



**KENTUCKY STATE
UNIVERSITY**

MASTER OF ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGY

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Master of Arts Program in Psychology

The mission of the 45-hour M.A. Program in Psychology is to support Kentucky State University's mission by preparing its diverse student population of traditional and non-traditional students to meet society's growing need for psychological services in a variety of settings. Students in this program will focus on the intersection between law and the behavioral and social sciences, broadly defined. Forensic psychology is any psychological service or research activity that is done in service to the legal system. Student engage in a program of interdisciplinary study based on rigorous coursework, research, and service activities founded on the scientist-practitioner model of education. This program prepares students to pursue doctoral study in psychology, or to work in industry, government, mental health services, or other human service agencies, consistent with the Kentucky State University motto: *Come In to Learn – Go Out to Serve*.

To satisfy the requirements for the M.A. in Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science, **students must complete a minimum of 45 semester credit hours**. The core requirements PSY 551, Psychology and Law, PSY 552, Law and Social Science, PSY 503, Intermediate Statistics I, PSY 504, Intermediate Statistics II, PSY 505, Intermediate Research Methods I, PSY 506, Intermediate Research Methods II, and PSY 671, Diversity and Law.

PLAN OF STUDY

Forensic Counseling (Licensure Track - KBEP)

Course	Title	Hours
Year 1		
Fall		
PSY 501	Theory & Prac. of Counseling	3
PSY 503	Intermediate Statistics	3
PSY 505	Intermediate Research Methods	3
PSY 511	Human Growth & Development	3
Hours		12
Spring		
PSY 512	Legal and Ethical Issues	3
PSY 507	Assess. & Evaluation Tech.	3
PSY 510	Career Counseling	3
PSY 601	Child & Adult Psychopathology	3
PSY 662	Psychology of Criminal Behav. (Online C term)	3
Hours		15

Year 2

Fall

PSY 502	Evi.-Base. Couns. Techniques	3
PSY 508	Group & Family Counseling	3
PSY 509	Cultural Diversity in Counseli	3
PSY 513	Practicum in Counseling	3
PSY 506	Intermed. Research Methods II (Global B Term)	3
PSY 681	Seminar in Psychology & Law (Global C Term)	3
Hours		18

Spring

PSY 515	Practicum in Assessment	3
PSY 672	Addiction & Psychopharmacology	3
PSY 690	Comprehensive Exam	3
PSY 664	Asses. & Treatment of Offend. (Global B Term)	3
PSY 699	Thesis (Global C Term)	3-12
Hours		15-24
Total Hours		60-69

Forensic Sciences (Psychology & Law - Formerly MIBS)

Course	Title	Hours
Year 1		
Term 1 (Fall)		
PSY 551	Psychology & Law	3
PSY 503	Intermediate Statistics	3
PSY 505	Intermediate Research Methods	3
Hours		9
Term 2 (Spring)		
PSY 552	Law & Social Science	3
PSY 504	Intermediate Statistics II	3
PSY 506	Intermed. Research Methods II	3
Hours		9
Year 2		
Summer		
PSY 671	Diversity & Law	3
PSY 681	Seminar in Psychology & Law	3
Hours		6
Term 3 (Fall)		
PSY 662	Psychology of Criminal Behav.	3
PSY 661	Theories of Offending & Correc	3
PSY 690	Comprehensive Exam	3
Hours		9
Term 4 (Spring)		
PSY 663	Aggression & Violence	3
PSY 664	Asses. & Treatment of Offend.	3
PSY 673	Principles of Victimology	3
Hours		9
Year 3		
Summer		
PSY 699	Thesis (you may enroll in thesis credits anytime after completing the core requirements)	3-12
Hours		3-12
Total Hours		45-54

WHAT CAN I DO WITH A MASTER'S DEGREE IN Psychology?

Psychologists are increasingly called upon to perform various evaluations and functions for the government, the courts, the criminal justice system, and the prison system. Some of the many general and specific career paths that our graduates may choose to pursue include:

- Teaching or research positions in academia
- Administrative positions in local, state, and federal agencies

- Positions within corrections and probation departments
- Positions as a research assistant with various agencies
- Positions at the local, state, and federal level in behavioral or social sciences
- Clinical or research positions with human service agencies, mental health agencies, social agencies, and forensic agencies
- Juvenile group homes
- Domestic violence agencies
- Immigrant and naturalization services
- City police divisions
- Positions such as Psychology Assistant, Court Administrator, Crime Analyst
- Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
- US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)
- US Secret Service (USSS)
- US Marshal Services
- National Air and Space Intelligence Center (NASIC)
- Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI)
- US Armed Forces
- Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA)
- Postal Service (USPS)
- US Department of Agriculture
- US Border Patrol Services
- US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
- Victim Services organizations
- Nursing homes
- Hospice centers
- Head Start programs
- Adoption agencies
- Drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers
- Probation and parole offices
- Courts
- Foster care organizations
- Mental health organizations
- Employee assistance programs

The MIBS program takes a multidisciplinary approach to the area of behavioral and social science and law by providing students with background in theoretical perspectives from psychology, sociology, and criminology, basic and applied research methods, and statistical techniques. Students develop competencies relevant to the science and practice of these various fields, and to the study of the intersection of behavioral and social science and law, forensics, intelligence, and security broadly defined. This program is relevant to students with backgrounds in psychology, sociology, criminal justice, social work, history, or public administration.

PROGRAM COURSE LOAD

Full-time MIBS students carry a normal load of 9 semester credit hours of graduate-level coursework per semester. Part-time students who are employed full-time are advised to carry no more than 6 semester credit hours of graduate-level coursework in any semester.

GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN INTERDISCIPLINARY INTELLIGENCE STUDIES

The Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences offers a 12-hour graduate certificate in Interdisciplinary Intelligence Studies to help KSU students prepare to meet the need for well-trained members of the Intelligence and Security fields. Partnerships and collaborations with the Bluegrass State Intelligence Community-Center for Academic Excellence (BGS IC CAE) member institutions (Eastern Kentucky University, Kentucky State University, and the University of Kentucky Patterson School of Diplomacy and International Commerce) and statewide and national intelligence and security agencies will help KSU to better serve its students by providing training for future intelligence and security workforce.

Code	Title	Hours
BSS 565	Counterintell. & Counterterror	3
BSS 566	Interm. Cyb.-Sec & Cyb-Pol.	3
BSS 569	Intermed. Pers & Radic.	3

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Students who participate in the MIBS program may be eligible for scholarship money, travel awards, and other benefits such as research support, opportunities to present at conferences, and access to hiring managers from local, state, and national intelligence and security organizations.

Admission

For information about admission requirements and to apply online for admission to the Kentucky State University MA Program in Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science, please visit the graduate studies web site at: <https://www.kysu.edu/academics/grad-studies/index.php> (<https://www.kysu.edu/academics/grad-studies/>)

Your application includes the following components:

- A properly completed application submitted via the Graduate Studies email, found on the link below:
graduate.studies@kysu.edu
- A letter of application with a statement of educational goals and career objectives in the form of a thoughtful, well-written essay of approximately 1,500 words. Your essay should describe your motivation for earning a degree from the MIBS program and discuss relevant experiences which have contributed to this goal. The essay should address your future goals and why you believe that the MIBS program will help you to achieve your desired future. The essay will be evaluated for content and writing mechanics such as grammar, spelling, punctuation, and clarity, and rated as satisfactory or unsatisfactory by the program faculty;
- A curriculum vitae or resume of qualifications, including your extracurricular activities, participation in professional development activities related to the field, relevant work experience, and any knowledge, skills, or abilities that you believe would make you a good fit for the MIBS program;
- Official undergraduate and graduate transcripts. Copies of all official transcripts must be submitted from the applicant's undergraduate and graduate institutions directly to graduate.studies@kysu.edu
- An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or above. Exceptions to this requirement *may* be made on a case-by-case basis, but preference for admission to the MA Program in Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science will be given to applicants with an undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher.

- Three letters of recommendation from professors or employers addressing your academic preparation for graduate study, which your recommenders will submit directly to the graduate.studies@kysu.edu

After review of the completed application, applicants who meet the entry requirements may be granted regular admission status by the Graduate Studies department, based on graduate admission requirements. The admission decision will then be sent to the program coordinator for review and contact purposes.

The MIBS program is research focused. Preference will be given to applicants who have earned a grade of B or higher in undergraduate statistics and research methods. Probationary admission status *may* be granted if students do not meet all the requirements stated above. Probationary students are subject to initial performance requirements more stringent than those imposed upon others. Students who are accepted into the MIBS program with academic deficits such as insufficient coursework or low grades in statistics and methods may be required to enroll in undergraduate courses to remedy those deficits. All unsatisfactory requirements must be met before students are granted regular admission to the program.

Curriculum Plans and Timelines

The curriculum plan assumes a 4-6 semester completion schedule for full-time students and a completion schedule of 6-8 semesters for part-time students. Please note that all schedules are subject to change and should only be used as a guide for program timelines.

Students should plan to take the required 21 hours of MIBS core courses during the first year of the program:

PSY 551 Psychology and Law (Semester 1, 3 credits)

PSY 503 Intermediate Statistics I (Semester 1, 3 credits)

PSY 505 Intermediate Research Methods I (Semester 1, 3 credits)

PSY 552 Law and Social Science (Semester 2, 3 credits)

PSY 504 Intermediate Statistics II (Semester 2, 3 credits)

PSY 506 Intermediate Research Methods II (Semester 2, 3 credits)

PSY 671 Diversity and Law (Summer, 3 credits)

Students should plan to take the remaining 21 hours of MIBS elective courses during the second year of the program:

PSY 681 Seminar in Psychology and Law (Summer, 3 credits)

PSY 690 Comprehensive Exam (Semester 3, 3 credits)

PSY 661 Theories of Offending and Corrections (Semester 3 or 4, 3 credits)

PSY 662 Psychology of Criminal Behavior (Semester 3 or 4, 3 credits)

PSY 663 Aggression and Violence (Semester 3 or 4, 3 credits)

PSY 664 Assessment and Treatment of Offenders (Semester 3 or 4, 3 credits)

PSY 672 Addiction and Psychopharmacology (Semester 3 or 4, 3 credits)

PSY 673 Principles of Victimology (Semester 3 or 4, 3 credits)

PSY 699 Thesis (Semesters 3-4, 0-9 credits)

****Up to nine credits of relevant coursework may be accepted from other Kentucky State University graduate programs or transferred into the MIBS program from other institutions. All courses accepted from outside the MIBS program must be approved in writing by the program coordinator or the School of Psychology Chair.**

Comprehensive Examination Requirements

A comprehensive examination, often referred to as "comps," is a critical assessment that occurs at various stages in advanced academic programs, especially at the graduate level. Its primary purpose is to evaluate a student's knowledge base and depth of understanding in their field of study, ensuring they have mastered the content necessary to proceed towards the next stage of their academic or professional journey. Comprehensive examinations are usually a culmination of coursework and reading, and they may serve as a prerequisite for advancing to candidacy for a degree (like a PhD) or before undertaking a major project like a thesis or dissertation. Success in these exams is often seen as a milestone in a student's academic career, signifying readiness to contribute independently to their field.

Comprehensive exams can vary widely in format, depending on the discipline and the specific requirements of the academic institution. The MIBS comprehensive examination consists of three formats:

Take-home Exams: These allow students to work on detailed, research-intensive questions over several days or weeks at home, encouraging deeper analysis and critical thinking without the immediate pressure of timed tests.

Practical Exams: Particularly in applied disciplines, practical components may require students to demonstrate specific skills or competencies, such as laboratory techniques, clinical procedures, or artistic performances.

Learning Portfolio: A learning portfolio is a curated collection of a student's work that demonstrates their educational progress, skills development, and reflective insights over the course of their academic journey.

The MIBS comprehensive examination includes a series of substantive papers and practical demonstrations of the student's ability to apply the concepts they have learned.

- **Theory:** Substantive exams and applied practical papers applying concepts from PSY 551 and PSY 552.
- **Methods:** Substantive exams and applied practical papers applying concepts from PSY 505 and PSY 506.
- **Statistics:** Substantive exams and applied practical papers applying concepts from PSY 503 and PSY 504.
- **Ethics:** Substantive paper applying concepts from PSY 671/681 (Diversity and Law).
- A comprehensive learning portfolio encompassing the student's evaluation of their progress and the value-added aspects of their training and education.

All components encompass a wide range of topics and issues. Students must complete all components to earn a passing final grade on the comprehensive exam. Exams will be graded according to the following scale: High Pass/Pass/Fail. Students who do not complete a particular component may schedule to retake that component one more time.

Students who fail to complete all components with a passing grade after retakes will be required to retake the entire exam.

All exams will be administered by the Program Coordinator, graded by the faculty member(s) submitting the question(s), and reviewed by the Program Coordinator and faculty member together for a decision about the final grade.

Thesis and Capstone Project Options

Thesis Project Plan: Empirical research projects for a master's thesis in the interdisciplinary field of psychology and law encompass a variety of methodologies and topics, aiming to explore the intersection of psychological principles and legal contexts. Here are several types of empirical research projects typically pursued in this area (students are not restricted to these topics):

- **Jury Decision-Making:** Studies might examine how psychological factors such as bias, persuasion, and group dynamics influence the decision-making processes of juries. These can include experiments or observational studies on mock juries.
- **Eyewitness Testimony:** Research could focus on the reliability of eyewitness memory, factors that influence the accuracy of testimony, and methods to improve the collection of eyewitness evidence. This often involves experimental setups to simulate witness scenarios.
- **Lie Detection:** Projects might investigate the effectiveness of different techniques for detecting deception, including physiological responses (e.g., polygraph testing) and behavioral cues. These studies typically use controlled experiments where subjects are instructed to lie or tell the truth.
- **Forensic Psychology:** Research could involve the assessment of mental health in legal contexts, such as evaluating the competency to stand trial, risk assessments for reoffending, or the psychological effects of different types of sentencing.
- **Legal Decision-Making:** Studies might explore how judges make decisions, the impact of legal frameworks on mental health, or the psychological effects of laws and regulations on individuals and communities.
- **Police Psychology:** Empirical research could look into issues such as police decision-making during arrests, the psychological impacts of police work, or strategies for managing stress and trauma in law enforcement officers.
- **Child Witnesses and Victims:** This research often focuses on the special considerations needed when children are involved in legal processes, such as the reliability of child testimony, methods to minimize trauma in legal settings, and the impact of legal outcomes on child development.

Each empirical research project typically involves collecting and analyzing data through surveys, experiments, or observational studies, and aims to contribute to both psychological understanding and legal practice. Students opting for the thesis plan should complete their master's degree program requirements over 4-5 semesters. The concentration can be completed in 24 months if students adhere to the following schedule.

- Complete at least 12 credits of coursework by the end of the second semester in the M.A. program and sign up for the remaining 18 credit hours (including 6 hours of thesis credit) during the third and fourth semesters in the M.A. program.

- Schedule to take comprehensive exam in the third semester in the program.
- Form a thesis committee by the beginning of the third semester in the program and complete and obtain approval of the thesis proposal by the end of the third semester in the program.
- Complete the thesis during the fourth semester, schedule an oral exam on the thesis, and obtain final thesis approval by the end of the fourth semester in the program.

Applied Capstone Project Plan: This option requires students to complete an extensive *applied* research project culminating in a publishable report or scholarly work. Capstone projects in a master's program are typically comprehensive, culminating assignments that allow students to apply their academic knowledge and skills in a practical setting. These projects can vary widely depending on the field of study, but generally include several common types:

- **Research Projects:** Students conduct in-depth research on a specific topic within their discipline, which may involve experimental or empirical studies. The goal is to contribute new insights to the field or solve a particular problem.
- **Design/Human Factors Projects:** Particularly common in engineering, architecture, and IT programs, these projects require students to find a functional solution to a real-world problem.
- **Consultancy Projects:** Students work with real companies or organizations to solve existing business problems, providing practical recommendations and strategies. This type of project is prevalent in business, management, and public administration programs.
- **Policy Analysis:** In fields like public policy, social work, or environmental studies, students might evaluate existing policies for effectiveness, equity, and efficiency, and propose improvements or alternative policies.
- **Case Studies:** Students might perform detailed analysis of a specific case or cases relevant to their field of study to draw broad conclusions about best practices and strategic approaches.
- Each project type requires a deep engagement with the subject matter and demonstrates the student's ability to synthesize and apply their learning in a meaningful and often professional context.

Students opting for the applied capstone project plan should also complete their program concentration requirements over a period of not more than four semesters and should adhere to the following schedule:

- Complete at least 12 credits of coursework by the end of the second semester in the M.A. program and sign up for the remaining 18 credit hours (including 6 hours of thesis credit) during the third and fourth semesters in the M.A. program.
- Schedule to take comprehensive exam in the third semester of the program.
- Form a capstone project committee by the beginning of the third semester in the program and complete and obtain approval of the capstone project proposal by the end of the third semester in the program.
- Complete the applied capstone project during the fourth semester, schedule an oral exam on the project, and obtain final project approval by the end of the fourth semester in the program.

Academic Probation and Dismissal

Academic Probation. Per Kentucky State University policy, a student whose cumulative graduate GPA falls below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation. Students on probation may subsequently enroll in up to 9 semester credit hours of graduate-level coursework, during which the student must bring his/her overall GPA up to at least 3.0. Those who reach the 3.0 level will be allowed to continue in the MIBS program and to return to good academic standing. Students who fail to reach a GPA of 3.0 will be placed on academic suspension for 12 months. After 12 months the student may then appeal in writing for readmission to the MIBS program. If readmission is granted, the student will be placed on up to 9 credit hours of probation. If the student does not reach an overall GPA of 3.0 during the subsequent 9 credit hours, then the student will be permanently dismissed from the program without appeal.

Dismissal for Cause. Students may be dismissed from the MIBS program at any time for cause. Causes for dismissal include, but are not limited to:

- *Any form of academic dishonesty* (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on exams, submitting pre-written papers authored by somebody other than the student, or any other form of misrepresenting the authorship of work submitted in fulfillment of program requirements).
- *Any form of harassment, bullying, threatening, physical aggression, or other forms of abusive behavior against fellow students, staff, or faculty* (e.g., use of inappropriate language, either verbally or via electronic communications, unsubstantiated accusations of inappropriate conduct).
- *Any form of criminal activity or behavior prohibited by Kentucky statute or Kentucky State University policy.*
- *Violations of policy involving providing false information, forgery, alteration, or misuse of Kentucky State University documents, records, or identification instruments.*
- *Violations of any other policy stated in the Kentucky State University Student Handbook.*

Psychology and Law Curriculum (45 hours)

The MIBS program is research-oriented. MIBS students may opt to complete either a thesis or a professional paper option, although emphasis will be placed on the thesis option described below.

Thesis Option

The table below presents a curriculum plan for the Thesis Option, outlining the sequence of courses. The curriculum plan assumes a 4-6 semester completion schedule for full-time students and a completion schedule of 6-8 semesters for part-time students.

Course	Title	Hours
Year 1		
Fall		
Psychology & Law		3
Intermediate Statistics		3
Research Methods		3
Hours		9
Spring		
Law & Social Science		3
Intermediate Statistics II		3
Research Methods II		3
Hours		9

Summer	
Core or Electives	0-9
Hours	
0-9	
Year 2	
Fall	
Psychology of Criminal Behavior	3
Assessment & Treatment of Offenders	3
Offending & Corrections	3
Hours	
9	
Spring	
Aggression & Violence	3
Thesis II	3
Comprehensive Exam	3
Hours	
9	
Summer	
As needed.	
Hours	
0	
Total Hours	
36-45	

Full-time students opting for the thesis plan should complete their Master's degree program requirements within the first four semesters (i.e., not more than two years). To maintain satisfactory academic progress, MIBS students should adhere to the following schedule:

- Complete at least 12 credits of coursework by the end of the second semester in the program and sign up for the remaining 18 credit hours (including 6 hours of thesis credit) during the third and fourth semesters in the program;
- Form a thesis committee by the beginning of the third semester in the program and complete and obtain approval of the thesis proposal by the end of the third semester in the program;
- Write the thesis during the fourth semester, schedule an oral exam over the thesis, and obtain its approval within the time frame designated by the student's thesis advisor.

Part-time students should complete these requirements within six semesters to maintain satisfactory academic progress.

All MIBS students must maintain satisfactory academic progress to be eligible for any available funding.

Non-Thesis Option

The table below presents the curriculum for the Non-Thesis Option, outlining the sequence of courses. The curriculum plan also assumes a 4-6 semester completion schedule for full-time students and a completion schedule of 6-8 semesters for part-time students.

Course	Title	Hours
Year 1		
Fall		
Psychology & Law		3
Intermediate Statistics		3
Research Methods		3
Hours		9
Spring		
Law & Social Science		3
Intermediate Statistics II		3
Research Methods II		3
Hours		9
Summer		
Core or Electives		9
Hours		9

Year 2	
Fall	
Psychology of Criminal Behavior	3
Assessment & Treatment of Offenders	3
Offending & Corrections	3
Hours	9
Spring	
Aggression & Violence	3
Professional Paper	3
Comprehensive Exam	3
Hours	9
Summer	
As needed.	
Hours	0
Total Hours	45

Full-time students opting for the non-thesis plan should also complete their program requirements within four semesters and should adhere to the following schedule:

- Complete at least 15 credits of coursework by the beginning of the third semester in the program and sign up for the remaining 18 credit hours of coursework during the third and fourth semesters in the program;
- Schedule to take the comprehensive exam in the third semester in the program.

Part-time students should complete their program requirements within six semesters, and adhere to the same timeline as full-time students.

Comprehensive Examination Requirements

The MIBS comprehensive examinations covers the first-year sequence (core content), and consists of several components:

1. Theory: Substantive and practical papers applying concepts from PSY 551 Psychology & Law and PSY 552 Law & Social Science;
2. Research Methods: Substantive and practical papers applying concepts from PSY 505 Intermediate Research Methods and PSY 506 Intermed. Research Methods II;
3. Statistics: Substantive and practical papers applying concepts from PSY 503 Intermediate Statistics and PSY 504 Intermediate Statistics II;
4. Ethics: Substantive paper applying concepts from PSY 671 Diversity & Law; and
5. A comprehensive learning portfolio encompassing an evaluation of progress and the value-added aspects of the student's training and education.

All components will encompass a wide range of topics and issues.

Students must successfully complete all components to earn a passing final grade on the comprehensive exam. Exams will be graded according as High Pass, Pass, or Fail. Students who fail components may be granted a re-take of those components. Students who do not successfully complete all components with a passing grade on the second try will be required to retake the entire exam.

All exams will be administered by the Program Coordinator. Faculty teaching specific content areas will evaluate students' submissions in

that area. The Program Coordinator and faculty members together will reach a decision about the final grade for each section.

Graduate Student Financial Support and Assistantships

Financial support for qualified graduate students is currently available through tuition scholarships. A limited number of graduate research assistantships may be available for students pursuing a degree or certificate from the MA Program in Interdisciplinary Behavioral Science.

Depending upon the availability of funds, students holding these positions work 10-20 hours per week and *may* receive stipends. Graduate assistants work with program faculty in their instructional and research activities. Students interested in such positions may inquire directly with program faculty. Assistantships are awarded according to availability, academic achievement, and need.