



## Doctoral Program Smart Shopping – Overview

*A resource for individuals applying to psychology doctoral programs*

### Make a list of potential programs to apply to

- Use the books and sites below; ask mentors, advisors, alums, professionals; visit program websites
- Find out what faculty are interested in; this matters highly if students are paired 1:1
- Look to see whether the goals, objectives, and climate fit your interests and abilities

### Dig deeper to determine whether the programs on your list are right for you

Get answers to these key questions online, from books, and by asking faculty and recent students  
Plot the information on the next page of this document (available at [apa.org/apags/resources](http://apa.org/apags/resources))

#### A. Getting in

- How many full and part-time positions are available?
- What is the acceptance rate of applicants?
- What is the profile of accepted applicants (background, scores, demographics)?
- Do the program and its faculty match my interests?
- Is the program APA accredited?\* (Note: APA only accredits doctoral programs in clinical, counseling, school, and combined/integrated psychology. Accreditation can ease employment, licensure, and protection of students and the public. Verify at [www.apa.org/ed/accreditation](http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation))

#### B. Student life

- What is the “culture” of the program?
- How much is tuition and other fees?\*
- What kinds of funding are available? How many students are funded and for how long?\*
- How much debt do graduates have? Are loans generally private or federal?
- What are pre-requisites, required courses/labs, training approach, supports?

#### C. Exiting and graduating

- How long does it take to graduate?\*
- How many students actually finish the program?\*
- Where do students tend to work after they graduate?
- What is program’s match rate to APA-accredited internships (counseling/clinical only)?\* (compare across programs at [appic.org/Match/Match-Statistics](http://appic.org/Match/Match-Statistics))
- What percentage of graduates gets licensed?\*. Also, what percentage of student pass the licensure exam? (counseling/clinical only; verify at [asppb.net/?ScoresByDrProgram](http://asppb.net/?ScoresByDrProgram))

\*If the program is accredited, it is required to post a link on **the program’s homepage** that reads “Student Admissions, Outcomes, and Other Data.” These data specifically answer the above questions marked with an asterisk. Learn how to evaluate the data at [psychologygradschool.weebly.com](http://psychologygradschool.weebly.com).

### Websites

- More APA tools: [apa.org/apags/resources](http://apa.org/apags/resources) and [apa.org/education/grad](http://apa.org/education/grad)
- From a Clinical professor: [mitch.web.unc.edu/professional-development](http://mitch.web.unc.edu/professional-development)
- Infographic on debt and salary: [apa.org/apags/resources/debt.pdf](http://apa.org/apags/resources/debt.pdf)
- Affording and Repaying Grad School: [apa.org/apags/resources/affording-repaying.aspx](http://apa.org/apags/resources/affording-repaying.aspx)

### Books

- Graduate Study in Psychology (APA) - Also available as an [online database](#)
- Getting In: A Step-by-Step Plan for Gaining Admission to Graduate School in Psychology (APA)
- Applying to Graduate School in Psychology (APA)
- Insider’s Guide to Graduate Programs in Clinical and Counseling Psychology (Guilford)



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## Doctoral Program Smart Shopping – Worksheet

From a set of tools for applicants at [www.apa.org/apags/resources](http://www.apa.org/apags/resources). Key data points are suggested for you in this chart, but please add your own, too, and use this sheet to compare across programs to find the best fit(s) for you. Answers may be sourced from the web, books, faculty, students, and/or alums.

	School/Program Name →				
<b>Getting in</b>	# full and part-time positions available				
	Acceptance rate of applicants				
	Profile of accepted applicants (background, GPAs, GREs, demographics)				
	Am I a good match to program and faculty interests? (assign a grade)				
	APA accreditation status (yes, no, or N/A) (clinical/counseling/school programs only)*				
<b>Student life</b>	Am I good match to culture of program? (assign a grade)				
	Pre-requisites, required courses/labs, training approaches, supports (assign a grade)				
	Tuition and other fees*				
	Funding sources for students (describe types and eligibility)				
	# Students funded*				
	Average student loan debt				
<b>Exiting &amp; graduating</b>	# Years to graduate?*				
	Attrition/drop-out rate*				
	Types of work for recent graduates (describe)				
	Match rate to APA-accredited internships* (counseling/clinical programs only)				
	% grads getting licensed* (counseling/clinical programs only)				
	% grads passing EPPP (counseling/clinical programs only) Verify at <a href="http://asppb.net/?page=ScoresByDrProgram">asppb.net/?page=ScoresByDrProgram</a> .				

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