

Frequently Asked Questions about the Human Development Ph. D. Program

More detailed answers to many of these questions can be found in different places on the Department's website and in the Guide to Graduate Programs and Doctoral Program Handbook available on the website. Links to further information on the Department's website are noted below.

Why would one choose a Ph.D. in Human Development over one in a discipline like Developmental Psychology?

The field of Human Development is similar to developmental psychology, but often has a more interdisciplinary focus on issues having to do with development. In Maryland's Department of Human Development, faculty have Ph.D.'s in human development, developmental psychology, and educational psychology. The study of human development often involves the translation of research findings to practitioners in various educational and other settings. A Human Development Ph. D. prepares students for academic positions in psychology departments, human development departments, educational psychology departments, and other education departments, and for a variety of positions in research institutions of different kinds. Examples of some of these positions are listed below.

What are the concentrations available in Human Development?

The University of Maryland's Human Development doctoral program offers broad training in different aspects or areas of human development and educational psychology, including social development, cognitive development, emotional development, human motivation, children's relations with peers, parents, and teachers, developmental neuroscience, and early childhood policy. All students receive their degree in human development. There is a formal university-approved specialization in educational psychology. The department also has a concentration in developmental sciences with most faculty in that group doing research on children and adolescents' social development. Another group of faculty study different aspects of developing during early childhood.

To learn more, click on the following links:

<http://www.education.umd.edu/EDHD/faculty2/>

<http://www.education.umd.edu/EDHD/programs/grad/>

What are some of the positions recent graduates go into?

Our Ph.D. program is designed to train students to be independent scholars and researchers in a specialty area in the field of human development. Coursework and experiences in the program emphasize research and teaching skills. Thus many students seek and obtain academic positions after they complete their degrees. Recent graduates have obtained academic appointments at the following universities: University of Illinois-

Chicago; State University of New York at Buffalo; University of Maryland, Baltimore County; Northern Illinois University; Towson University; Catholic University; and Temple University. Other students who do not wish to pursue an academic career obtain positions at research institutions in the Washington DC area or in other locations. Students have obtained such positions at the National Research Council, American Association of the Colleges for Teacher Education Westat, and the American Institutes for Research. Still other students obtain positions in other government agencies, or with school systems.

How long does it take to complete the Ph.D. in Human Development?

For students entering our program without a master's degree, it takes 4 – 6 years to complete their Ph. D., with most students finishing in 5 years. Students entering with a master's degree can finish the Ph. D. program in four years.

Do you offer a masters program?

The Department of Human Development offers a variety of master's programs, although it is important to note that students pursuing the Ph. D. are not required to obtain a masters degree as part of the Ph. D. program. Details about the three kinds of master's degrees we offer can be found in the Guide to Graduate Programs. The department has a joint masters program with the Department of Measurement, Statistics, and Evaluation that a number of our doctoral students enroll in during the time they are in our Ph. D. program.

To learn more, click on the following link:

<http://www.education.umd.edu/EDHD/programs/grad/>

What are the funding opportunities?

The Department supports nearly all of the Ph.D. students who enroll each year. Current funding sources for incoming students include university fellowships and research assistantships from individual faculty member's grants. Students in the program also are funded with department assistantships for teaching and research. The department has an NIH training grant that provides traineeships to some students who concentrate their studies in social development. Students awarded university fellowships are guaranteed financial support for two or four years, with half of the support coming from fellowship funds and the other half from departmental assistantships.

To learn more, click on the following link:

<http://www.education.umd.edu/EDHD/admissions/aid.html>

How is funding determined?

The Admissions Committee makes recommendations concerning which students should receive university fellowships. Faculty members with grants decide who will receive research assistantships supported by the grants. NIH traineeships are decided by the faculty associated with the NIH training grant after students are admitted to the program.

How many students normally enroll each year?

The department normally enrolls between 5 and 10 new doctoral students each year.

What is the Admissions Committee looking for?

Detailed discussion of the admissions criteria can be found on the Department's website. The main criteria for admission include: strong GRE scores, high GPAs from the student's undergraduate program and/or master's program, a personal statement that describes the student's interests, career goals, and why the University of Maryland's program is a good fit for the applicant, research experience and potential, letters of recommendation, and match between the student's interests and faculty interests. The match between a student's interest and faculty interests is very important because we have a mentorship-based model of doctoral training; all students work closely with a faculty mentor for most of their training following the completion of their core courses.

To learn more, click on the following link:

<http://www.education.umd.edu/EDHD/admissions/>

Do you have a cut-off score for the Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores?

Generally GRE scores above the 40% percentile are required for admission into the program.

To learn more, click on the following link:

<http://www.education.umd.edu/EDHD/admissions/instructions.html>

How are advisors assigned?

The Department's Admissions Committee makes the initial advising assignments based primarily on the student's essay stating which faculty member or members with whom he or she would like to work. Assignments also depend on whether a faculty member is taking new advisees for the coming year.

To learn more, click on the following link:

<http://www.education.umd.edu/EDHD/faculty2/index.html>

Can I visit the program?

The Department encourages applicants to visit campus and meet with faculty in the program.

What is it like to live College Park?

College Park is a city of approximately 25,000 residents in addition to 35,000 students at University of Maryland, 10,000 of who are graduate students. College Park is part of the greater Washington DC area and is about 25 minutes from Baltimore. Many students live in College Park, and others live throughout the metropolitan Washington area. Graduate students at Maryland have ready access to a plethora of cultural, recreational, and sporting activities and events both on campus and across the region. The cost of living in College Park is consistent with that of other major metropolitan areas.

The University has a free shuttle bus system that serves many areas. There is a stop on the Washington area Metro system located on campus. Metro provides easy access to downtown Washington and surrounding areas.