

## **Ph.D. Program in Critical, Transpersonal & Humanistic Psychologies:**

### **Emphasis on Consciousness and Society**

**Department of Psychology**

**University of West Georgia**

#### **Introduction**

A century ago, the “father” of American psychology, William James, suggested that psychology, then a new discipline, should proceed along two complementary paths. James considered one path to be objective because it is based in neurology and behavior and yields quantifiable data. Such psychology is alive and well today and continues to generate useful results. But James (1890) argued that this approach is not fully adequate to the breadth of human experience. In addition to the study of the brain and behavior, James proposed an additional path for psychology: the study of human consciousness and experience. Another seminal figure in psychology, Wilhelm Wundt, similarly saw more than one future for psychology. Although known as the father of experimental psychology, Wundt’s notion of *Volkpsychologie*, with an emphasis on language, sociality, and history was one of Wundt’s unrealized dreams for the discipline (Leahey, 2000). There have now emerged methodologies and theories to address James’s and Wundt’s alternative visions for psychology. Building on these seminal ideas and current developments and methodologies, our program offers a distinct perspective from which to inaugurate the study of consciousness and its social context:

The proposed Ph.D. program, focused on the study of Consciousness and Society, will be grounded in the Department’s approach to psychology as a distinctively human science. It will train scholars and practitioners at the highest level of the discipline to serve as consultants, leaders, and teachers who can affect interventions at the individual and organizational level in community, corporate, and educational settings. The program draws on two strong themes within humanistic psychology, an interest in consciousness and experience and an articulation of the broader context of sociality in the realization of human values within community.<sup>1</sup>

- There are three theoretical approaches to the program’s attempt to analyze the intersection of consciousness and society: Critical, Humanistic & Transpersonal. As suggested, we firstly draw on the *humanistic* existential foundations that have been

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<sup>1</sup> This is not to say that humanistic psychology has always succeeded in fulfilling its initial social activism. Many have remarked on its naiveté about the formative influence of social factors and on its cooptation by North American discourses of individualism and hedonism (see Jacoby, 1975; Hill). But such critiques should not miss the social awareness and desire to “give psychology away” for the betterment of the community that founded so much of the humanistic mandate and informed its efforts (perhaps overly successful) to reach out to the broader population. For a balanced history, see Ellen Hermans (1992), “Being and Doing: Psychology and the Spirit of the Sixties,” in *Sights on the Sixties*.

definitive of the Department, centering around a core of classes that addresses the theoretical grounding of consciousness; this entails drawing upon the classical texts in the discipline (e.g. William James) and relevant scholars in philosophy, cognitive science, and the neurosciences (e.g. Merleau-Ponty, 1964; Gallagher & Zahavi, 2008). This interrogation of consciousness is also informed by rising *critical* traditions that examine the historical position of the discipline as well as cultural representations and practices in order to understand the constitution of consciousness and the subject within institutional and social contexts. This involves a focus on Social Justice research, a tradition gaining widening influence within the field. Both the *humanistic and critical traditions* privilege the question of one's subjective accounting of an event, either in experiential or discursive terms. This orientation ties these traditions to more qualitative approaches (see below). In recent years, the emphases on situated practices and embodiment have gained ground within cognitive and learning sciences and in these fields there has appeared a correlative and increasing use of qualitative research (Greeno, 1998). Our program is not precisely oriented to the same questions as these fields, but our courses and faculties are interested in related and relevant methodological shifts (e.g. the increased use of ethnography in cognitive science). Further, we offer a more holistic and integrative approach toward consciousness and society, including an awareness of the spiritual dimensions that inform individual and community life. Such dimensions have recently become of great interest within the mainstream of the discipline (see de Angeles, 2008; Churchland, 2002) and have always been a concern within the *humanistic and transpersonal* subfields of psychology. This more acute sense of the place of community life for the individual also translates into our support of *social justice and critical interests* within psychology and dovetails with our effort to continually adjudicate the relationship between theory and praxis through, for example, training in participatory action research.

The doctoral program at University of West Georgia is not a mainstream program, but it is part of a strong movement for alternative perspectives within the discipline of psychology. The program here closely resembles one at City University of New York within their Social Psychology program and another program at University of Michigan that studies the co-creation of Personality and Culture. We named our emphasis *consciousness and society*. A resurgence of psycho-social studies in the United Kingdom also matches our orientation. University of Cardiff and Manchester University have asked to start an exchange program. This holistic and broadly ranging approach will draw on other disciplines (similar to current work in cognitive science) and require of us that we expose students to rigorous reflection on the relationship of culture to consciousness in terms of the discipline's commitment to social justice and to human health as a more broadly conceived project that entails all aspects of lifestyle and "psychological variables."

A variety of interpretative, qualitative, and case-based methods are required to address questions stemming from the study of humans in their "natural qua community" habitat (Hutchins, 1995). As we noted, such methodological approaches are thriving in cognitive science, psycho-social studies, and the learning sciences (Lave, 1988; Suchman, 2007). In keeping with these respected trends and using increasingly refined *qualitative methodologies* derived from social construction, critical discourse analysis, and phenomenological methods, students from our program will address issues of consciousness and society from the perspective and context of those directly affected.

- We believe our focus on qualitative method is a sage and innovative choice at this juncture in psychology's history. As many know, Division 5, the Division for Measurement, Evaluation & Statistics, has recently *invited* qualitative researchers to join its ranks. The Division will be crafting a new name in order to indicate this broader understanding of the research process and the gaining recognition of qualitative methodologies. The British Psychological Society opened a Division on qualitative inquiry in 2005, and it is now the largest division in the BPS. Dozens of books on qualitative research have appeared in recent years, including the APA publication by Camic, Rhodes and Yardley, *Qualitative Research in Psychology: Expanding Perspectives in Methodology and Design*. Denzin and Lincoln's interdisciplinary, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, has been so popular that it has moved through three editions in less than a decade. A variety of new journals has also emerged, including *Qualitative Inquiry in Psychology*, *Qualitative Health Research*, *Narrative Inquiry*, *Action Research*, the *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, the *Qualitative Report*, *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, *Qualitative Family Research*, *Discourse and Society*, the *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, and *Discourse Studies*. Interdisciplinary conferences on qualitative inquiry are now in full swing. Last year the 4<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Qualitative Inquiry brought together over 1,000 participants from numerous fields of study. In an essay discussing research on education, gender and science cited on the NSF website for *Research on Gender in Science and Engineering* (2004), Dietz, Anderson, & Katzenmeyer, (2002) note that ethnographic research be engaged to frame and accompany broader, more quantitative or outcome oriented research, where the former provides "a rich and sophisticated analysis that can capture change in an organizational climate (p. 404). Our focus on qualitative research should not lead the reader to believe that our students will not be exposed to the benefits of mixed methodologies.

The importance of qualitative research is also being recognized in the private and public sectors. The above paragraph contains a reference to views that spoke to research for the National Science Foundation. Approaches that analyze the interrelation of actions and persons within communities of "learning", both within education and within business also rely upon qualitative methodologies (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002). Recently, the philanthropist and investor, George Soros (2008) notes that qualitative research methods can and should be considered when analyzing financial and economic behavior. Soros asserts that "social events have a different structure from natural phenomena. In natural phenomena there is a causal chain that links one set of facts directly with the next. In human affairs the course of events is more complicated. Not only facts are involved but also the participants' views and the interplay between them enter into the causal chain." (p.7).

- The focus on context and interdependence is not confined to the examination of the matrix of the social (typically conceived) and consciousness but informs our way of studying integrative health and mind/body relations. Drawing upon increasingly sophisticated understandings of the mind/body relation, we will train students how to interpret, understand, and communicate the meanings and implications of the many evidenced-based findings that support the linkage between mind and body. Too, students will gain an understanding of how to bridge the research findings in neuroscience on the subject of consciousness with subjective self-assessment, and in relationship to the person's behavioral and broader social context.

Ultimately, our program will result in an understanding that generates new solutions to recalcitrant community problems and individual suffering. An approach based on the

awareness of the researched as a subject or mutual participant in a lived context organized through social and individual meanings is especially important as we study others from a diversity of backgrounds. Calls to understand or even ask the community under study before developing interventions or research instruments have been expressed by a variety of leading experts in the field (Reid, 1993; Fine, 1996). Calls for methodological changes that respect context can be seen in the emergence of the notion of distributed cognition within cognitive science, of participant action research within the social sciences, and of a more holistic understanding of what is meant by physical or mental health. Grounded in a tradition in Psychology articulated by William James and Wilhelm Wundt, but which now possesses a greater variety of tools and perspectives to address human experience, our program will train Ph.D.s who can join the ranks of psychology departments because of their training in qualitative research, social action research, critical thinking, history and systems within psychology, and consciousness studies (Slife, Reber, & Richardson, 2004). Our graduates will also be prepared to join forces with projects designed to improve the relationship of the individual to his broader social network in a variety of organizational climates from workplace to broader communities.

Building upon decades of graduate education at the M.A. level, we are posed to join the ranks of innovative programs. Our Masters program has been internationally recognized and prosperous for its entire tenure. In our Ph.D. program, we will require a form of philosophical reflexivity that is unique in psychology programs as well as an emphasis on praxis and experience. Our curriculum will integrate a psycho-spiritual perspective, an orientation that takes in the significance of human values with innovative research methodologies. Thus we will provide our students with the tools to look at consciousness in terms of the whole person and the broader social context.

In keeping with the above aims, the doctoral program will entail advanced course work encompassing the breadth of post-positivistic approaches to consciousness and human experience; it will explore the particular complexities of consciousness and human development in a global age, and will involve a praxis-based internship wherein course work is applied to a particular social setting, context, or issue. It will terminate with a dissertation.

The proposed program will offer graduates a wide variety of potential careers. As is typical for psychology Ph.D.'s it is expected that many will become college professors and researchers. A unique skill set of UWG's graduates is the training they will receive in human science research, qualitative methodologies, and philosophically rigorous background in history, theory and systems. But the proposed program also will provide the opportunity for its graduates to find employment in more applied settings as well. These will especially include employment in the following: community development, wellness and holistic health, psycho-educational facilitation, organizational transformation, personal and executive coaching, and consultancies to policy makers and private organizations.

As we see it, there are three broad categories of skill sets and future employment opportunities:

1. **University/College Professor-** Our Ph.D. candidates will be prepared well to teach in liberal arts colleges and university settings. Backgrounds in history and systems, social action research, and qualitative methodologies will give them skills to add to a

psychology program as a professor. While contributing to the disciplinary knowledge base of psychology, their skills will prove also to be beneficial to interdisciplinary programs across the social sciences. This could be a major advantage to academic institutions in times of budget restraints.

2. **Non-governmental Agencies and Non-Profit Community Based Organizations-** The University of West Georgia Ph.D. candidate will be trained to bring a broader background and higher skill level for upper-level administrative positions in community based action programs and other similar organizations. Training in various research methodologies from qualitative traditions in participatory action research, psycho-social research (particularly prevalent in the United Kingdom) and program evaluation will give a skill set that is useful inside or outside of the academy. The practicum dimension of our program will provide them with the “hands on” experience to develop, implement and evaluate program effectiveness and accountability.
3. **Qualitative Researcher-** There is a growing interest in supplementing outcome-based quantitative methods with qualitative data in government agencies and the private sector. This area will include also grant writing and program evaluation (see Dietz, Anderson, and Katzenmeyer). As noted, qualitative research will soon become a section in Division 5 of the American Psychological Association. Its growing presence in praxis based and academic reach is noted above.

## **PH.D. PROGRAM IN CONSCIOUSNESS & SOCIETY:**

A program grounded in Critical, Transpersonal & Humanistic Psychologies

Department of Psychology

University of West Georgia

### **Policies and Procedures**

#### ***Students***

*Admissions:* Students will be admitted for the fall semester only. Applicants with a Bachelor's degree will be considered; however a graduate degree is preferred. Those with degrees outside of psychology are encouraged to apply. Additional courses in the Department of Psychology at the University of West Georgia may be required due to disciplinary background or level of educational attainment (see below).

*Matriculation:* Students admitted directly to the doctoral program should expect at least one year of full time attendance. After one year, students may be allowed to change to part time status. The program must be finished within seven years.

#### ***Financial Aid and Stipends:***

The Department can offer a limited number of stipends for graduate research/teaching assistantships. The department also offers some tuition waivers. See application form for requirements for consideration for such waivers and stipends. Further financial aid may be available through the financial aid office or the graduate school.

#### ***Preparation for the doctoral program:***

Those with degrees in non-related fields or without a Master's degree may be required to complete twenty hours of coursework. This may include Psyc. 6000, Growth and Potential and Psyc. 6010, Foundations of Humanistic Psychology. Other courses can be determined in consultation with faculty. Courses taken at the 7000 level can be taken for Masters level credit or doctoral credit but not both. Those admitted under the condition of having to take additional courses will need to finish the preparatory sequence before entering 8000 level courses.

#### ***Requirements***

To complete the Ph.D. program, students must complete the following requirements:

1) Earn 60 credits in Doctoral Level Courses.

These include credit for the required internship and are in accordance with prevailing doctoral standards for psychology doctoral programs At least 48 credits must be attained from the Psychology Department. The remaining 12 may, upon approval, be comprised of

coursework from other universities or from other departments at the University of West Georgia. At least 40 credits must consist of courses numbered 8000 or above. The remainder may include courses numbered 7000 or above.

**All required course credits are 4 hours.**

2) Earn credit for the following required courses named below. Courses 8000 to 8006 are pre-requisite for subsequent 8000 level courses.

Foundations

PSYC 8000 – Consciousness and Experience

PSYC 8001 - Culture & Subjectivity

PSYC 8002 – Studies in Mind/Body

PSYC 8003 – Philosophy, Psychology & Social Practice

PSYC 8004 – Development, Transformation, & Change

*We may give a series of courses to replace Psyc 8004 in order to better fit with a Ph.D. Most likely we would offer the choice of a more praxis based course offering, research courses in mixed methods or more advanced qualitative methods or a course in integral health. At this time any of these courses may be taken as independent studies.*

Research Methods:

PSYC 8005 – Human Science Methodologies

PSYC 8006 – Advanced Qualitative Research

Practica:

Sequential courses with increasing levels of integration of theory, complexity of systems, contexts/populations, research & interventions. Two of the three practica will meet this requirement.

PSYC 9000, 9001 - Practica include Teaching Seminar. All teaching assistants are required to take Teaching Practicum (9000).

3) Complete the following additional requirements:

*Comprehensive Examinations:* Students must demonstrate readiness to advance to doctoral candidacy by passing a comprehensive exam.

*Internship:* At minimum a one semester internship at an approved setting leading to/related to research project. *We may also offer a research option here as well as internship since we would move from a Psy.D. status.*

*Dissertation:* Approval of a doctoral dissertation by the student's dissertation committee.

**Comprehensives:**

A doctoral student will fulfill the requirement of comprehensives by taking a final examination/project in all the required core academic and research courses. The nature and the grading of the comprehensive exam or final research project will be determined by the professor of record in the course. Copies of all of the exams/projects will be kept in a portfolio maintained by the Department. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that the portfolio stays up to date. A student may augment the portfolio with whatever material

he/she deems appropriate. After completing all coursework, comprehensives, and dissertation proposal, the student may begin the internship and register for the dissertation.

### **Internship:**

The internship should begin after the comprehensives for all core courses are successfully completed (including research courses and practica) and the student has successfully defended his/her dissertation proposal. The internship ideally provides the field foundation for the dissertation research and spans at least one and perhaps two semesters, with the total number of hours determined by the supervising faculty. *(see above about PsyD status)*

### **Dissertation Committee:**

Before beginning the dissertation proposal, the student should choose a dissertation advisor and committee. The committee should be comprised of 1) a dissertation advisor, who is primarily responsible for the direction of the dissertation and who will be a full-time member of the Department and a member of the Graduate faculty and 2) two faculty members with full-time graduate faculty credentials, one of which may be from outside the Department. The student may also request a fourth member, or external reader, from an outside Department or University. Upon forming the dissertation committee, the student must arrange an initial meeting with the advisor to establish the timetable for the proposal and dissertation. The dissertation committee will work with the student while the dissertation proposal is started, and the names of committee members and proposal title will be given to the designated departmental administrator. All members of the committee should be kept informed as to the progress of the proposal and of the dissertation at regular intervals. Any changes in committee membership should be followed by notification of all members and the departmental administrator.

### **Dissertation Proposal**

The nature of the dissertation proposal will reflect the type of dissertation undertaken by the student as approved by the dissertation advisor.

### **Proposal Defense**

Once the proposal is finished, the dissertation committee will meet with the candidate to determine the feasibility and scholarship of the proposed project. During the meeting, the committee will suggest revisions and evaluate the viability of the candidate's dissertation project. Approved dissertation proposals will be filed with the proper administrative office. Upon approval and filing of the dissertation proposal, the student is officially admitted to candidacy. The proposal defense will be open to any interested faculty.

### **Dissertation Defense**

The dissertation defense will consist of an oral presentation by the student followed by a question-and-answer period led by the student's advisor. The dissertation defense is open to the public. After the defense, the student will give a departmental colloquium.



## The Curriculum

### Curricular Formats

The curriculum includes a variety of course formats: lectures, seminars, tutorials, independent projects, and practica. Lecture courses are larger in size (10-15 students each), and present foundational overviews. Seminars are smaller (6-10 students), more specialized discussion-oriented courses focusing on advanced topics. Tutorials are composed of 3-5 students who gather for advanced study in an area with a faculty mentor, following the tradition of associated with the Oxford model. Independent projects are individualized research projects designed by the student in collaboration with a supervising professor. These are available only to those students who have qualified for more in-depth work in a particular area. The practicum is a field placement.

### Course Descriptions

#### REQUIRED COURSES

***PSYC 8000 CONSCIOUSNESS & EXPERIENCE.*** This course introduces current approaches to the study of consciousness. An examination of consciousness as lived experience, through its manifestation as embodiment, temporality, spatiality, and sociality.

***PSYC 8001 CULTURE AND SUBJECTIVITY.*** An examination of the dialectical nature of the relationship between subjectivity and culture including recent developments in linguistics, textual analysis, and research on intersubjectivity.

***PSYC 8002 STUDIES IN MIND/BODY.*** Basic issues in mind/body psychology, such as the phenomenology of embodied consciousness, psychoneuroimmunology, neuroscience, integrative and holistic health, and contemplative disciplines.

***PSYC 8003 PHILOSOPHY, PSYCHOLOGY & SOCIAL PRACTICE.*** This course emphasizes interrelations between philosophy, psychology, and social practice. The course looks at traditions that have questioned this demarcation, such as pragmatist, third force, and critical approaches and examines the implications of a more integrative approach.

***PSYC 8004 DEVELOPMENT, TRANSFORMATION & CHANGE.*** This course explores dimensions of change at the individual and social levels. It will draw upon more traditional developmental models and integrate these with other approaches to spiritual growth, social transformation, and/or psychological change.

***PSYC 8005 HUMAN SCIENCE RESEARCH METHODOLOGES.*** An examination of the practice and application of research methodologies such as qualitative, phenomenological, hermeneutic, ethnographic, and discourse analysis.

***PSYCH 8006 ADVANCED QUALITATIVE RESEARCH.*** Advanced applications and design of qualitative methods and their fields of application, including areas such as health psychology, education, community, program evaluation, and other fields.

**PSYC 9000 TEACHING PRATICUM.** Development of expertise as a teacher in both academic and psycho-educational settings. Required for all teaching assistants.

**PSYCH 9001 PRACTICA.** A focused immersion into a specific psycho-social intervention, in the course of which the student is to develop a systemic understanding of the issue(s) addressed, as well as a concept of what constitutes a change in conscious awareness or systemic transformative intervention around those issues. May be repeated for credit.

#### **ELECTIVES:**

Electives may be taken either in tutorial or seminar formats.

At the 7000 Level

**PSYC 7003 STATISTICS FOR THE SOCIAL SCIENCES.** Survey of quantitative research methods with an emphasis on mixed methodology designs.

**PSYC 7020 TRANSPERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.** An overview of the farther reaches of human development, including consideration of consciousness studies, altered states, spiritual growth, and ways of knowing.

**PSYC 7030 INTRODUCTION TO ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.** Provides a working understanding of organizational development (OD) and change including the process of change, the forces (internal and external) which impact organizations, and the role of OD and intervention strategies. Students will also gain an understanding of the impact that personality and consulting style may have in an organizational environment.

**PSYC 7050 CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES.** Examines selected topics in consciousness studies, such as the history of consciousness, the phenomenology of consciousness and society, etc.

**PSYC 7250 FOUNDATIONS OF PSYCHOANALYSIS.** Addresses fundamental concepts in psychoanalysis through a return to Freud's texts and exploration of the basic schools in psychoanalysis after Freud. The emphasis is on clinical practice and the relationship between psychoanalysis and psychology. Course will require clinical and/or research applications.

**PSYC 7430 CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION.** This course is a combination of on-campus experiences, travel to foreign countries, and other appropriate experiences, specifically designed to thematically explore cultural and ethnic dimensions in order to deepen psychological understanding. May be repeated for up to 12 hours.

**PSYC 7470 ADVANCED ORGANIZATIONAL DEVELOPMENT.** An analysis of the processes for organizational development and renewal with emphasis on individual and organizational health. Special attention will be given to effective processes for change agent in the organizational context.

**PSYC 7490 PHENOMENOLOGY OF SOCIAL EXISTENCE.** An exploration of the phenomenology of intersubjectivity as a horizon of human existence.

**PSYC 7500 EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY.** An inquiry into the influences of selected existential themes—such as anxiety, being-in-the-world, being-for-others—with an emphasis on their appearance in psychology.

**PSYC 7600 PERSONALITY AND MOTIVATION.** Survey of theories of personality and motivational factors from a sampling of psychological, spiritual, and philosophical traditions.

**PSYC 7650 BUDDHIST PSYCHOLOGY.** An introduction to the teachings and psychospiritual methods of the major schools of Buddhism.

**PSYC 7670 MUSIC AND THE MIND.** An inquiry into the relationship between sound and the mind, including music and therapy.

**PSYC 7895 HORIZON SEMINAR.** A special series of topical seminars meant to explore subjects at the leading edge of contemporary psychology which are of interest to students and faculty.

**PSYC 7810 TUTORIAL 1.** Students meet in small groups with instructor once a week to discuss a research topic. Subject matter varies each semester. May be repeated for credit.

**PSYC 7820 WORKSHOP 1.** This course is offered over three consecutive weekends, 4.25 hours each weekend. Subject matter varies each semester. May be repeated for credit.

**PSYC 7830 INVITED LECTURES 1.** Invited lectures by a visiting professor. Subject matter varies each semester. May be repeated for credit.

At the 8000 Level (Courses currently being proposed)

***PSYC 8100 SPECIAL TOPICS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT.*** Special series of topical seminars meant to explore subjects in human development which are of special interest to students & faculty.

***PSYC 8102 PSYCHOSPIRITUALITY AND TRANSFORMATION.*** An examination of wisdom traditions and approaches to psychospiritual personality integration and how they apply to modern human problems.

***PSYC 8103 SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND CONSCIOUSNESS.*** An examination of the individual and social psychological significance of living in an increasingly technological world, including implications for such issues as identity, agency, cultural change and adaptation.

***PSYC 8260 EPISTEMOLOGY AND ETHICS.*** An examination of the human capacities to know, to love, and to act with respect to self, relationships, and historic time.

**PSYC 8270 DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY.** Topics in depth psychological theories of the unconscious.

**PSYC 8280 HISTORY OF CONSCIOUSNESS.** Examination of the evolution of human consciousness, through a focus on key historical epochs in civilization and the transformations in consciousness wrought in each.

**PSYC 8290 APPROACHES TO COMMUNITY.** Identification of the interplay of social, individual, and other factors at work in given community issues and problems.

**PSYC 8300 EXPLORATORY METHODS IN CONSCIOUSNESS STUDIES.** Practice in the cultivation of methods of conscious awareness, such as meditation, yoga, and other methods relating to mental disciplines.

**PSYC 8301 PROGRAM EVALUATION.** Advanced studies in program evaluation: applied settings are emphasized.

**PSYC 8500 ADVANCED SEMINARS.** These seminars will offer advanced study in special topics: Child & Youth Care, Organizational Transformation, Community Building & Generativity, Disaster Mental Health, Cultural Diversity and Community.

**PSYC 8501 INDEPENDENT PROJECT.** (var. credit 1-4) Independent research in a particular topic, under the supervision of a professor.

**PSYC 9999 DISSERTATION.** Student enrolls in PSYC 9999 each semester after completing comprehensives and coursework. (Required.)

## Comparable Programs

### Consciousness Studies

Within psychology, the time is ripe for such innovation with regard to the subject of consciousness. For the past two decades, many phenomena have forcefully demonstrated the signal importance of a better comprehension of the role of consciousness in human life. These have appeared in such diverse fields as holistic health to economic decision making (2003 Nobel Prize in economics given to a psychologist for such research being a case in point).

Currently extant doctoral programs in the United States that programmatically address consciousness studies are increasing yet are often located in private rather than public institutions. The most relevant comparisons to the focus in the proposed UWG program include the following four:

1. Duquesne University, whose Ph.D. program in phenomenological psychology dates to the early 1960s.
2. California Institute of Integral Studies, whose program dates from the late 1960s, emphasizes a holistic and multi-cultural approach, and includes a subprogram specifically on consciousness.
3. Saybrook Institute, whose Ph.D. program dates to the early 1970s. Saybrook's program emphasizes "studies of consciousness" as one of its key areas.
4. The Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, whose Ph.D. program dates to the mid-1970s. ITP is widely recognized as the leader in the field of transpersonal psychology.

Two other private universities (the University of Dallas and Seattle University) whose graduate programs currently offer only Master's degrees have also contemplated initiating doctoral programs. In addition to these, a few public universities have become involved in consciousness studies to a limited extent. The University of Tennessee's Psychology Department is the most prominent example. A few public universities in Canada have also become active in this field. These include: the University of Alberta and the University of Quebec at Montreal.

Besides programs focused on consciousness studies as basic science, there are also psychology programs which have begun to incorporate some of the insights that come from consciousness studies into their applied (primarily clinical) doctoral studies. Among private institutions, these include St Mary's University (California) and Immaculata (Pennsylvania); and John F. Kennedy University (California); among public institutions, Temple University is an example; and among Canadian universities is the University of Ottawa. Lastly, as an interdisciplinary subject, consciousness studies also is the focus of doctoral programs outside of psychology.

Finally, although the program is under the auspices of continuing education, the University of Arizona is engaged in a multi-pronged educational mission dedicated to consciousness studies. They sponsor an annual conference, a peer reviewed journal, several books, and a graduate-level course of study. These efforts have rightfully earned for the University of

Arizona the reputation of being the cutting edge for discourse on consciousness studies, and have garnered millions of dollars in funding from foundations.

### **Programs in Psychology, Social Theory and Social Context**

One of the most unique aspects of our proposed program is that it engages issues of consciousness in terms of social praxis and in a broader social frame. From new approaches in cognition to increasing interest in “social justice” to research that aims to articulate “a far more complex set of social, structural, and cultural factors” rather than following psychology’s traditional focus on the dynamics of individual psychology” (Parker, Barbosa, and Aggleton, 2000, p. 5), there has been a growing awareness of importance of social context in understanding any “psychological” phenomena, whether it is “abnormal psychology” or self-esteem. Although geared to psychology, our program’s social dimension draws theoretically from the internationally renowned interdisciplinary approach in “History of Consciousness,” Ph.D. program at the University of California at Santa Cruz. This focus means that our work intersects with a number of parallel emerging trends in psychology: critical psychology, gender studies, history of ideas, narrative work, and participant action research. More developed in Europe and Australia than in the U.S., as yet few North American departments have doctoral studies with this emphasis. The most outstanding programs/initiatives are:

1. Vanderbilt University (community action research), Ph.D.
2. The University of California at Santa Cruz, Ph.D. in history of consciousness.
3. Boston College (participant action research –interdisciplinary initiative-Dept. of Education).
4. Pacifica Graduate Institute (community research from a multicultural perspective).
5. City University of New York’s Social-Personality Program (see above)
6. University of Michigan (see above).
7. Saybrook Institute has a community action emphasis in their Ph.D. program (see above).
8. Duquesne University is increasingly drawing on Cultural Studies and Social Justice Research even among its phenomenological based faculty.
9. York University- History and Systems with a strong critical focus.
10. University of Calgary- The Theory Program, which includes a strong social action component.

Outside of North America, there are also a number of programs: Examples include:

1. University of Witwatersrand (South Africa) community based/participant action research.
2. The London School of Economics (United Kingdom) has hired a preeminent scholar for program development in critical psychology.
3. University of Bath (United Kingdom) critical psychology, discourse analysis, and community participant research.
4. University of Manchester (United Kingdom) critical psychology, discourse analysis, and community participant research.
5. Cardiff University (United Kingdom) critical psychology, discourse analysis, and community participant research.
6. University of West Sydney (Australia) program in critical psychology.

7. Auckland University (Australia) a gender and critical psychology group aimed at narrative research into issues related to gender.

**Competition with Other Programs in the University System of Georgia:**

UGA has an applied program in psychology. Yet the methodological and theoretical approaches are extremely different and would attract much different type of student. UGA follows the traditional model of research design in Psychology. Our program has no contention with this approach, but it is grounded in qualitative methods. The same caveat holds for Social Psychology program at UGA. Regarding UGA's neuroscience program, our examination of consciousness is phenomenological; this perspective and its offshoot research interests would be complementary to neuroscience. We would not be asking for any equipment related to neuroscience. The same distinction holds for the program in Cognition and Brain Science offered by Georgia Tech.

The Industrial-Organizational program at Georgia Tech shares the applied focus of our program. Once again our interest in qualitative methodologies and in participatory action research distinguishes us from this program. The closest program is the community psychology program at Georgia State. Our program is again less traditional than this program in its methodologies and theoretical approach. In fact, with the change to a Ph.D., we will be less pressed to produce psychologists who can work in a community setting although of course that will be an option. We will be in less competition than we may be now.

**We do not compete with any clinical programs. We are not a clinical program. The change from the Psy.D. will help with changing the perception that we are a clinical program.**

Our graduates will be hired by Universities or colleges for teaching or research precisely for their difference from traditional training. They may be the qualitative researcher or teach history and systems. Their community action and research projects will be much more organized around social justice issues or holistic health. In no way will such graduates compete for positions that might go to graduates from other programs. The same for applicants: We recruit from a number of Masters Programs in England and Europe that have phenomenological roots and/or discursive psychology curriculum. We draw on North American graduates from Existential, humanistic, and transpersonal programs, including our own. This pool is not the same as the one from which other doctoral programs in the System draw.

**Thus there is no competition at the level of recruitment, program content, or later job placement. Our program is already enrolling international students, as well as local and national applicants. The instatement of a Ph.D. program will allow for innovative work in the social arena, rigorous critical thinking, and a grounded methodology, all of which are consonant with the discipline and are propitious monikers for the program' eventual reputation and standing. Such reputation would only further the University's aims to be a world class provider of higher education at the graduate and undergraduate levels.**

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