

Connections

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Community Psychology

“Community psychology goes beyond an individual focus and integrates social, cultural, economic, political, environmental, and international influences to promote positive change, health, and empowerment at individual and systemic levels” (SCRA27.org).

What do Community Psychologists do?

Community psychologists work in nonprofit agencies, community organizations, government positions, mental health agencies, public health, consulting and evaluation agencies, and academic or research settings (idealist.org) as educators, program directors, consultants, policy developers, evaluators, researchers and more.

Graduate School Opportunities include Community Psychology, Clinical-Community Psychology, and interdisciplinary programs at the master’s and doctoral level. Master’s programs are typically service-oriented programs with a significant focus on practice. Doctoral programs focus on theory and practice with significant emphasis on comprehensive research training (SCRA27.org)

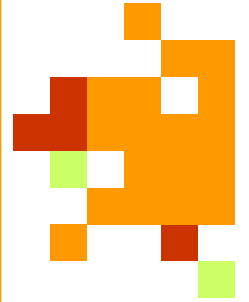
Graduate School Admission Criteria includes undergraduate GPA, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, personal statement, and relevant research, volunteer, and work experience. Specific admission criteria varies by school. Be sure to check individual programs directly.

Preparation for a Community Ph. D. Program

These are suggestions that may help you stay competitive for graduate school. **You do not necessarily need all of these qualifications to be accepted.**

GPA/Coursework

- Take Community Psychology (PSY 270) .
- Demonstrate a strong background in statistics (PSY 295) and research methods (PSY 395).
- Develop excellent writing skills by taking courses that require you to write.
- Take a range of courses in psychology and related social sciences that provide you with experience and training in the social problem you are interested in studying.
- Obtain hands-on research experience in community based settings. See “Opportunities to Gain Experience” on page 2.
- Average GPA: 3.6



Graduate Schools for Community Psychology:

• Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI

• DePaul University
Chicago, IL

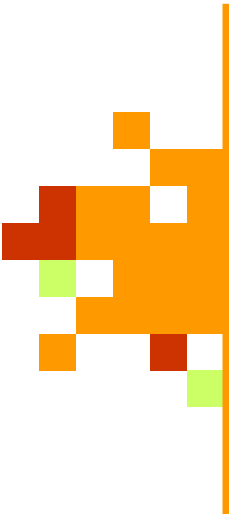
• Georgia State University
Atlanta, GA

• University of Illinois at Chicago
Chicago, IL

• University of Maryland
Baltimore, MD

**For a complete list of programs visit:
www.scra27.org*





Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

- Almost all PhD programs require students to take the general GRE, which is a standardized test for graduate school. Some programs require students to take the Psychology Subject Specific GRE as well, which is only offered three times a year as a paper based test. This means planning ahead is essential.
- Check out the GRE website at www.gre.org and the GRE Career Connection to begin gaining the knowledge needed to start studying.

Letters of Recommendation

- Most programs require multiple letters of recommendation from individuals who know the applicant very well.
- Establishing the relationships needed to obtain strong letters of recommendation takes time, effort, and a close working relationship with the writer.
- Getting hands-on experience is one of the best ways to establish strong working relationships. See opportunities to gain experience below.



Personal Statement

- Be sure to check with all schools for specific instructions about the personal statement.
- An excellent personal statement is tailored to each individual program, communicates a perfect applicant-program fit, and demonstrates superior writing ability.
- Utilize the MSU Writing Center, professors, peers, and others for feedback about your personal statement.

Opportunities to Gain Experience

- Participate in community service projects through the Service Learning Center, student group involvement, and attending alternative break programs. www.servicelearning.msu.edu
- Actively pursue undergraduate research opportunities in your areas of interest. Academic credit can be earned through independent study (PSY 490/491). www.psychology.msu.edu
- Take part in the Psychology Human Service Internship Course (PSY 381/382) and the MSU Adolescent Project (PSY 371/372). www.psychology.msu.edu

Examples of Community Psychology Research

- Violence against women; examining the legal, medical, mental systems and response to the needs of rape survivors and how that response can be improved.
- The influences of peer and teacher social networks on childhood outcomes and intervention dissemination.
- The design and delivery of effective community-based HIV prevention services.

References

SCRA. (2015). Society for Community Research and Action. Retrieved March 11, 2015, from <http://www.scra27.org/>
Idealist.org Public Service Graduate Education Resource Center. Degree Overview: Community psychology. Retrieved March 11, 2015, from Idealist.org_-_Community_Psychology_Degree_Overview.pdf

To find out more check:

- www.scra27.org
- www.apa.org
- www.idealists.org

