

Psychology (Positive Psychology), MS

ASPGSPPMS

Do you have a passion for bringing out the best in yourself and others? Do you want to help promote psychological strengths within families, workplaces and communities? Learn positive psychology knowledge and skills to develop optimal well-being and life satisfaction within yourself and others.

Program description

Degree awarded: MS Psychology (Positive Psychology)

The MS program in psychology with a concentration in positive psychology, offered by the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences, prepares students to apply their knowledge and skills to find meaning and fulfillment in their own lives, as well as to contribute to transformational practices in communities and organizations that can lead to optimal well-being and more harmonious, equitable and inclusive societies.

Through the lens of historical and contemporary research in positive psychology, students in the program gain a solid grounding in the basic tenets of the field, the methodologies employed, and the development and effectiveness of interventions that seek to improve peoples' lives and enable them to thrive.

Coursework emphasizes a theoretical, evidence-based and experiential focus on key factors contributing to psychological well-being and optimal functioning, such as gratitude, joy, love, optimism, inspiration, compassion, creativity, resilience and mindfulness.

At a glance

- **College/School:** [New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences](#)
- **Location:** [West Valley](#) or [Online](#)

Accelerated program options

This program allows students to obtain both a bachelor's and master's degree in as little as five years. It is offered as an **accelerated bachelor's plus master's degree** with:

[Psychology, BA](#)

[Psychology, BS](#)

Acceptance to the graduate program requires a separate application. Students typically receive approval to pursue the accelerated master's during the junior year of their bachelor's degree program. Interested students can learn about eligibility requirements and [how to apply](#).

Degree requirements

30 credit hours including the required capstone course (PSY 553)

Required Core (3 credit hours)

PSY 502 Professional Issues in Psychology (3)

Research (6 credit hours)

PSY 500 Research Methods (3)

PSY 513 Fundamentals in Quantitative Methods (3)

Concentration (12 credit hours)

PSY 550 Advanced Social Psychology (3) or

PSY 577 Advanced Developmental Psychology (3)

PSY 565 Psychology of Mindfulness (3)

PSY 585 Advanced Positive Psychology (3)

PSY 586 Emotion (3)

Electives (6 credit hours)

Culminating Experience (3 credit hours)

PSY 553 Capstone in General Psychology (3)

Additional Curriculum Information

Students are enrolled in a section of PSY 553 designated specifically for the positive psychology concentration. The capstone project requires students to synthesize and organize the prior research related to a positive psychology intervention, identify a gap in the prior research and develop a research study proposal that addresses the identified gap.

Admission requirements

Applicants must fulfill the requirement of both the Graduate College and the New College of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences.

Applicants are eligible to apply to the program if they have earned a bachelor's or master's degree in psychology or a related field from a regionally accredited institution.

Applicants must have a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in the last 60 hours of their first bachelor's degree program, or a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.00 (scale is 4.00 = "A") in an applicable master's degree program.

All applicants must submit:

1. graduate admission application and application fee
2. official transcripts
3. statement of purpose
4. two letters of recommendation
5. proof of English proficiency

Additional Application Information

An applicant whose native language is not English must provide [proof of English proficiency](#) regardless of their current residency.

Applicants must provide evidence of successful completion of an introductory psychology course, as well as either a statistics course or a research methods course. Typically, these prerequisite courses should be in a social science field; however, applicants may apply with courses outside of a social science field.

The statement of purpose should describe the educational background, scholarly interests, and academic and professional goals of the applicant.

It is preferred that the letters of recommendation are from faculty members who know the applicant's work well; if these are not available, then recommendations should be from individuals in supervisory or professional roles.

Tuition information

When it comes to paying for higher education, everyone's situation is different. Students can learn about [ASU tuition and financial aid](#) options to find out which will work best for them.

Attend online

ASU Online

ASU offers this program in an online format with multiple enrollment sessions throughout the year. Applicants may [view the program's ASU Online page](#) for program descriptions and to request more information.

Global opportunities

Global experience

Studying abroad is possible for graduate students, and it allows students in the psychology program to stand out in many career fields. Students are exposed to distinct differences in the human condition worldwide, are able to improve language and cross-cultural skills for effective communication, and are challenged to adapt under new social and cultural circumstances.

There are more than 50 program opportunities, with programs on every continent. Faculty-directed programs tend to be the best fit for graduate students; taking courses with ASU professors over the summer or during academic breaks offers students close mentorship and professional network growth in many fields of study while they earn ASU credit. Exchange program participation is also possible with careful planning.

Career opportunities

Graduates leave this program with an in-depth understanding of this growing field. They may pursue professional research careers in psychology, education, health care or marketing. In addition, the positive psychology coursework benefits graduates working in supervisory or management positions, training or teaching roles, or in any social services profession.

Careers benefitting from the positive psychology concentration include:

- equity and inclusion officer
- individual life coach
- positive coach in sports or organizations
- positive psychology research assistant
- social and community services manager

Graduates can also find careers in the following industries:

- business (sales and marketing manager, human resources manager, employee assistance program manager)
- community health and wellness professions (prevention specialist, youth development specialist, community health educator)
- education (high school psychology teacher, character strengths educator)
- government (health and wellness policy specialist, state department of public health or mental health program coordinator)
- social services (family interventionist, warm line worker, occupational analyst)

Contact information

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Admission deadlines