

Doctor of Psychology: Clinical Psychology

Degree Type

Doctor of Psychology

Mission

The Doctor of Psychology (PsyD), Clinical Psychology is focused on training students to be practitioner-scholars who integrate faith into clinical work as clinical psychologists. The PsyD program is built on three pillars: clinical competence, academic rigor, and faith integration. Graduates of this program will be prepared for licensure in the practice of clinical psychology, which takes many forms including, but not limited to, psychotherapy/counseling, psychological and cognitive assessment, and program administration.

Program highlights include:

- The program is designed to take 60 months to complete.
- Twelve non-residential credits from an existing clinical Master's degree may be accepted toward the completion of this degree.
- Course delivery in late afternoons/evenings and some weekends.
- Utilization of a cohort model to increase support and camaraderie among the students.
- The PsyD program is designed to be a 5-year program, accommodating those entering directly from a psychology BA program or those with a terminal MA degree in a clinical social science field.
- The full 5-year program, for those entering directly from a psychology BA program, consists of 123 credits - 4 years of coursework and a dissertation, with a final pre-doctoral internship year.
- Those entering with a terminal MA degree may transfer up to 12 credits of applicable graduate coursework, contingent on approval of course equivalency and relevance. Transferring credits allows the students to have a lighter course load for the first year. Transferring credits will not change the 5-year timeline of the program. This option consists of a minimum of 111 credits - 4 years of coursework with a dissertation and a final, full-time pre-doctoral internship year.
- The program includes a 4-year full-time academic residency requirement, followed by a full-time 1-year internship experience.
- New cohorts begin in August of each year. The application deadline is January of the year of intended enrollment.

For more detailed information about the requirements and policies of the PsyD program, please see the [PsyD Student Handbook](#).

Accreditation

NNU is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (NWCCU). The NNU PsyD program submitted an application for accreditation to the American Psychological Association (APA) Commission on Accreditation in Spring 2024. A site visit is anticipated in Fall 2025.

PsyD Admissions Requirements

Application Requirements for NNU's PsyD in Clinical Psychology Program include the following:

- GPA: 3.0 Undergraduate; 3.5 MA/MS
- Prerequisites:
 - FOR BACHELOR'S STUDENTS ONLY: Bachelor's degree in Psychology from an accredited college or university OR a minimum of 18 credits of Psychology that must include:
 - General Psychology or Introduction to Psychology
 - Developmental Psychology (covering the Lifespan)
 - A Research Methods or Psychological Statistics class
 - Abnormal Psychology
 - FOR MASTER'S STUDENTS APPLYING FOR POST-BACC PLUS STANDING: Terminal clinical Master's degree from a related field (Counseling, Psychology, Social Work).
- Necessary Application Documents for ALL Applicants:
 - Personal Statement
 - Submit a written essay (no more than 4 pages) that covers the following:
 - Why do you want to be a psychologist and what interests you about the field?
 - What experiences in your life have prepared you for being a good psychologist?
 - What unique qualities do you possess that will assist you in becoming a psychologist?
 - The reasons behind selecting this particular program and Northwest Nazarene University.
 - How do you anticipate this degree will impact your role in the community?
 - CV or Resume
 - Academic Writing Sample
 - A writing sample that is representative of your best academic writing (i.e., thesis, journal article, and/or academic paper). The sample should provide evidence of research-based writing and include citations from outside sources. The writing sample should follow APA formatting (double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, margins, etc.).

Our interview process has two parts. The first interview is a video conference evaluation with a mock therapy session and an in-depth interview with one of our faculty. Depending on the results of the first interview, selected candidates will be invited for a mandatory on-campus interview.

Once an applicant has been offered admission, they must complete the following:

- Letter of Intent
- \$300 nonrefundable deposit, due within 3 weeks of the date of the acceptance letter (this deposit will be applied to the first-semester tuition).
- Successfully pass a background check

Student Success Fee

In lieu of course fees, the Department of Psychology has chosen to charge students a mandatory flat fee of \$250 per semester to help cover ancillary costs of the PsyD educational experience.

Provisional Admission Acceptance

Any student who is admitted into the NNU PsyD programs through an exception process will begin with an academic standing of Provisional Admission. This standing will be in effect during the 1st semester of the student's enrollment at NNU. NNU reserves the right to conduct an evaluation of the student's progress after the first semester, and those students who do not meet the regular admission standards may be administratively withdrawn from the university.

Student Learning Outcomes (AIMS)

1. To prepare students to be culturally and ethically competent entry-level providers of mental health services with the necessary general knowledge in the discipline of Psychology (DSKs).
2. To prepare students to be culturally and ethically competent entry-level providers of mental health services with the necessary Profession-Wide Competencies in the discipline of Clinical Psychology (PWCs).
3. To equip students to ethically integrate psychological theory and application through the four pillars of NNU's mission: Transformation, Truth, Community, and Service.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation requirements for the NNU PsyD program are:

- Candidates accepted into Pre-PsyD track must complete a total of 123 credits: 41 Pre-PsyD credits and 82 PsyD credits.
- Candidates accepted into the Post Bacc Plus track must complete 111 credits total: 29 Pre-PsyD credits (in addition to approved coursework transferred) and 82 PsyD credits.
- All students must pass a Qualifying exam and comprehensive student review before being invited to continue the PsyD program.
- Completion of the approved program within seven years of beginning coursework.
- Students must earn a B- (2.70) or higher in all courses and have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher
- Pass the full comprehensive exam before the Internship Application Process
- Complete 1500 hours of supervised hours total (approximately 500 supervised hours minimum per year) of Practicum.
 - On average, students must complete 15-20 hours per week of school to reach 500 hours per year.
 - While 1500 hours is the minimum requirement, students are encouraged to maximize hours to ensure a competitive internship application.
- 1500 Clinical hours minimum in an approved internship
- Successfully defend a doctoral dissertation project

Program Progression and Leave of Absence

The sequence of Psy.D. courses is critical to the successful completion of the educational and professional outcomes of the program. Additionally, the Psy.D. program is designed to rely heavily on the student cohort model. Thus, students must enroll in every prescribed course scheduled each term. Electives are optional and dependent on a number of factors, including approval by Psy.D. Program staff and faculty.

In an emergency situation, a student may be allowed to withdraw from or defer one or more courses to be taken at a later time. The Psy.D. Program staff and faculty will formulate a plan for the student to make up the course(s) and complete the program, which may involve an independent study format (and its associated fee) and/or joining another cohort. Independent study format will only be considered in extreme circumstances and will be contingent upon faculty availability and resources. Considerations for the program completion plan include the cumulative nature of some course sequences (e.g., Research Methods). The student may also wish to consider their need to maintain half-time equivalency for financial aid purposes (e.g., eligibility, deferment; refer to the Academic Catalog for more detail).

The student, not the Psy.D. program, bears the responsibility for ensuring all curriculum and clinical requirements are fulfilled within the seven-year allotment for program completion. Nonetheless, consultation with the Psy.D. Program Office is essential to devise a workable completion plan. In order to preserve the cohort model, the student may be required to take a leave of absence and rejoin a later cohort or, in extreme circumstances, make up missed mandatory courses in an independent study format and pay the associated independent study fees in addition to the cost of tuition.

In every situation, the format in which the student will make up the course(s) is up to the determination of the Psy.D. Chair and faculty. In addition, should a student decide in conjunction with the Psy.D. Chair and faculty to take fewer courses per semester and/or take a leave of absence the student must complete the entire program within seven (7) years from their initial start date. It is the student's responsibility, not the Psy.D. Program, for ensuring all curriculum and clinical requirements are fulfilled within the seven-year allotment; nonetheless, consultation with the Psy.D. Chair and the student's advisor is essential to devising a workable completion plan.

Another consideration when deferring courses is that complications arise when the deferred class is a prerequisite for a subsequent course. Courses cannot be taken unless all prerequisites are fulfilled, and it is the student's responsibility to verify that all prerequisites are met before enrolling in any course. Also, any complications that may occur should a student postpone, drop, or withdraw from a mandatory course are the student's complete responsibility. The student must confer with the Psy.D. Chair and the student's advisor when deciding to postpone, drop, or withdraw from a mandatory course.

Should a student defer enough courses to put them below the number of credits required to meet full-time or half-time equivalency, financial aid eligibility may be affected. While student advisors will assist in these matters, the PsyD department is not responsible for ensuring that students maintain eligibility for student financial aid. Additionally, if a student takes a leave of absence, their student loans may come due. See the section on full-time/part-time status of the NNU Graduate Catalog.

Program Continuation

If a student is finishing degree requirements (e.g., dissertation, internship) in the fifth year of the program or beyond, the student is considered to be in continuation. The student must remain enrolled in the appropriate continuation courses (e.g., PSYD9905 Internship Continuation, and/or PSYD8995 Dissertation Continuation) each semester until the student completes the remaining degree requirements.

Students who do not enroll in continuation by the first day of the term cannot utilize university resources such as the library, document tracking, and faculty advising. Should a student choose not to register for a semester while in continuation, the student will be considered on leave without permission and, therefore, will be unable to accrue hours for clinical training or complete work for their dissertation (e.g., unable to seek chair assistance, apply for IRB approval, or defend proposal or final dissertation).

Readmittance Procedure

In order to be readmitted into the program after taking a leave of absence with permission, the student will need to complete a readmittance form and meet with program staff or faculty to develop a plan for program completion. A student must apply for re-admittance after a leave of absence without permission. Re-admittance applications will be reviewed by the PsyD Student Progress Committee (SPC). Students who are granted re-admission will be readmitted after a leave without permission will be readmitted on "Provisional" status.

Reapplication Policy

NNU has specific policies and requirements for students who wish to reenter the program after previously withdrawing. Students who have withdrawn must reapply in order to reenter the program. The application will be reviewed by the PsyD Admissions Committee, and students are not guaranteed re-admittance. In addition, it is up to the discretion of the PsyD Admissions Committee if the applicant will return to their cohort or be placed in a new cohort. A readmitted student is responsible for completing the Psy.D. program within seven (7) years of their original start date of the program. Students may contact Psy.D. Program Manager for assistance in this process.

Pre-PsyD Track

This track is designed for individuals who have completed their Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with a major in Psychology OR a minimum of 18 credits of Psychology. *Upon successful completion of the entire Pre-PsyD curriculum, these students are also eligible to receive a Master of Arts degree in Clinical Psychology.* Please see NNU PsyD Admission Requirements for additional information.

Minimum semester credits required: 123 credits Total (41 credits Pre-PsyD, 82 PsyD Credits)

Pre-PsyD Courses (41 credits):

Item #	Title	Credits
PPSY6001	Basic Skills - Individual Psychotherapy	3
PPSY6100	Integration I: Psychology and the Wesleyan Perspective	2
PPSY6111	Professional Foundations in Psychology I	1
PPSY6170	Psychopathology	2
PPSY6202	Clinical Foundations in Psychology	2
PPSY6512	Professional Foundations in Psychology II	1
PPSY6530	Ethical and Legal Issues in Psychology	2
PPSY6532	Theories of Psychotherapy	2
PPSY6533	Family Systems Theory and Interventions	2
PPSY6542	Group Processes and Interventions	2
PPSY6550	Diversity I: Social Aspects of Behavior from a Multicultural Perspective	2
PPSY6590	Assessment I: Psychological Tests and Measurements	3
PPSY6844	Introduction to Human Sexuality: Physiology, Diversity, and Interventions	2
PPSY7190	Assessment II: Cognitive	3
PPSY7201	Clinical Practicum 201	2
PPSY7507	Basic Skills of Child-Centered Play Psychotherapy	1
PPSY7513	Professional Foundations in Psychology III	1
PPSY7535	Statistical Analysis	3
PPSY7552	Addictions Psychotherapy	2
PPSY7635	Research Design and Methodology	3

PsyD Post-Bacc Plus Track

This track is designed for individuals who have completed a Terminal Master's degree from a related clinical field (Counseling, Psychology, Social Work). These individuals may petition to transfer up to 12 credits from their previous graduate program, contingent on approval of the Program Director for course equivalency and relevance.

The following courses may be transferred in from an accredited terminal Masters program (upon approval):

[PPSY6001](#), [PPSY6111](#), [PPSY6512](#), [PPSY6532](#), [PPSY6542](#), [PPSY7507](#), [PPSY7552](#)

Minimum semester credits required: 111 credits Total (29 credits Pre-PsyD and 82 credits PsyD credits)

Pre-PsyD Courses (29 credits)

Those students who enter the PsyD with a terminal clinical Masters degree (Counseling, Social Work, etc.) may transfer credits as listed above. All courses below must be successfully completed in the NNU PsyD program prior to starting the PsyD courses.

Item #	Title	Credits
PPSY6100	Integration I: Psychology and the Wesleyan Perspective	2
PPSY6170	Psychopathology	2
PPSY6202	Clinical Foundations in Psychology	2
PPSY6530	Ethical and Legal Issues in Psychology	2
PPSY6533	Family Systems Theory and Interventions	2
PPSY6550	Diversity I: Social Aspects of Behavior from a Multicultural Perspective	2
PPSY6590	Assessment I: Psychological Tests and Measurements	3
PPSY6844	Introduction to Human Sexuality: Physiology, Diversity, and Interventions	2
PPSY7190	Assessment II: Cognitive	3
PPSY7201	Clinical Practicum 201	2
PPSY7513	Professional Foundations in Psychology III	1
PPSY7535	Statistical Analysis	3
PPSY7635	Research Design and Methodology	3

PsyD Courses (82 credits)

All PsyD courses listed below must be completed at NNU by students who have completed either the Pre-PsyD Track or the Post-Bacc Plus Track.

Biblical Integration (6 credits)

Item #	Title	Credits
PSYD8200	Integration II: Psychology of World Religions and Spirituality	2
PSYD9200	Integration III: Moral and Spiritual Identity Formation	2
PSYD9800	Integration IV: Social Ethics, Diversity, Spirituality, & Psychotherapy	2

Psychotherapy - Intervention (6 credits)

Item #	Title	Credits
PSYD8210	Cognitive Behavioral Theory and Intervention	2
PSYD8610	Psychodynamic Theory and Intervention	2
PSYD9310	Postmodern and Contemporary Theories and Interventions	2

Clinical courses (6 credits)

Item #	Title	Credits
PSYD9172	Clinical Psychopharmacology	2
PSYD9710	Gerontology	2
PSYD9870	Professional Preparation	2

General Science (8 credits)

Item #	Title	Credits
PSYD8220	Clinical Neuropsychology	3
PSYD8330	Cognitive and Affective Foundations of Behavior	3
PSYD8731	Lifespan Development	2

Assessment (9 credits)

Item #	Title	Credits
PSYD8190	Assessment III: Personality and Projective Assessment	3
PSYD8290	Assessment IV: Neuropsychological Assessment	3
PSYD8790	Assessment V: Child Assessment	3

Diversity – Individual and Cultural Diversity (4 credits)

Item #	Title	Credits
PSYD8850	Diversity II: Social Justice and Advocacy	2
PSYD9850	Diversity III: Global Psychology	2

Other Required Courses (8 credits)

Item #	Title	Credits
PSYD8362	History and Systems of Psychology	2
PSYD8840	Health Psychology	2
PSYD9630	Supervision	2
PSYD9730	Consultation and Interprofessional Practice	2

Other Graduation Requirements

- Clinical Praxis - Communication and Interpersonal Skills (14 credits).
Successful completion of all Pre-PsyD and PsyD practicum and internship hours is required for program completion.
- Clinical Practicum courses will be one unit of clinical consultation for every semester that students are on practicum (except for the Pre-internship year). Students will complete the 500 supervised hours minimum per year required by the APA in 12 credit hours, including [PPSY7201](#) and 11 credits of PSYD Clinical Practicum and Pre-Internship courses (see courses below).
- Internship (8 credits) 1 full year of internship = 1500 hours minimum
- Dissertation – Research (16 credits)
 - [PPSY7635](#). Research Design and Methodology
 - [PSYD8990](#). Dissertation Development (2), taken seven times for a minimum of 14 credits
- Oral & Written Comprehensive Exam -- Spring Semester of third year
Before the student is cleared to apply for internship, each student is required to pass an oral and written component of a comprehensive exam of PsyD content that indicates readiness for internship. The student will sit before a panel to present a portfolio and be examined by a panel of experts. Each student's work will be evaluated and should reflect psychotherapeutic proficiency; appropriate goal setting; diagnostic understanding; theoretical soundness; diversity awareness, and a biblically-based, holistic approach. Please see the [PsyD Student Handbook](#) for further information.
 - [PSYD9400](#). Oral Clinical Competency Exam (0) (Fee attached)

Item #	Title	Credits
PPSY7201	Clinical Practicum 201	2
PSYD8202	Clinical Practicum 202	2
PSYD8601	Clinical Practicum 301	2
PSYD8602	Clinical Practicum 302	2
PSYD9501	Clinical Practicum 401	2
PSYD9502	Clinical Practicum 402	2
PSYD9866A	Introduction to Internship	0
PSYD9866B	Pre-Internship	1
PSYD9900	Clinical Internship	4
PPSY7635	Research Design and Methodology	3
PSYD8900	Introduction to Dissertation	2
PSYD8990	Dissertation Development	2
PSYD9400	Oral Clinical Competency Exam	0
PSYD9600	Dissertation Defense	0

Please note that some of these classes will be taken more than once during the program.

Total Credits	111-123
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