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# ***Graduate Program in Applied Social & Health Psychology***

***At Colorado State University***

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## ***Program Overview***

Applied Social & Health Psychology (ASHP) is one of five doctoral programs within the Department of Psychology at Colorado State University. Students trained in this program develop a strong methodological background and learn to use multiple research techniques to investigate social issues that have major impact on people, organizations, and communities. Through a selection of courses, active research involvement, and teaching opportunities, students tailor a program of study to their individual career goals. Graduates from the program go on to careers in academia, the private sector, and government agencies.

The program utilizes a mentorship model. Students are matched to a specific faculty member according to area of interest and by mutual consent of the student and faculty member. The faculty member serves as a mentor to the student, helping to guide the student through the program. However, students are strongly encouraged to collaborate with other faculty and students to gain a wide range of research experiences. Our faculty have diverse training and interests, but all share a desire to use social psychological research to improve people's lives.

## ***Research and Training Foci***

The program faculty and students concentrate their research emphases into several domains, including environmental psychology, prevention science, family health, occupational health, and child/adolescent development, with a special emphasis on the study of underserved groups including women, ethnic minorities, criminal justice populations and rural communities. These foci are described below:

**Environmental psychology:** This research focus emphasizes human-environment interaction, such as studying effective management of natural resources, psychological factors in the valuation of public environmental goods, the

influence of environmental stress (heat, odor, noise, crowding) on performance and social behavior, design of museums and other learning environments to maximize intended outcomes, environmental influences on special populations (e.g., those with dementia, visitors to national parks), creativity, culture and individual differences, aggression and violence, and conflict resolution.



***City Park, Fort Collins***

**Prevention Science:** Details are still being developed. For more information, contact Dr. Henry (kim.henry@colostate.edu)

**Relationships and Family Health:** Faculty have studied the role of intimate relationship and family processes in relation to a wide variety of health outcomes and problems, such as HIV prevention and substance use and domestic and family violence (e.g. parental alienation).

**Occupational Health Psychology:** The CSU Department of Psychology offers training in Occupational Health Psychology (OHP). OHP is the application of psychological theories and research methods to protect and promote worker safety, health and well-being. Occupational Health Psychology takes a comprehensive view of the work environment, including the way work is organized (e.g., shift work) as well as the culture of the organization.

### **Public Health:**

Many students in ASHP decide to pursue a master's degree in public health in addition to their doctorate, and their research focus reflects this interdisciplinary approach. The MPH program is part of the Colorado School of Public Health, a partnership with the University of Colorado at Denver, the University of Northern Colorado and Colorado State University. There are different curriculum requirements for the two programs, and students are able to navigate both with the help of the ASHP faculty. More information about the program can be found at: <http://www.colostate.edu/Depts/Psychology/gpph.shtml>.

For additional information on the types of research programs, publications, funded grants, and examples of course plans of study for each of these foci, visit <http://psychology.colostate.edu/aps/>.

### ***Course Requirements***

#### **Master of Science:<sup>1,2</sup>**

##### **Methods:**

PSY 652 Methods – I	4
PSY 653 Methods II	4
PSY 655 Methods Seminar	3

##### **Content:**

PSY600G Advanced Social Psychology	3
PSY 600J Health Psychology	3
PSY600M Measurement	3
Two additional courses from PSY600:	6
Personality	
Physiological	
Human Learning and Memory	
Human Performance	
Cognitive Processes	
Neuropsychology	
Developmental	
Sensation & Perception	
History & Systems	
Research practicum <sup>4</sup>	6
Thesis	6

#### **Doctor of Philosophy:<sup>2</sup>**

Specialty classes <sup>3</sup>	12
Research Practicum <sup>4</sup>	6
Dissertation	6
Additional specialty seminars and courses as determined by student's interests and research focus (e.g., environmental psychology) (e.g., from Statistics, Sociology, Natural Resource Recreation and Tourism, Computer Science, Journalism and Technical Communication, Human Development and Family Studies, Landscape Architecture, Environmental Health, or additional Psychology courses)	

### ***Notes:***

(1) Students are not admitted for a terminal M.S. degree.

(2) Credit hours over 30 taken during the M.S. degree at Colorado State University may be counted toward the Graduate School's PhD credit hour requirement.

(3) Students are expected to be actively involved in research each semester. The Research Practicum is a mechanism through which academic credit is given for this activity.

### ***Sample Schedule***

Some courses in the PSY 600 series are not taught every year. Check with the graduate committee for a schedule and register accordingly. Specialty seminars in other programs and departments should be selected by the student in consultation with their advisor. The table below presents an example of the coursework for the first two years of the graduate program.

Fall	Spring
<b>Year 1</b>	
PSY 652 (4 cr)	PSY 653 (4 cr)
PSY 600 (any; 3 cr)	PSY 655 (3 cr)
PSY 600J (3 cr)	PSY600G (3 cr)
Practicum (3 cr)	Practicum (3 cr)
<b>Year 2</b>	
PSY 600 (any; 3 cr)	PSY600M (3 cr)
Seminar (3 cr)	Seminar (3 cr)
Thesis (3 cr)	Thesis (3 cr)
Practicum (1 cr)	Practicum (1 cr)

Seminar topics change each semester. Examples of upcoming topics are: Attitudes and Persuasion, Health Psychology, Psychology of Gender, Perspectives in Global Health (taught under PSY 517), Women's Health (taught under PSY 515), Adolescent Problem Behavior, Close Relationships, Energy Efficiency and Behavioral Science, Structural Equation Modeling, Longitudinal Methods and Multilevel Modeling, Occupational Health Psychology and Methods in Social Psychology. The specific plan of study for each student varies depending on their research focus, and is developed as part of their professional development plan (see below).

### ***Course Waivers***

**Graduate Core Classes (PSY600 A-M):** Waiver requests for core courses are handled through Graduate Committee (GC). The petitioning student should submit their written request for a waiver, including a copy of the course syllabus from the class they took, to their program's GC representative. GC will determine if the course meets the scope, rigor, and type of content of the department's graduate core classes, and will where possible identify the closest match of an existing CSU class. Regardless of whether a student has taken Health or Social Psychology at another graduate degree program, ASHP students cannot get a waiver for the two courses and must retake them at CSU.

**Graduate Statistics (PSY652 & PSY 653).** Waivers are done on the basis of passing the waiver exam set by the current course instructor, the previous instructor, or someone designated by the department. Waiver exams should be taken either prior to, or early in the semester. The content of the

exam, and the threshold for obtaining a waiver, are set by the individual administering the test.

Other Graduate Courses: Waivers for other course requirements, including research methods, required and optional courses, and seminars, are at the discretion of the doctoral program. Waivers will be granted in accordance with that program's policies and procedures. Such waivers typically require assent of the instructor of a matching course at CSU or approval from a majority of program faculty where no direct equivalent course exists at CSU (unless another mechanism is specified by the program for granting waivers).

## ***Additional Degree Requirements***

The training model taken by the ASHP program is product-focused. We believe that students should be working toward publications, grant proposals, and developing into excellent teachers/communicators. Students begin by completing a first-year research project. Depending on the student's level, students may collaborate on an ongoing research project or may conduct a study of their own design. In many cases, the first year project will serve as pilot data for the student's thesis. It is expected that the Master's thesis will be completed before Spring of the student's third year.

After completion of the master's thesis, or after the first year for students who have entered the doctoral program with a master's degree, students are required to submit to the ASHP a **professional development plan**. The purpose of this Plan is to help students formulate a clear set of activities and projects that they will complete during their formal doctoral training in the ASHP program. The plan contains a summary of career goals, planned coursework, a timeline, dissertation plan, and a summary of competency three "competency projects" designed to demonstrate teaching/presentation, research, and writing skills.

The doctoral program in Applied Social & Health Psychology does not include a preliminary or qualifying exam. Rather, students are admitted to candidacy for the PhD after completing PSY652, PSY653, PSY655, 12 hours of PSY600 courses, the M.S. thesis, and upon approval from the ASHP faculty after reviewing the student's Professional Development Plan. Students may defend the dissertation and graduate two semesters after being admitted to candidacy.

Committee members for the master degree need to include three faculty (or approved affiliate faculty); one member being the student's primary advisor, one being a faculty member from the psychology department, and the third being a faculty member from another academic department outside of psychology. Doctoral dissertation committees require four members: the primary advisor, two faculty members from the psychology department, and one faculty member from outside of the psychology department.

## ***Centers/Institutes***

There are several research centers that are available to assist ASHP students in their academic pursuits.

The Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research (TEC) is a research center established to investigate social problems including substance use, violence, victimization, and environmental impacts, especially in rural communities. TEC conducts federally, privately, and state-funded research and outreach. A core piece of recent TEC efforts is the Community Readiness Model, which is aimed at helping communities develop their own responses to their own problems using their own resources. Students in the Applied Social & Health Psychology Program often participate in TEC projects and have access to the rich database and expertise of TEC faculty and staff.

The Colorado Injury Control Research Center (CICRC) is dedicated to reducing the occurrence and severity of injuries in rural areas in the Rocky Mountain Region, particularly underserved populations including Hispanics, Native Americans, and agricultural workers and their families. Center associates conduct research, provide service and education on injury prevention and control, acute care, rehabilitation, and biomechanics. Students and faculty conduct research through the CICRC on topics such as risky behavior among rural adolescents, evaluation of educational materials for injury prevention, epidemiology of brain injuries, and road rage prevention

The Columbine Health Systems Center for Healthy Aging is a catalyst for interdisciplinary research and evidence-based outreach and education about healthy aging. As a community-engaged center, they aim to be a premier local, regional, and nationally recognized resource for discovery and application of research on biological, cognitive, psychological, social, and behavioral factors that lead to healthy and successful aging.

The Early Childhood Center is the lab school for HDFS. ECC provides on-campus training for undergraduates and assistantship opportunities for graduate students. Opportunities for natural observation of very young children in a variety of activities and data collection on their behavior are key features of the ECC.

## ***Funding for Students***

Numerous sources of funding are available for students in the program. It is our intention and practice to provide 4 years of financial support to all our graduate students who remain in good academic standing (3 years for those entering with a Master's degree). Financial support is contingent on availability of funds. Funding sources include Graduate Teaching Assistantships, Graduate Research Assistantships, and Graduate Fellowships, all of which include tuition coverage. The Carol Lynne Baird Memorial Scholarship and the Will Szlemko Memorial Fellowship are available for Applied Social students after their first year. Colorado State University has a variety of fellowships including the Bridge to the Doctorate and McNair graduate fellowships.





*Horsetooth Reservoir, Fort Collins*

## ***Fort Collins***

Fort Collins is a community of approximately 164,000 people located 1 hour north of Denver. Consistently ranked as one of the top places in the country to live, Fort Collins has a low crime rate, affordable housing, and more than 300 days of sunshine each year. Its location at the foot of the Rocky Mountains affords residents endless opportunities for outdoor activities including hiking, bicycling, skiing and white water rafting. For more info, go to <http://www.ftcollins.com/>



*Images from around the Behavioral Sciences Building where the Psychology Department is located (above) and the CSU Oval (below)*



## ***Core Program Faculty***

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Dan Graham, Associate Professor  
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Jennifer J. Harman, Associate Professor and Program Coordinator, Applied Social and Health Psychology graduate program  
PhD, University of Connecticut, 2005  
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