

4 - YEAR BACHELOR OF ARTS
Psychology (Applied Emphasis)

Planning Guide

Application Deadline: March 1 (every year)
Requirements: Section 3.3 of the Academic Calendar

To apply, please visit www.concordia.ab.ca and click Apply Now

*This information reflects policies and procedures at the time of dissemination.
These policies and procedures are subject to change.*

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INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF THE APPLIED EMPHASIS PROGRAM

The Applied Emphasis psychology program emphasizes the application of psychological theory outside the classroom and in a human services setting. If you are accepted into this program, you will have a full academic year (eight months) field placement. This opportunity allows you to gain hands-on experience, apply what you have learned, build your skills and competencies, and make connections in your community. Placements vary widely in their setting and type, which is representative of the many careers in which a psychology degree may be used.

ADVANTAGES OF THE APPLIED EMPHASIS PROGRAM

This program is a chance to see some of the ways psychology is applied in a practical setting. You might administer psychometric assessments, co-lead group therapy with at-risk teens, support the rehabilitation of individuals with acquired brain injuries, job shadow a counselling psychologist, help a single parent get a job and housing, research the efficacy of social support systems in the city, or teach a preschooler how to ask for a cookie without yelling.

In this program, you will explore the human services side of psychology. The skills you learn can be a foundation for later training to become a psychologist (a profession that requires a minimum of a Master's degree). Our graduates have gone on to do Master's and PhD programs at universities across Canada. This program also helps you to develop the skills needed to enter the human services field with your Bachelor's degree. Our graduates have found jobs such as family support workers, probation officers, child and youth workers, addictions counsellors, psychometrists, and behavioural specialists, among other occupations.

Our graduates tell us that the "package" of Applied Emphasis courses, plus the field placement, gave them valuable knowledge and connections for the workplace and prepared them for graduate school. The Applied Emphasis program can give you a headstart in acquiring the practical skills you need for the human services field.

EXAMPLES OF FIELD PLACEMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Some of the types of field placements we offer include:

- Supporting individuals leaving abusive situations (e.g., elders, partners, children) with safe housing, sustainable living (e.g., job, community, etc.), and therapeutic resources
- Learning how to administer, score, interpret, and write reports for a variety of psychometric assessments
- Delivering programming for individuals with acquired brain injuries, various disabilities, or neurodiversities
- Working with children, youth, and families involved with Child and Family Services

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- Shadowing individual counselling or co-leading group counselling
- Supporting children and youth of all ages in schools and out of school programs
- Learning about and working within eco- and animal-assisted therapy
- Delivering programming for minority populations (BIPOC, LGBTQIA2S+, immigrants, etc.)
- Supporting residential addiction recovery treatments

Students are assigned to field placements based on interest, previous experience, placement site requirements, scheduling, and the discretion of the Field Placement Coordinator.

STRUCTURE OF THE 4-YR BA IN PSYCHOLOGY (APPLIED EMPHASIS)

FIELD PLACEMENT I (PSY 486)

Field Placement I (PSY 486) is a full year university course (September to April) worth 6 credits. It involves both the placement and a weekly seminar.

Placement: The placement is 160 hours (average 8 hours per week) from September to April. Students are placed in an agency or organization that provides experience in the human services field. A Field Placement Supervisor is assigned to each student.

Weekly Seminar: The seminar activities typically involve practicum-related assignments, discussion groups, student presentations, guest speakers, and preparation for next steps following graduation. There are also two, **mandatory**, full-day Saturday workshops (one in the Fall semester and one in the Winter semester).

Practicum Grade: Grades for the practicum course are “credit” or “no credit.” All components of the course (practicum work, Field Placement Supervisor and Field Placement Coordinator evaluations, weekly seminar attendance and participation, seminar assignments) need to be completed satisfactorily to receive credit in the course.

CONCURRENT COURSES

Students are required to take the following three exclusive courses during the program.

PSY 486 (Field Placement I) *as described above*

PSY 305 (Ethical Issues in Professional Psychology)

PSY 332 (Communication and Counselling Skills)

Students often share that the opportunity to take several courses as a cohort allows them to build strong, rewarding, and enduring relationships with each other.

PLANNING YOUR DEGREE

For admission to the Applied Emphasis program you need to have taken: **PSY 104, 105, 211, 338, 339, and 3 credits in another senior-level (200+) PSY course**. You must also have a minimum GPA of **3.0** on your last 24 credits.

A minimum grade of C- is required for PSY 104, 105, and 211. The Psychology Department **strongly recommends** that students take PSY 211 rather than an equivalent course. Students should take PSY 211 as soon as possible as some students find this course challenging; taking this course earlier allows time to repeat it if necessary to achieve a satisfactory grade.

In both of the below plans, only courses required for admission into the Applied Emphasis program and for graduation are listed. Although 275, 311, 319, and 431 are not required for admission to the Applied Emphasis program, they are **required for graduation** from the Applied Emphasis program.

For a career in the human services field, other recommended courses include: PSY 223 (Developmental Psychology), PSY 281 (Principles of Behaviour), PSY 341 (Social Psychology), PSY 358 (Introduction to Applied Behaviour Analysis), PSY 359 (Atypical Development), PSY 385 (Applications of Learning), PSY 434 (Intellectual Assessment), PSY 435 (Clinical and Counselling Psychology: Theories and Applications), and WRI 300 (Essay Writing (Non-Fiction)).

This is a sample program for a student in the Applied Emphasis program who is completing a placement in their third *and* fourth year. It includes only the specific courses required for admission to the program and the specific courses required for graduation.

| | |
|--|--|
| YEAR ONE - Fall | YEAR ONE - Winter |
| PSY 104 (Basic Psychological Processes) * | PSY 105 (Individual and Social Behavior) * |
| YEAR TWO - Fall | YEAR TWO - Winter |
| PSY 211 (Statistical Methods for Psychological Research) * | PSY 311 (Intermediate Statistics) |
| PSY 338 (Personality) * | PSY 339 (Abnormal Psychology) * |
| | PSY 275 (Brain and Behaviour) |
| YEAR THREE - Fall | YEAR THREE - Winter |
| PSY 486 (Field Placement I) | PSY 486 (Field Placement I) |
| PSY 305 (Ethical Issues in Professional Psychology) | PSY 332 (Communication and Counselling Skills) |
| PSY 319 (Research Designs and Intermediate Statistical Method in Psychology) | PSY 431 (Theory and Practice of Psychometrics) |
| YEAR FOUR - Fall | YEAR FOUR - Winter |
| PSY 496 (Field Placement II) | PSY 496 (Field Placement II) |

**Required for admission to the program.*

Note: completing a second field placement is optional and requires approval of the department.

In addition to the courses listed above, to graduate you must also complete:

- 3 - 21 credits of unspecified senior level (200+) PSY courses
- 6 credits of ENG courses
- 6 credits of courses in the Faculty of Science
- AIT 100

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This is a sample program for a student in the Applied Emphasis program who is completing a placement in their fourth year *only*. It includes only the specific courses required for admission to the program and the specific courses required for graduation.

| | |
|--|--|
| YEAR ONE - Fall | YEAR ONE - Winter |
| PSY 104 (Basic Psychological Processes) * | PSY 105 (Individual and Social Behavior) * |
| YEAR TWO - Fall | YEAR TWO - Winter |
| PSY 211 (Statistical Methods for Psychological Research) * | PSY 311 (Intermediate Statistics) |
| PSY 338 (Personality) * | PSY 339 (Abnormal Psychology) * |
| YEAR THREE - Fall | YEAR THREE - Winter |
| PSY 319 (Research Designs and Intermediate Statistical Method in Psychology) | PSY 431 (Theory and Practice of Psychometrics) |
| PSY 275 (Brain and Behavior) | |
| YEAR FOUR - Fall | YEAR FOUR - Winter |
| PSY 486 (Field Placement I) | PSY 486 (Field Placement I) |
| PSY 305 (Ethical Issues in Professional Psychology) | PSY 332 (Communication and Counselling Skills) |

**Required for admission to the program.*

In addition to the courses listed above, to graduate you must also complete:

- 3 - 21 credits of unspecified senior level (200+) PSY courses
- 6 credits of ENG courses
- 6 credits of courses in the Faculty of Science
- AIT 100

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

WHEN TO APPLY

The application deadline is **March 1st** for the following September.

When students are eligible to apply, they will need to submit an application package (even if they are currently enrolled at Concordia University of Edmonton), because the program is competitive. Students can apply for admission once they have completed the **prerequisite courses** and achieved the required **minimum GPA**.

In their first year of study, students should consult the Academic Calendar and the Registrar's Office to plan their course sequence. Applicants typically apply in March of their second or third "year" **while or after** completing the prerequisite courses. *Note: the "year" may look different for students who are not studying full-time and/or did not begin their studies in a Fall semester.*

Students who have already completed the 3-Yr BA in Psychology can apply for this program at *any time*.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, please visit our website at www.concordia.ab.ca and click *Apply Now* to complete your application through ApplyAlberta.

If you have any difficulties with the online application process, please contact the admissions office at 780-479-9220 or admits@concordia.ab.ca.

TIPS FOR MAKING A GREAT APPLICATION

VOLUNTEER/WORK EXPERIENCE RECORD

Your volunteer experience can include activities such as being a camp counsellor at a summer camp, working a crisis phone line, volunteering in a shelter, or coaching soccer. Include all your work experience, especially if you have had positions of responsibility such as shift supervisor at a restaurant or experience as a lifeguard.

Example:

| Place of Employment Volunteer Experience | Position | Time Commitment | Period of Employment | Paid? |
|---|------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------|
| "Trendy Cafe Name" | Shift Supervisor | 20 hours/week | September 2020 - April 2021 | Yes |
| "Inspiring Camp Name" | Cabin Leader | 15 hours/day, 5 day/week | Summers 2018, 2019, 2021 | No |

*Note: your application will **not** be disqualified because you do not have considerable (or any) work and/or volunteer experience, however your experiences may enhance your application.*

STATEMENT OF INTENT

Your Statement of Intent is a very important element of your application. It would benefit you to research how to write a Statement of Intent. You may need to write several drafts and it is always a good idea to have your written work proofread and edited. A Statement of Intent that contains grammatical and spelling errors will weaken your application.

When you apply online, you will receive the following instructions:

Outline your reasons for wanting to enter the program so that your readers have a good understanding of your intentions. Describe the strengths and experiences you have that make you a good candidate for the program. Describe what you expect to gain from the training in your coursework and field placement. Describe your understanding of the knowledge base and personal qualities required to be a worker in a helping profession. Identify the key elements of professionalism. Give reasons why you think you would be an effective helper in the human-services field.

Make sure that you address each aspect of the prompt. Your Statement of Intent can be written as an essay or a letter.

REFERENCES

You will need **two general** referees and **one academic** referee.

For your academic referee: full-time faculty in the Psychology Department **cannot** provide a reference. This ensures that there is no conflict of interest on the part of psychology faculty members who both teach candidates and screen candidates for the Applied Emphasis program. However, you may use a sessional instructor in psychology, a university professor in another department, a lab instructor, or a highschool teacher.

For your general referee: choose people who know something about your ethics and character, and/or someone who can comment on your abilities as a worker. Examples of frequently used referees include: a work or volunteer supervisor, a team coach, a spiritual/religious leader, or a mentor. **Do not** choose a classmate, co-worker, family member, or family friend because this will make your application less competitive.

Remember to ask each person if they would be willing to give you a **positive** reference; do not assume that a reference will be positive.

After you submit your portion of the application, you will be given access to the reference forms. Send each person the appropriate form (Academic or General); the instructions for submission of the form is on the document. Each referee must email or mail their form **directly** to the Admissions Office **by the application deadline**. Be sure that your referees know when and how to submit the document and to thank them for their time.

SELECTION PROCESS AND INTERVIEW

Your application will be evaluated based on your grade point average, experience, Statement of Intent, and references. Following the initial review of applications, qualified applicants will be invited for an interview. This 30-minute interview will assess your non-academic qualifications, such as self-awareness, reflective capacity, communication skills, problem-solving skills, and overall suitability.

Note: this is a professional interview and students should plan to present accordingly.

POLICE INFORMATION CHECK WITH A VULNERABLE SECTOR CHECK

Students who are offered admission must provide a current clear Police Information Check with a Vulnerable Sector Check. This means completing a police information check, which authorizes the police to search their database and provides written confirmation that the applicant does not have a criminal record. Instructions for completing the check will be given at the offer of admission. Students will be responsible for the fee required to complete a police information check and the submission deadline is August 1st each year.

*Applicants with a criminal record are **ineligible** for the Applied Emphasis program unless they have obtained a pardon. The process of obtaining a pardon takes several years.*

Students who will work with children in their placement may be required to complete a Child Intervention Record check by their placement site. This does not have a fee.

PLAN YOUR TIMETABLE

Plan your schedule (courses, work schedule, and volunteer schedule) so that you have large blocks of free time (half days and/or full days) available each week for your practicum. This will allow you to have more potential options for field placements.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. When can I submit my application?

The application deadline is March 1st every year, but the applications can be submitted as early as October 1st. Once the Admissions Office has **all** of your documents, including your most recent transcript and your references, they will send your application package to the psychology department to be reviewed.

2. What if I don't meet the required minimum GPA?

The GPA required for admission to the Applied Emphasis program is 3.0 for the last 24 credits. If you are not sitting at or above 3.0, we encourage you to retake/take more courses in order to improve your GPA before applying. If this is a challenge for you, we recommend that you connect with Learning Accomodation Services at learningaccomodations@concordia.ab.ca

3. Are there fees for the program?

There are no different or extra fees.

4. What if I don't have volunteer experience?

Your application will still be eligible for consideration even if you don't have volunteer or work experience. We want to know what experiences you have had in both paid and unpaid work. Other significant life experiences, such as raising a family, are also important parts of your history.

5. Can I be in the program as an international student?

Yes! We have many international students in our program. We strongly advise you to connect with the International Relations Office to discuss how your participation in a practicum relates to your co-op work permit. We cannot advise you in regard to international matters, so please connect with the International Relations Office at international@concordia.ab.ca

6. Can I work/have a full course load while in the program?

This is up to you! This program requires commitment, so it is important to manage your time accordingly. You will be expected to average 8 hours at your practicum site each week in order to accumulate the required 160 hours by the end of the academic year.

When planning your schedule, remember that in **each** term you will have **two** Applied Emphasis courses and **one** mandatory Saturday workshop.

7. When will I know if I've been accepted?

After the Admissions Office receives all elements of an application package (including reference forms), they share these documents with the psychology faculty. We review all packages and invite qualified applicants to an interview. After interviews, we inform the Admissions Office of our final decisions and they inform students if they have or have not been accepted to the program. We do our best to move through this process swiftly, but the Admissions Office and psychology faculty have many ongoing responsibilities so we ask you to be patient.

8. How many students are accepted?

We can accept up to 30 students. In a typical year roughly 25 students are admitted to the first year of the program.

CONTACT

Field Placement Coordinator (carmen.ross@concordia.ab.ca)

Registrar's Office (registrar@concordia.ab.ca)

Admissions Office (admits@concordia.ab.ca)

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