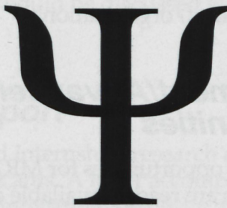




*general graduate  
psychology program*



*Mental Retardation/  
Developmental  
Disabilities  
Concentration*

---

**MR/DD**

## Overview

The MR/DD concentration trains students to work with persons who have mental retardation/developmental disabilities. It is a minimum 36 semester-hour program that prepares students primarily to become psychologists who are familiar with the major theories and principles of psychology and with research design and statistical analysis.

In addition, students will gain expertise in the area of applied behavior analysis, particularly as it relates to assessment and intervention with persons who have mental retardation or other developmental disabilities. One or more internships will provide students with the opportunity to apply skills learned through course work; to acquire new skills in real-world settings; and to serve as professionals working with professionals from other disciplines with the same population.

One unique aspect of the MR/DD concentration is that persons who are working full time can complete this program at night on a part-time basis over a six-year period. Many part-time students complete the program more rapidly by taking at least one semester to attend school full time.

The MR/DD concentration is one of three within the general program, the other two being academic/experimental and industrial/organizational.

## Employment/Advancement Opportunities

Employment opportunities for MR/DD master's-level psychologists are readily available and quite varied in eastern North Carolina and throughout the United States in large state-supported institutions for individuals with mental retardation, as well as in privately owned residential facilities. With the trend toward deinstitutionalization, normalization, and integration of individuals with mental retardation and other developmental disabilities into the mainstream of society, child development centers, mental health centers, group homes, employment agencies, and community colleges frequently hire persons with expertise in applied behavior analysis and MR/DD.

Master's-level psychologists with a concentration in MR/DD must pass a state examination to become licensed as a psychological associate to practice psychology in the state of North Carolina. Once licensed, they can work for an agency or have their own private practice, provided that they obtain ongoing licensure supervision from a PhD-level licensed psychologist with expertise in MR/DD.

Upon completion of the master's degree, students may elect to continue in a PhD-level program in applied behavior analysis and/or MR/DD.

## Course Work

The required and recommended courses and semester credit hours are as follows. The semester credit hours will total a minimum of 36.

### PSYC

- 6430** Statistics and Research Design (3)
- 6427** Advanced Principles of Learning (3)
- 6412** Advanced Physiological Psychology (3)
- 6426** Motivation (3)
- 6333** Applied Behavior Analysis (3)
- 5336** Introduction to Programming in Mental Retardation (3)
- 6960** Internship in MR/DD I (2);

Select one course from the following:

### PSYC

- 5380** Psychology of the Exceptional Child (3)
- 6401** Advanced Child Psychology (3)
- 6405** Advanced Educational Psychology (3)
- 6452** Emotional Problems of Childhood (3)

Electives (5)

or

Assessment Sequence (8)

**PSYC 6510** MR/DD Assessment I (3)

**PSYC 6511** MR/DD Assessment II (3)

**PSYC 6961** Internship in MR/DD II (2)

**PSYC 6995** Thesis (3)

**PSYC 6996** Thesis (3)

Electives to complete requirements for graduation

## Internships

Internships give students the opportunity to perform under the supervision of a master's- or PhD-level psychologist in an agency serving persons with mental retardation or other developmental disabilities. Internships may also provide students with the opportunity to develop these projects and collect data. Internship placements are generally scheduled for the fall and/or spring semesters of the second year of the program.

There are two separate internships in the MR/DD concentration, each involving twenty hours a week for one semester. The first is a programming internship. As interns, students will be assigned duties that may include activities such as meeting with other professionals on an interdisciplinary team and writing behavioral programs for clients.

The second is an assessment internship that is designed for students who choose the assessment sequence option. The assessment internship allows students to participate in several activities related to diagnosis and evaluation.

Many students who are working full-time may be able to complete their first internship at the facility in which they work if the agency and the program director formally agree. Most of the available internship placements provide a salary, and many are located in eastern North Carolina. Several other exciting paid internship placements in MR/DD are located throughout the country. More information concerning the variety of internship placements available can be obtained directly from the director of the MR/DD concentration.

## Thesis

A thesis is required in the MR/DD concentration. It is a professional research paper in which students will be required to exhibit their research skills and ability to write an organized research report in the area of MR/DD.

Many students elect to conduct single subject or small group research utilizing behavioral research designs rather than more traditional experimental or quasi-experimental designs. Students present the completed thesis at an oral examination conducted by the thesis committee as the last stage in the process.

## Other Requirements

Comprehensive examinations covering the core course areas as well as the MR/DD specialty are required of all students in the MR/DD concentration. These examinations are normally taken in the second year.

A research skill requirement of not less than 3 semester hours from certain areas determined by the department or from a foreign language must be met. Additional work in statistics or computer science is recommended if it has not already been taken as an elective. These semester credit hours do not count toward the semester hours required for the master's degree.

## Application and Admission

Admission to the general psychology program is contingent on meeting all requirements of the ECU Graduate School and being recommended by the graduate admissions committee of the Department of Psychology. A completed application will include a Graduate School application; a Department of Psychology basic information sheet; GRE verbal, quantitative, and advanced test

scores; complete college transcripts; and a minimum of two letters of recommendation (at least one from a psychologist). Interviews are occasionally requested.

A combination of GRE scores, grade point average, and references is used in making recommendations for admission. Applicants should score above the fiftieth percentile on the GRE and have above a 3.0 GPA, both overall and in their major.

The department requires that all graduate students have a common core of undergraduate psychology courses in psychological statistics, experimental psychology, learning, personality, physiological psychology, and tests and measurements. Applicants are admitted with deficiencies, but those must be met by appropriate undergraduate course work. These courses will not count toward the master's degree. An undergraduate course in computer science is also highly recommended.

The admissions screening procedure begins March 15. All application materials should be submitted prior to this date. Final decisions generally are sent out in April. The general program will accept applications after the March 15 deadline, but spaces may be limited.

For course sequencing, it is recommended that students begin graduate work in the fall semester, but mid-year admissions are generally acceptable. Admissions for entrance at other times should be discussed with the program chair.

### **Financial Support**

In addition to the paid internship, research assistantships are available for applicants. A letter accompanying the application materials indicating the desire and basis for needing financial assistance is considered an application for an assistantship.

### **Additional Information**

Additional information, including appointments for further discussion, can be obtained by contacting:

William F. Grossnickle, PhD  
Professor and Director, Graduate General Program  
Department of Psychology  
East Carolina University  
Rawl Building  
Greenville, NC 27858-4353  
Telephone: 919-757-6634

or

Jeannie Golden, PhD  
Assistant Professor  
Director of Specialty Area in MR/DD  
Department of Psychology  
East Carolina University  
Rawl Building  
Greenville, NC 27858-4353  
Telephone: 919-757-6800

East Carolina University is committed to equality of educational opportunity and does not discriminate against applicants, students, or employees based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, or handicap. Moreover, East Carolina University is open to people of all races and actively seeks to promote racial integration by recruiting and enrolling a larger number of minority students. An equal opportunity/affirmative action university, which accommodates the needs of individuals with disabilities.

U.P. 93-104 2,000 copies of this public document were printed at a cost of \$178.98, or \$.089 per copy.