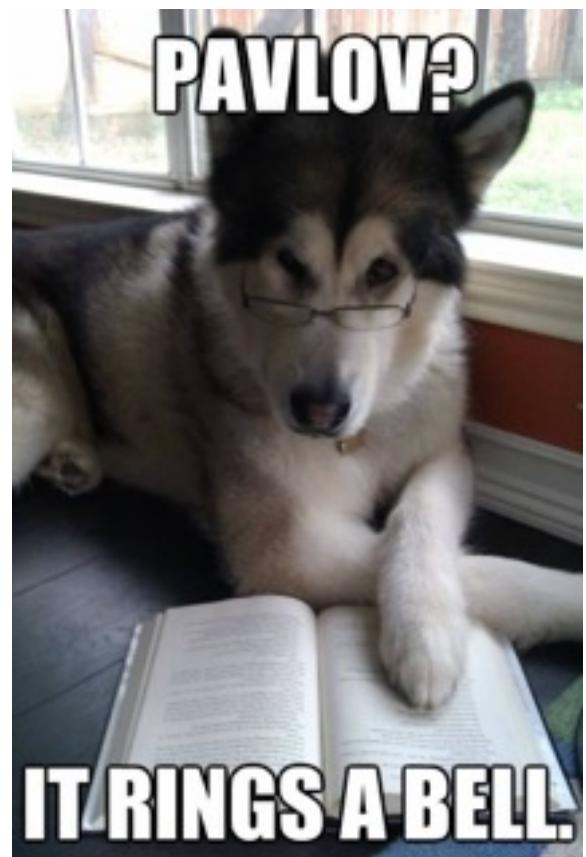
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RUTGERS MASTERS PROGRAM

by Brenna Stone

The psychology department at Rutgers Camden offers a competitive research based masters program. For students who already attend Rutgers Camden, the program would provide a smooth transition into graduate school. Instead of having to spend several weeks adjusting to new surroundings, students are able to continue their studies in classes with professors they have already established a



relationship with and also continue research in their lab, taking on more of a leadership role. The program offers students a variety of elective courses in various areas of psychology and also helps students develop research skills that make them attractive candidates for PhD programs and potential employers.

In order to fit the needs of the students, the psychology department has two tracks graduate students can follow while still earning the same degree: thesis and content. Thesis requires students to work with a

faculty member and develop a research project of their own. Their proposal is then evaluated by a committee for approval. Once approved, the student can take the steps necessary to carry out a study. At the end of their course of study, students submit a thesis detailing their work. Many graduate students will agree that it is the most challenging but rewarding aspect of graduate school. Dr. Duffy explained that the thesis track is designed for students who are interested in applying to PhD programs in the future or want to pursue a career in research. In contrast, the content track offers students who are juggling a full time job or various responsibilities outside of school the option to not complete a thesis but rather take two more elective courses. Even if a student opts for the content track, they are still required to be involved in research. This experience will give students a certain set of skills which will help them be competitive in the workforce. Dr. Duffy

noted that there is also a chance that in the course of aiding a faculty member's research they may co-author a paper with them, which mirrors the strength of having written a thesis on a resume. Before graduation, content

students will take a series of exams covering research methods and two classes of their choosing.

If you need help finding a job, you can always go to the Career Center for help!

The University also funds a fellowship program which awards students who show particular promise through their undergraduate GPA, GRE score, and letters of recommendation money to pay for textbooks, housing, and tuition. Dr. Duffy also explained the three teaching assistantships that the department offers. While the program can be very competitive, it has a big reward. Three students, who have the highest scores on their teaching evaluations after being a teaching assistants, are chosen. These students are given full tuition remission, health insurance and a \$26,000 stipend to use

however they see fit. Rutgers gives graduate students many opportunities to fund their education. Even if you are not one of the three graduate students chosen, you may still qualify for work study. Since you have your bachelors, you can

also try to get a job in the local community or greater Philadelphia area. Most psychology graduate classes are offered at night to accommodate the majority of students who work throughout graduate school.



Admission Requirements

- 3.0 GPA (although the average is 3.5)
- GRE combined verbal and quantitative score of 302 or higher
- Two or three letters of recommendation
- Personal statement
- Official transcripts
- Writing sample (suggested)

DUAL DEGREE

by Brenna Stone

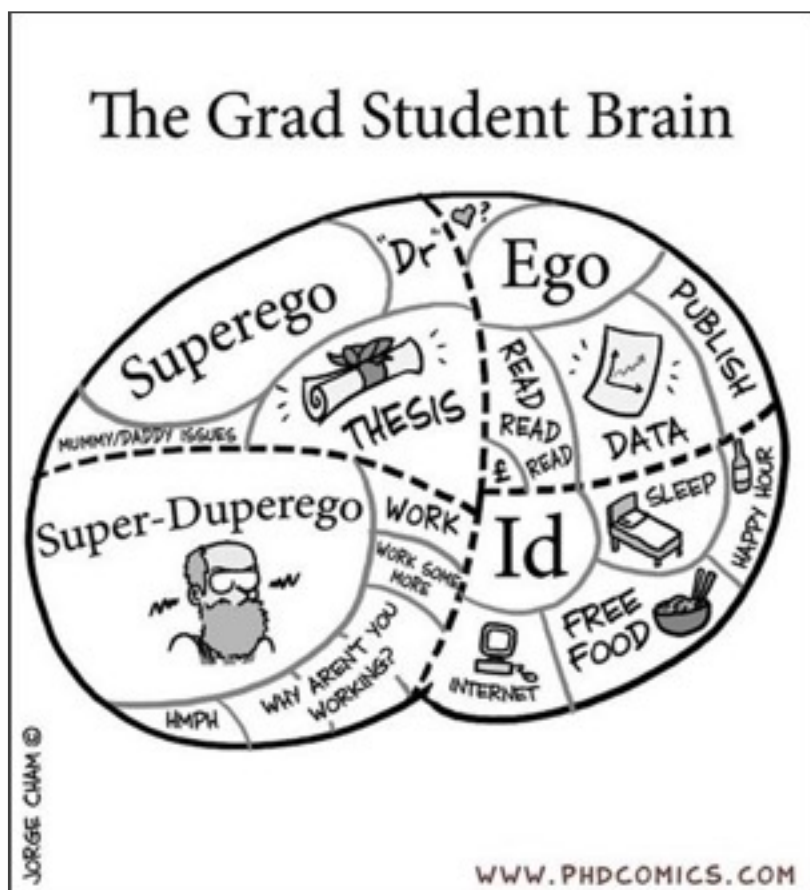
Rutgers Camden offers a unique way to get a jumpstart on graduate school. Through the dual degree program, undergraduate students can take graduate level courses. These courses cost the same as undergraduate courses and fulfill different elective courses required in the Psychology major. The program allows students to take three graduate level classes, which exposes them to the course work required of typical graduate level classes. Students gain graduate level credit, which they are then able to apply towards a masters degree at either Rutgers Camden or to the graduate school of their choosing as transfer credits. Last fall, I took Introduction to Psych Science with Dr. Duffy. We had class once a week for which we were assigned to read about fifty to sixty pages; we also worked in a research

lab for six hours a week. These grad courses were also an opportunity for undergraduate students, like myself, to network with graduate students and gain insight on life after a bachelor's degree. Interactions with other students in the class increased my awareness of the graduate school application process and how to make my application more competitive. Most importantly, it exposed me to a research-based program, which then allowed me to determine if it and other MA and PhD programs that follow the same model were a good choice for me.

Admission to a dual degree program requires an undergraduate GPA of 3.5 and the sponsorship of a faculty member. Typically five or six juniors and seniors, who have already taken several psychology classes and have shown particular promise for graduate level study, are admitted every year. Dr. Duffy stated that being accepted into the dual degree program does not guarantee admittance into the graduate program. During their senior year, student pursuing their dual degree, must apply to the graduate program to continue their studies.

Admission Requirements

- Letter of recommendation from full time faculty member
- 3.5 GPA
- Must be a junior or senior



NAVIGATING THE GRE

by Brenna Stone

Almost all graduate schools require their applicants to take the GRE, or Graduate Record Examination.

What is the GRE?

It's very similar to the SAT but is slightly more difficult and is graded differently. It contains three sections: verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and analytical writing. The verbal and quantitative reasoning sections are graded on a scale ranging from 130 to 170 and fluctuate in one-point increments. The better you do on the earlier sections, the harder the later sections will become, meaning you have the opportunity to end with a higher score. The writing section is comprised of two, thirty minute essays, which are scored on a scale from zero to six in half-point increments.

How can you prepare for the GRE?

Arguably the best way is to take prep courses offered by Kaplan or other tutoring centers. Different companies offer individual tutoring, small group tutoring, large group tutoring, as well as online tutoring. These options, while helpful, can cost a small fortune. Even the online classes can cost almost one thousand dollars and classes in-person can run as high as three thousand. If you can, begin saving early and set time in your schedule for weekly classes. For those on a budget, there are practice workbooks available at various bookstores and online stores

such as Amazon. They will run you about twenty-five to forty-five dollars each depending on their provided contents and resources. They are an inexpensive way to prepare by yourself, but they require a great deal of dedication to work through individually. Before you take it, make sure to research potential graduate programs to see what their average GRE score for accepted students is. Then, set that as the goal for yourself.

What is the best course of action?

The GRE is offered at testing locations across the state of New Jersey including Laurel Springs and Trenton; they also have locations in Philadelphia. It is computer based and will take around four hours to complete, meaning you must register and reserve a computer in advance. While it is offered almost everyday, students can only take it once every

twenty-one days, so it is important that you do not procrastinate. A downfall of the GRE in comparison to the SAT is the inability to super score. Schools will not take the highest score of each section from your different testing experiences. The testing agency will report all grades from each day you send them. Most students take it two or three times, but be prepared to pay about two hundred dollars each time you take it.



September

September is a great time to start picking out potential programs. Creating an excel sheet with application information such as essays required, average GRE scores, and application deadlines is an easy way to stay organized. It is also time to start studying for the GREs. Being prepared is key since, like the SATs, you are competing with students around the world for those top-notch scores. Decide whether you will be taking the Psychology GRE on **October 24th**. The deadline to register is **September 18th**. By the end of the month, you should also have contacted professors for letters of recommendation, giving them plenty of time to reminisce on your strengths and thoughtfully convey what an asset you are to your programs! Writing a small descriptions of each programs you're applying to will also help them gear their letter toward their expectations of you as a student.

October

October is when you should think about taking the GRE for the first time. You don't want to wait too long considering you can only take it once every twenty-one days and if you don't get the score you were hoping for you always have November to study and take it again. **October 24th** is when the Psychology GRE is offered. Like the SAT, the GRE offers individual subject tests. This subject test, tests your knowledge in psychology and is sometimes required by graduate schools. The next time it will be offered is in April, so if one of your graduate schools require it you must take it in October. Toward the end of the month you should be thinking about starting applications. Even if its just creating an account on each school's website and filling out simple information like your address, it will save you time later!

November

November should be spent taking the GRE for the second or third time if needed. Don't wait till the end of the month to take it because the writing sections can take weeks to grade. The month should also be spent starting and finishing applications. This includes sending in official transcripts, which you get two free per semester and after that they are around \$7 each, writing essays, personal statements, editing writing samples, and paying application fees, which will run somewhere between \$50-\$70 each.

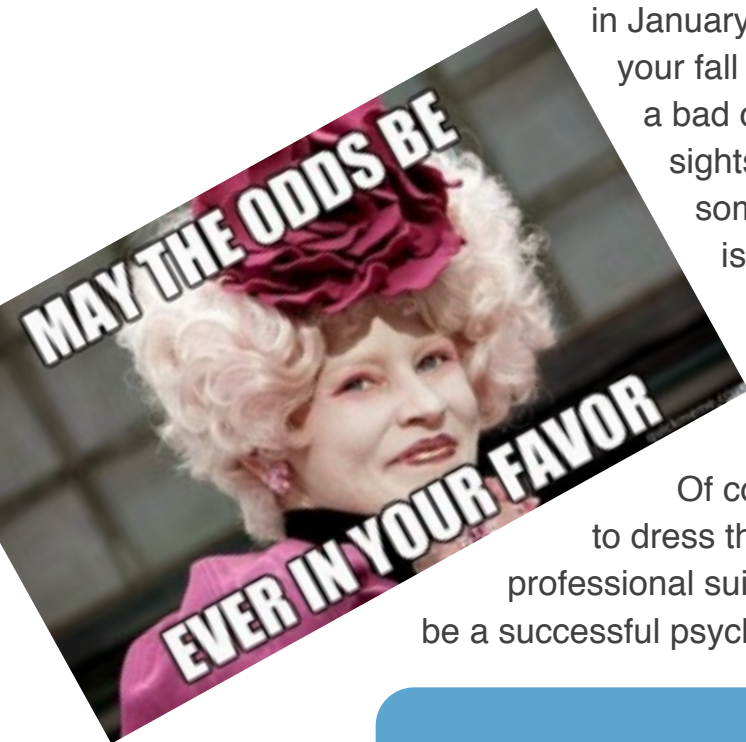
December

December 1st is the deadline for many PhD programs and masters programs that receive a large pool of applicants. Everything must be submitted and the application fee must be paid by this date. The early application deadline exists so the department can thoroughly review applicants and choose who to accept/invite to interviews. Another common application date is **December 15th**, but as you know this is very close to finals time so try not to save everything for the last minute. If you have any applications that are not due until January, that's great! You can take this time to perfect your writing samples or take the GREs for a third time.

January

January 1st and 15th are popular deadlines as well. By now, you should finally be done with those pesky GREs. Since the applications are due in January, it may also be a good idea to submit transcripts with your fall semester grades to demonstrate that you do not have a bad case of *senioritis*. You should also be setting your sights on preparing for interviews. They usually happen sometime in February. An easy way to prepare for them is to go online and search common graduate school interview questions. Spend some time answering them either to yourself or maybe bribe a close friend and have them ask you them out loud. That should ease some of your nerves the day of the interview.

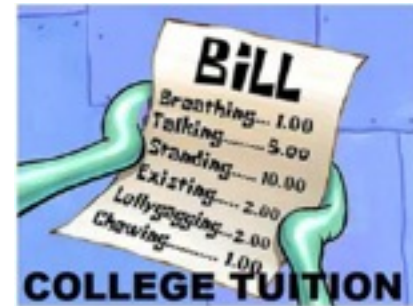
Of course, it's important to play the part but you also have to dress the part. In January treat yourself to a nice, professional suit. Something that'll make professors think: "They will be a successful psychologist. We have to admit them".



February

February is the time for interviews. Don't stress yourself out about them. Take time to prepare and know that this is where you belong. Practice more interview questions and research the faculty of the department. Instead of saying "I'm Jane. What's your name?" you can say "Hi, Dr. Smith, I'm Jane. I find your work in autism research quite fascinating". That'll really make you stand out. When interviews are over you should be hearing back from programs in March and April. The acceptance deadline for graduate school is **April 15th**. I wish you all the best of luck and may the odds be ever in your favor!

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO PAY FOR THIS?!



by Indira Pearce

Dean's Scholarships²

Scholarship supported by Alumni helps with the burden of tuition costs. The Dean's Office of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences offer current students various scholarships (listed below) to award for the Spring 2016 semester.

Edward and Deborah Spelled Endowed Scholarship

Scholarships are to be awarded to full-time and part-time undergraduate and graduate students based on academic merit and financial need.

John C. Miller Scholarship Fund

Scholarships are to be award to first generation students who attend FAS.

More Family Scholarship³

Established by Paul Moré (CCAS '65), scholarships are to be awarded to full-time students who are a minimum of four years from high school and are in their junior year majoring in one of the following departments: biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, or psychology; based on academic merit and financial need.

Dorothy and David Cooper Scholarship¹

Established in memory of Dorothy and David Cooper and Dorothy's late parents, Sylvia and Paul Markum, for an endowed scholarship for undergraduate students majoring in psychology.

Rutgers-Camden Merit Scholarships Offered⁴

There is no additional application required to be considered for a Camden merit scholarship. All students who apply to Rutgers-Camden and complete their application for admission by the designated deadlines will be considered. Students who fall within our scholarship parameters will be identified and submitted for review by the scholarship committee. The committee will make final selections based on the following criteria.

Academic Excellence Scholarship

Offered by the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business, and School of Nursing

The exact criteria will vary for each school; however, the Academic Excellence Scholarship is awarded to students presenting excellence both in and out of the classroom. Due to a holistic review, the SAT and GPA will vary among recipients. Typically, the middle 50 percent for SATs will range from 1800 to 2150 and the middle 50 percent for the converted GPA will range from 3.8 to 3.9.

Academic Achievement Scholarship

Offered by the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Business, and School of Nursing

The exact criteria will vary for each school; however, the Academic Achievement Scholarship is awarded to students with high accomplishments in and out of the classroom. Due to a holistic review, the SAT and GPA will vary among recipients. Typically, the middle 50 percent for SATs will range from 1750 to 2000 and the middle 50 percent for the converted GPA will range from 3.5 to 3.8.

Meritorious Achiever Scholarship

Offered by the College of Arts and Sciences and School of Business

The exact criteria will vary for each school; however, the Meritorious Achiever Scholarship is awarded to students showing impressive achievements both in and out of the classroom. Due to a holistic review, the SAT and GPA will vary among recipients. Typically, the middle 50 percent for SATs will range from 1650 to 1900 and the middle 50 percent for the converted GPA will range from 3.4 to 3.7.

¹ <https://fas.camden.rutgers.edu/student-experience/scholarships/>

² <https://fas.camden.rutgers.edu/scholarship-opportunities/current-students/>

³ catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/cam-ug_current/pg45.html

⁴ <http://www.camden.rutgers.edu/admissions/scholarships>

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FACULTY ACHIEVEMENTS

by Kristen Woods

DR. MARY BRAVO

Congratulations On Your Retirement!

1. What retirement plans are you most excited about at this time?

My plans include retiring to a farm and raising a variety of animals. This has been a dream of mine for a very long time now, and I am truly looking forward to spending time outdoors and caring for the animals.

2. Are you looking forward to teaching online during your retirement?

Yes, of course. While I will certainly miss the classroom environment, I am glad to have the opportunity to teach online. I believe that the online setting will encourage quieter students to share their ideas and participate in class. In addition, I'm looking forward to having more time to assist students, especially with writing.

3. What is the most rewarding experience you had at Rutgers-Camden?

It is probably the Engaged Civic Learning experimental lab. We had about fifteen high school students from LEAP visit campus and work on various projects with students in the lab. I feel that sometimes faculty members can become frustrated by students, who often struggle with statistics and other quantitative aspects of psychology. However, these same students can also perform strongly in terms of relating to people in a positive way. I thought they did a fabulous job with the high school students.

4. In the past decades, psychology research has increasingly employed computational modeling, algorithmic techniques and increasingly-rigorous understanding of the relationship between cognitive processes and their physiological basis. Over the course of your career, what do you feel have been the most meaningful advances in psychology as a field?

I was not very excited about neuroimaging initially because they often duplicated findings that were already understood by scientists. But I do think that those techniques have evolved and are much more sophisticated, and I'm very glad to see that. There are some very interesting questions that you can now answer with neuroimaging, even though the initial research was not particularly strong.

Congratulations on Receiving the Lindback Teaching Award

1. Are you grateful to be receiving this honor at the end of your career?

Yes, of course. I really do enjoy teaching, and I do put a lot into it. I know that this department has a lot of good teachers, and they could have given this award to almost anyone. People teach in different ways, and different students resonate with different teachers. I'm very pleased to have the award because it means that I have a lot of support from my colleagues but I also know that it could have gone to quite a few people.

2. What do you think distinguishes you from the other professors in the department?

I like to think that my particular skill is explaining something that's complicated in a simple way, cutting through the irrelevant parts, and focusing on what's truly important. I think that other professors do this as well, but I place an emphasis on this in my teaching preparations. I try to convey the information clearly and make it less scary.

3. Your courses seem to concentrate on the biological basis for behavior. Did you find it challenging to teach these concepts to psychology students?

I really enjoy teaching psychology students. Teaching this group helps me hone in on what is important, and how this information can be conveyed without using as much terminology. You have to understand something very well to explain it in ordinary terms. So I feel like it is a challenge, but it is one I really enjoy. I am also happy to review information as many times as needed, and I try to explain a topic differently when the message is not coming across to students. I really enjoy showing students that they can understand something that they may have thought they couldn't.

4. I noticed that you readily admit when you are unfamiliar with a topic, and you conduct research to learn more about it. Have you always been this way?

When I first started teaching, I thought that students would doubt me more if I admitted to ignorance. But I realized that a very important part of education is thinking clearly and understanding when you grasp a concept and when you don't. When teachers attempt to finesse students' questions, they give students the idea that an answer was provided. This does not help them separate what answers are clear versus unclear. I think it is extremely important for educators to either answer a question fully or say they do not know. Students should expect to understand and trust the material provided by educators.



DR. SARAH ALLRED

iPads in the Teaching Environment

1. How have you integrated iPads in the classroom?

I use iPads to foster a more active learning environment among my students, particularly in respect to research-related questions. For example, I may direct students to find answers to their own questions using internet-accessible resources (like databases for academic publications). The

iPads help to provide my students with an opportunity to practice what they are learning (as opposed to passively listening).

2. Do you think they have increased attention, participation, and attendance in the classroom?

The iPads have definitely contributed to attention and participation, and students are noticeably more alert and engaged during class. I feel that most professors can determine if students are generally paying attention, regardless of the use of classroom electronics. However, I am unsure about the influence iPads have on overall attendance.

3. On the contrary, have you found that the active use of iPads detract in any way from your teaching environment?

In spite of initial worries, I was relieved to find that most students found the iPads to be beneficial and generally used them appropriately. I did not find that the iPads were distracting; on the contrary they seemed beneficial to student engagement.

4. With iPads in the classroom, do you feel that the syllabus has changed significantly, or has it stayed the same (with a slight adaption in teaching style)?

The syllabus is very different. I use the iPads as part of a broader goal of changing the classroom to the “flipped classroom”. So instead of lecturing a lot, we focus more on active learning exercises. For example, I will talk for five or ten minutes, and then we will break into groups to complete an activity (and eventually talk about what we did). The class outline is very different than it used to be.

Congratulations on receiving the Chancellor’s Teaching Award!

1. Were you surprised to receive this award?

Yes. I haven’t been teaching at Rutgers-Camden for very long, so I was very surprised.

2. What aspects of your teaching style separate you from other professors in the psychology department?

I may incorporate more digital teaching into my curriculum than other faculty members, but it’s really just one tool for engaging students. All of our teaching styles vary in different ways, and I think the professors in our department do a very good job of finding ways to connect to students.

3. As an active researcher who has also been recognized for your outstanding teaching efforts, how do you remain active in research while fulfilling your teaching responsibilities?

It can be challenging. One way is to get students involved in the research, so some of your time is spent mentoring and

teaching. I also try to design my experiments in the summer to expedite the process of acquiring data.

4. What advice can you give to professors who want to improve their teaching abilities?

My advice is to make an active note of what methods works in the classroom and which ones do not. This way, you can refer back to these notes – as well as actively contribute to them – through the course of your teaching career.

DR. NAOMI MARMORSTEIN

New Chair of the Psychology Department

1. As department chair, you are tasked with additional administrative responsibilities. What motivated your decision to take this new position?

One of the strengths of this department is that we do our best to share administrative responsibilities, including the various leadership roles. I decided to apply for department chair because I wanted the opportunity to engage with our faculty and students in a new/exciting way.

2. Does this position significantly impact your primary goals as an educator/researcher?

No. My goals have always been to do the best job I can to teach our students, conduct high-quality research, and support the mission of the university. My new position does not change these goals, but simply represents a new avenue for me to better fulfill them.

3. While the additional responsibilities will require you to divert your time away from teaching, you also now have a greater ability to affect change on a departmental scale. In the long-term, do you feel that this position will ultimately increase your overall effectiveness as an educator?

I will likely be spending a little less time in the classroom, but I will be able to dedicate more of my time facilitating the teaching of other faculty members in our department. Through these interactions, my hope is that this position will also serve to benefit my own effectiveness as a teacher. I have always found myself continually learning from my colleagues and students, and I see my new role as contributing in this regard.

4. Do you find yourself in a better position to offer advice to students (particularly those who share your interests-such as working with children or adolescents)?

Our advising system has undergone dramatic changes over the years. We now have a coordinator for the undergraduate program and a dedicated advising office, so often student advising is relegated to other faculty members. I am always interested in talking to students, and they will still routinely come to me for follow-up questions or more specific advice. It is important to me to be accessible to students, and I do not anticipate that my new position as department chair will change this.



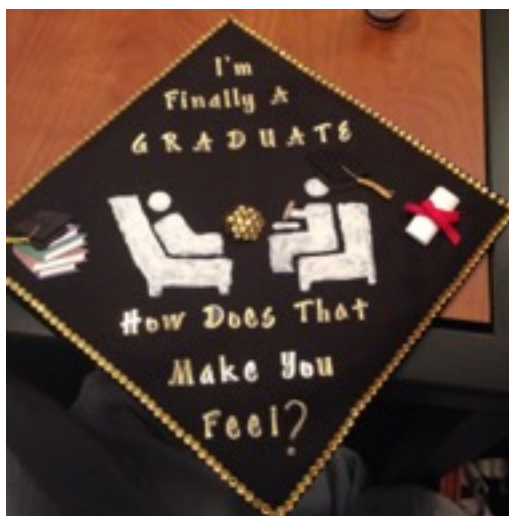
A Student's Perspective



Graduation is a time for celebration, but it can also be the root of confusion. As the day approaches, seniors begin to ponder their future following their diploma. Many of us have spent the last four years commuting to school, while also working part time jobs and juggling numerous responsibilities at home. After we get our degree, all of our troubles disappear. We can work at only one job and forget about school forever. This was my assumption when entering college, but I learned quickly that I would have many more years ahead of me if I wanted to go into the field of clinical psychology. I wanted to study psychology because like many of you "I want to help people". As a freshman, I set my sights on graduation,

I could finally make a decent living and move out of my parents' house. I began researching jobs online and was surprised with what I found. With just an undergraduate degree in psychology, I would not be qualified for jobs that paid more than the money I make to sustain my current lifestyle. So, what do I do now? Graduate school was my answer.

I consider myself lucky to have discovered this early in my college career. All of my sophomore year was spent finding as much information as I could about different graduate schools near and far, their programs, their costs, the differences between degrees, and even the professors I would want to do research with.



Was this all necessary? Definitely. I knew what was expected from different programs and had two more years to meet those expectations. I took classes like abnormal and clinical psychology, which are considered pre-requisites for certain graduate programs. I got involved in two research labs: one in each of my majors. With the help of the career center, I got an internship in order to get a more hands on experience. Accomplishing these goals not only makes me a stronger candidate for different graduate programs, it also helped me solidify the belief that I was embarking on the right career path. I'm now entering my senior year confident and relived. Even though it was a lot of hard work and in particularly stressful times I questioned the worth of it all, I can sit here now extraordinarily grateful that I put in all of that effort.

Brenna Stone
Psi Chi President

How to Apply for Psi Chi Membership:

Requirements for Psi Chi Membership:

UNDERGRADUATES MUST:

- be enrolled as a major or minor in a psychology program (or a program psychological in nature)
- have completed at least 3 semesters of college courses
- have completed at least 9 semester hours (3 courses) in psychology courses
- have earned an overall GPA that is in the top 35% of their class in general scholarship (minimum GPA of 3.5 on a 4-point scale)
- have a minimum 3.5 GPA in psychology courses

GRADUATE STUDENT APPLICANTS MUST:

- be enrolled in a psychology graduate program
- have completed at least one full semester of graduate coursework
- have an overall GPA of at least 3.5 in all graduate courses, including psychology courses*

TRANSFER STUDENT APPLICANTS:

- follow the same requirements as the undergraduate student applicant
- should complete at least 12 semester hours at the new institution in order to establish a GPA

TRANSFER STUDENT APPLICANTS WHO ARE ALREADY MEMBERS OF PSI CHI:

- contact the Psi Chi faculty advisor at the new institution to complete an online transfer membership form

FACULTY ADVISORS:

- must be full-time faculty members at an institution and hold a doctoral degree in psychology
- must be members of Psi Chi (as required in Psi Chi Constitution Article XII, Section 7)

FACULTY MEMBERS MUST:

- be full-time faculty at an institution
- be a faculty member in a psychology department
- hold a doctorate in psychology, or a closely related field

In order to join, **you must qualify for membership** and **join through the Rutgers-Camden Chapter.**

The application process is now online at:

<http://memberapp.psichi.org/cfamember/applicationform.aspx>.

The Psi Chi Society one-time membership fee is \$70. Of this fee, \$55 goes to the national office, an \$15 is received by our local chapter. This small fee pays for **lifetime** Psi Chi membership, a certificate of membership, and a membership card.

***To find your Overall GPA as well as grades for each course**, log in at my.rutgers.edu, click on the Academics tab, then click on “Your Full Transcript” under the “Get My Grades” button. In the pop-up box, click the radio button for “Full Transcript”.

Contact Information

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