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Behavioural Health Doctoral Programme Candidate Agreement

This document must be read thoroughly by every candidate applying for a Behavioural Health Doctoral Degree from International University for Graduate Studies. You are required to submit this signed document with your other admission documents.

Candidates for the doctoral degree in Psychology are offered three pathways:

1. The Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)
2. The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
3. The PsyD-PhD Dual Doctoral Degree (*Earn both degrees, PsyD & PhD*)

The candidate will discuss these three potential pathways with their Dean or Associate Dean. Prior to the discussion, the candidates will read information concerning each pathway. The Dean or Associate Dean, along with the candidate will jointly determine which of the pathways best meets the goals and objectives of the candidate.

This document consists of a selection of excerpts from articles that explain how the value of earning the PsyD as a behavioural health practitioner compares to our PsyD-PhD Doctoral Programme or the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD).

A reference list is also provided to allow you to do your own reading.

Agreement

I acknowledge that I have read this document in its entirety. If accepted for admission by the Dean or Associate Dean, I hereby agree to the requirements of International University for Graduate Studies Behavioural Health Doctoral Programme.

Name

Date

Doctoral Programme

Please select preferred Pathway: (*the final decision is to be made after conferring with the dean*)

- The Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)
- The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)
- The PsyD-PhD Dual Doctoral Degree
- Undecided

About Doctoral Degrees in Behavioural Health

In today's world, some Behavioural Health Field Practitioners believe the PhD is the superior degree for them to pursue. The reality is – it is not.

The degree most beneficial to practitioners is the PsyD. The PsyD is a degree which may be compared to the M.D. The PhD in Psychology is comparable to the PhD in medicine which primarily is a researcher's degree. While the PsyD involves research, it is primarily oriented to improve techniques for treating clients by behavioural health professionals.

The PsyD-PhD Dual Doctoral Degree is comparable to Dual Degree Doctoral Programmes used by various prestigious medical schools, such as Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and Yale School of Medicine, which offer a similar path to the MD (Practitioner's Degree) and the PhD (Researcher's Degree).

Approximately fifty percent of PhD candidates in the United States do not complete their degree within ten years. The subset for Psychology is also about 50% or slightly higher. Worldwide this rate is approximately 59 percent.

Benefits of Pursuing a PsyD Rather Than a PhD in Psychology (n.d.)

A degree in psychology opens up the door to a multitude of career ventures. In any case, psychologists evaluate and study the affect, behaviour, and cognition of others. The way in which this study is applied on a professional level depends on the kind of higher education you decide to pursue. Some psychologists provide mental health or consultant services, while others conduct research or teach. For those who are interested in pursuing psychology in a clinical capacity there are two graduate level options: PhD and PsyD. Traditionally, the PhD was the highest level of education one could earn in the field, and those who wanted to practice clinical psychology and psychotherapy typically took this route. However, since the 1970's the PsyD has become increasingly popular. If you are considering a career as a therapist or in clinical work here are five reasons you may want to consider pursuing a PsyD rather than a PhD in Psychology:

1. Emphasis on Practice

The PsyD is a degree that is focused on the practical application of theoretical frameworks and therapeutic techniques. While a PsyD program will still require a dissertation applying relevant psychological literature, being able to produce unique, empirical psychological research will not be at the helm of the degree holder's work. A PsyD will emphasize clinical skills and prepare you to be an effective practitioner.

2. Earlier Clinical Exposure

Due to the PsyD's emphasis on clinical practice over research, programs begin to incorporate clinical exposure earlier. Many PsyD programs will also offer opportunities to narrow your focus by choosing concentrations within clinical practice. These programs will give the degree holder a wealth of practice-based knowledge, exposure to and implementation of advanced therapeutic techniques, as well as many different types of supervised experiences.

3. Shorter Programs

The average time it takes to complete a PhD is five to seven years, while it typically takes four to six years to complete a PsyD. If practice is your goal, then it may make more sense to pursue a PsyD which will place you in a clinical setting a little bit sooner than if you were to pursue a PhD.

Both a PhD and a PsyD are prestigious degrees that require an investment of time and money. However, depending on what you are trying to accomplish with your degree one may be more suited to you than the other. If practicing psychotherapy is the main goal of pursuing graduate level study in psychology and you do not plan on conducting your own academic research then the PsyD may be for you.

Ph.D. in Psychology or Psy.D.? by Tara Kuther, Ph.D.

If you hope to study psychology at the graduate level, you've got options. Both Ph.D. and Psy.D. Degrees are doctoral degrees in psychology. They differ in history, emphasis and logistics.

Psy.D. Emphasis on Practice: The Ph.D. in psychology has been around for well over 100 years, but the Psy.D. or doctor of psychology, degree is much newer. The Psy.D. became popular in the early 1970s, created as a professional degree, much like that for a lawyer that trains graduates for applied work -- therapy. The rationale was that the Ph.D. is a research degree, yet many students seek a doctoral degree in psychology to practice and do not plan to conduct research.

The Psy.D. is intended to prepare graduates for careers as practicing psychologists. The Psy.D. offers a great deal of training in therapeutic techniques and many supervised experiences, but there is less of an emphasis on research than in Ph.D. programs.

As a graduate from a Psy.D. program you can expect to excel in practice-related knowledge and experience and also be familiar with research methodology, comfortable reading research articles and learning about research findings, and able to apply research findings to your work. Psy.D. graduates are trained to be consumers of research-based knowledge.

Ph.D.: Emphasis on Research and Practice: Ph.D. programs are designed to train psychologists who can not only understand and apply research but also conduct it. Ph.D. psychology graduates are trained to be creators of research-based knowledge. Ph.D. programs range in the emphasis they place on research and practice.

Some programs emphasize creating scientists. In these programs students spend most of their time on research and much less on practice-related activities. In fact, these programs discourage students from engaging in practice. While Psy.D. programs emphasize creating practitioners, many Ph.D. programs combine both the scientist and practitioner models -- they create scientist-practitioners, graduates who are competent researchers as well as practitioners.

If you're considering a degree in psychology, keep in mind these distinctions so that you apply to programs that are appropriate to your interest and goals. Ultimately, if you think you might want to engage in research or teach at a college at some point in your career, you should consider a Ph.D. over a Psy.D. because the research training provides more flexibility in career options.

Generally speaking, Psy.D. students finish their graduate programs in less time than do Ph.D. students. A Psy.D. requires a specific number of years of coursework and practice, as well as a dissertation that usually requires that students apply research to a given problem or analyze the research literature. A Ph.D. also requires a specific number of years of coursework and practice, but the dissertation is a more cumbersome project because it requires that students devise, conduct, write up and defend a research study that will make an original contribution to academic literature. That could take an extra year or two -- or more -- than a Psy.D.

Bottom Line: Both the Psy.D. and Ph.D. are doctoral degrees in psychology. Which one you choose depends on your career goals -- whether you prefer a career solely in practice or one in research or some combination of research and practice.

Doctoral degrees in psychology: How are they different, or not so different? By Daniel S. Michalski, PhD, and Garth Fowler, PhD

Doctoral degrees in psychology offer individuals preparation to conduct scientific research, professional practice or both. Most individuals receive either the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) or the Doctor of Psychology (PsyD) degree. Although each of these degrees is designed to engage students in deep knowledge and skills within a subfield of

psychology, there are substantial differences in the type of training and career plans of individuals with these degrees. Finding the best-fitting program for an individual student begins with understanding these differences.

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

The PhD is the most common degree conferred in psychology and is generally offered at either private or public research universities.¹ PhD degrees are intended for students interested in generating new knowledge through scientific research (i.e., setting up experiments, collecting data, applying statistical and analytical techniques) and/or gaining teaching experience. PhD graduate students receive substantial training in research methods and statistics in order to independently produce new scientific knowledge and are often required to produce a dissertation to demonstrate research competency. Students enrolling in PhD programs may also be interested in pursuing professional careers in applied work — such as health services, counseling in school settings and consulting in businesses and organizations in addition to research and academic work.

Doctor of Psychology (PsyD)

The PsyD degree came into existence in the 1970s as an alternative to the PhD for those more interested in providing psychological services than conducting disciplinary research. The PsyD degree is generally offered in professional schools of psychology — either affiliated with research or teaching universities or housed in a free-standing graduate school.² The focus of PsyD programs is to train students to engage in careers that apply scientific knowledge of psychology and deliver empirically based service to individuals, groups and organizations. Most programs require students to write a thesis or dissertation, and students may use quantitative or qualitative methodologies to demonstrate how psychological research is applied to human behaviour.

Both PsyD and PhD programs can prepare students to be licensed psychologists, and training in these types of programs prepares graduates to take state licensing exams (licenses are awarded by individual states, not graduate programs).³ Many states require graduates to have attended accredited graduate programs to ensure that all students have minimum training and competency necessary for treating patients and serving clients.

Completion and Attrition Rate Rates

According to a report published on July 26 by England's funding council, 72.9 per cent of the 11,625 students from the UK or the EU who began full-time doctorates in 2010-11 will obtain a degree within seven years. This compares with 70.1 per cent who started in 2009-10 and 70.5 per cent in 2008-09. Meanwhile 80.5 per cent will complete their PhD within 25 years: the point at which anyone who is going to earn a doctorate is assumed to have done so. The equivalent figure for the 2009-10 cohort was 78.2 per cent (Jump, 2015).

For the fourth year in a row, the number of students earning PhDs in psychology has decreased, according to the federal "Doctorate Recipients from United States Universities" report, which offers data on most 2002 PhD recipients. In fact, since 1998 the number of psychology PhDs awarded has dropped about 13 percent, from 3,676 to 3,199, the survey found. The figures reflect a larger trend in higher education: The total number of PhDs awarded in the United States has dropped 6.3 percent since an all-time high of 42,652 in 1998. The number of PhD degrees granted has varied more while the number of PsyD degrees has remained stable or increased, she notes. (Bailey, 2004)

Doctoral attrition rates are high in North America: an estimated 40% to 50% of candidates never finish.

Though these rates have been relatively stable over time, the issue is of growing concern given recent increases in PhD enrollment. According to the OECD, enrollment in advanced research programs in the US and Canada rose by approximately 70% from 1998 to 2012 (Litalien, 2015).

The completion rate for Ph.D. degrees has become a topic of pressing, national attention in recent decades for graduate school deans, public and private funding agencies, faculty members, and graduate students. Despite recent national

attention focusing on doctoral completion, the Analysis of Baseline Program Data from the Ph.D. Completion Project, which examined both private and public institutions nationally, reports that the completion rate ten years after students begin their doctoral program remains low at 56.6% (Sowell, Zhang, Redd, & King, 2008). Additionally, the analysis indicates that completion rates continue to vary considerably by field of study: 49.3% in humanities, 54.7% in mathematics and physical sciences, **55.9% in social sciences**, 62.9% in life sciences, and 63.6% in engineering. Such low completion rates result in concerns ranging from the waste of limited resources and our "domestic talent pool," to the detrimental effects on students' lives (Smallwood, 2004; Workshop on Graduate School Attrition, 1997); (Council of Graduate Schools, n.d.).

The Council of Graduate Schools produced a study on the PhD completion and attrition. The study looked at 49,000 students attending 30 institutions in 54 disciplines comprising 330 programs. **Astonishingly, the completion rate ten years after students begin their doctoral program remains low at 56.6%** (Lani, 2017).

One model for alternative paths to the Ph.D. involves dividing "scholars" from "teachers" by granting them separate versions of the doctorate. Because most graduate students won't get jobs that emphasize research, this argument goes, **why should they write esoteric scholarly dissertations that take years and years to finish? Let them get some kind of "professional doctorate" that will prepare them faster for the teaching that will occupy more of their professional lives. Psychology, which grants both the Ph.D. and the expressly clinical Psy.D. (a three-year degree), already does this. Why can't other fields? Perhaps they can.**

Balancing the practical appeal of dual Ph.D. tracks is the model's heavy reliance on binary thinking—the "us" and "them" problem. It's easy to imagine this bifurcated model of scholarly and clinical Ph.D.'s creating not different paths but different tiers, with one distinctly higher than the other. Put simply, the danger is that it would enshrine a caste system. (More than a taint of caste already pervades psychology, but because most Psy.D.'s go into clinical practice, there exists an escape valve of sorts that keeps the Ph.D. and Psy.D. populations separate.) Moreover, a two-tier model would reduce the time to degree only for those who choose the teaching-intensive option. It would do nothing to speed up the progress of would-be scholars (Cassuto, 2013).

Additional statistics can be obtained from the Council of Graduate Schools Ph. D. Completion and Attrition: Analysis of Baseline Data at http://www.phdcompletion.org/resources/cgsnsf2008_sowell.pdf

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