Frequently Asked Questions

THE PROGRAM

What are the major requirements for the Ph.D. program?

A minimum of 75 course credits for the Ph.D. is required. Students also must pass a research certification exam, typically toward the end of their second year. In addition, two qualifying papers must be submitted based on students’ academic work and research. A dissertation is the capstone of the degree requirements.

What types of classes are required?

Required classes cover four main areas: 1) research and statistics, 2) theory in social-organizational psychology, 3) practice in social-organizational psychology, and 4) integrative experiences (research workgroups). In addition, students are encouraged to take courses in related areas, such as in other psychology fields, business, or human development to ensure breadth of study. More detailed information about coursework and requirements can be found in our Ph.D. Handbook and the Ph.D. worksheet, which is available on-line.

Can I receive credit for previous graduate work?

It is possible to receive up to 30 credits for previous graduate work, if these credits meet social-organizational psychology program requirements. The number of credits that may be transferred is determined on a case-by-case basis by the Transfer Credit Coordinator (located in the Office of Admissions) and the student’s academic advisor. (Handout “Policies and Procedures: How to Transfer Graduate Credits Earned Outside of Teachers College” is available in the Office of Admissions.)
What options are available to students to gain practical experience as part of the program?

The program requires students to complete three practical courses, such as Group Dynamics (ORL 5362), Practicum: Organization Change & Consultation (ORLJ 6343), Fieldwork in Change, Coaching and Supervision (ORLJ 6244), and Process Consultation (ORLJ 6349). In addition, many students complement their academic experience with internships in a variety of organizations in the New York metropolitan area. Organizations where social-organizational psychology Ph.D. students have recently worked or had an internship include Mercer Human Resource Consulting, Morgan Stanley Dean Witter, TIAA-CREF, Perkins Williamson Associates, the United Nations, Pfizer, Campbell Soup Company, and PricewaterhouseCoopers (now IBM's Global Business Consulting Services).

What types of research projects are available for students to participate in? How do students get involved?

Students get involved in research by participating in workgroups led by social-organizational psychology faculty. Students are required to participate in at least one workgroup per semester for a minimum of eight semesters overall. Participation in at least two different workgroups is required over the course of the program. More detailed information about workgroups and their activities can be found in the "Expectations: Research" section of Ph.D. handbook. The Handbook is available online at: [http://www.tc.edu/o&l/orgpsych/index.asp?Id=Our+Students&Info=Resources+for+Current+Ph.D.+%26+M.A.+Students](http://www.tc.edu/o&l/orgpsych/index.asp?Id=Our+Students&Info=Resources+for+Current+Ph.D.+%26+M.A.+Students).

What role do students play in workgroups?

In workgroups, students participate in all phases of the research process, including the design and conduct of research. Many times, this participation leads to presentations at professional conferences or publications in journals and books with faculty.

How many students are in a typical workgroup?

The number of students per workgroup varies but typically ranges from 3 to 6.

Can I be a part-time student?

Only full-time students are accepted into our program.

How long does it take to obtain a Ph.D.?

The average amount of time is 5-6 years for dedicated students.

Is it possible to earn the M.A. en passant to the Ph.D.?

Yes, Ph.D. students can receive an M.A. provided that they meet the course and degree requirements for the M.A. This requires completion of at least 45 credits and one qualifying paper.

What is the relationship between Teachers College and Columbia University?

Teachers College is an affiliate of Columbia University. The College has its own Board of Trustees, administration and budget, while having access to resources of Columbia University, such as the
library, health services, recreational center, and so forth. Doctoral degrees are granted by Columbia University, Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (GSAS).

What kinds of opportunities and support are available for Ph.D. students interested in teaching a course?

All students serve as graduate teaching assistants. In addition, teaching opportunities may be available to advanced students who are near to completing their course work, or who have completed their course work. Students should consult the Ph.D. Program Coordinator regarding available opportunities.

To what extent are students encouraged to pursue their own research ideas and projects?

Numerous opportunities exist for students to work on research projects with faculty in research workgroups as well as to develop and pursue their own research projects and interests. Faculty encourages students to develop their own ideas and studies, leading to papers to meet program requirements or to publication opportunities.

What kind of recognition has Teachers College and the social-organizational psychology program received?

Teachers College has been consistently ranked on U.S. News & World Report's list of top graduate schools in education. More specifically, the social-organizational psychology doctoral program was ranked #7 in the country based on student ratings of quality (The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist, 2004, pp. 28-43), and #9 for total publications in a survey of research productivity among I/O psychology doctoral programs (The Industrial-Organizational Psychologist, 2014, pp. 40-52). A number of the social-organizational psychology faculty have received national awards and recognition for their contributions to research and practice.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS AND STUDENT AID

How much does it cost to study at Teachers College?

Non-subsidized tuition and fees for the college in 2013-2014 Academic Year (AY) amount to between $31,200 and $35,000 per year (see table, below); this approximate amount does not include courses taken during the summer and does not include any additional course fees, cost for books, and housing expenses. (Please note: All tuition and fees may increase for the 2014-2015 Academic Year.) These approximate amounts are based on the following:
Approximate cost for studying at Teachers College, AY 2013-2014:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition (only) 2013-2014:</td>
<td>$29,568</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(assuming 11 credits/semester = 22 credits/AY)</td>
<td>(22 x $1,344/credit)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College fee:</td>
<td>$816 ($408/semester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health fee:</td>
<td>$858 ($429/semester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*Insurance, depending on level of coverage:</td>
<td>$3,786 ($1,893/semester)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL (not including books, housing, course fees, etc)</strong></td>
<td><strong>$35,028</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Health and insurance fees may be waived if proof of coverage from another source can be provided.

All social-organizational psychology doctoral students receive partial tuition subsidies for their first four years in the program (see document "Financial Support for the PhD Program in Social-Organizational Psychology").

**Are graduate teaching assistantships available to social-organizational psychology students?**

All students are required to serve as graduate Teaching/Course assistants. Additional opportunities beyond those required are available. Students should consult the PhD Program Coordinator regarding available opportunities.

**Do social-organizational psychology students work part-time in addition to their studies?**

In order to allow for full immersion in the program, students are discouraged from working in the first two years of the program. However, some students work part-time in organizations to supplement their income throughout the program and most students do a full-time paid internship with a local business during the summer months.

Work opportunities include teaching, consulting, coaching, and research in both profit and not-for-profit organizations. We encourage students to pursue a wide range of experiences as doing so increases their knowledge of organizational life, helps to clarify career goals, and expands their network which is beneficial during the program and after graduation.

**Do Ph.D. students receive grants and fellowships from organizations outside the school?**

Yes, students have received fellowships from various external agencies. Faculty support students through external funding and students are encouraged to apply for scholarships, grants, and fellowships.
STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

How many students are in the program?

The number of students ranges from 20 to 30. At any given time, about 25 are “active” meaning that they are still taking classes, participating in workgroups, and working on completing their formal requirements; the remainder of the students are working on their dissertations.

What are the demographics characteristics of the student group?

Approximately 56% of the students are female, approximately 40% are minority, and approximately 14% are international. On average, students tend to be in their mid to late-twenties when starting the program.

Where do students typically live?

Students tend to live near the university on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Many students live in graduate housing on campus. A few students commute to school from other parts of the city and the greater metropolitan area, given the ease of travel.

Where are social-organizational psychology students from?

Social-organizational psychology students come from all over the United States, as well as from Canada, Korea, India, Israel, Scotland, Singapore, Thailand and other countries.

STUDENT LIFE

What kinds of activities outside the classroom are available?

Social-organizational psychology Ph.D. students and faculty meet regularly for a colloquium series to promote learning outside the classroom and foster a sense of community within the program. In addition, students engage in committee work with faculty to help with planning colloquia and speakers, social gatherings and parties, selecting and recruiting new students for the program, and so forth. Several student-run clubs aligned with Organizational Psychology are available for membership as well. These include Organization and Human Development Consulting Club (OHDCC) and the Columbia Chapter of the American Society of Training and Development.

Students are encouraged to join professional associations, such as the American Psychological Association, the Society for Industrial-Organizational Psychology, the Academy of Management, and the Society for Human Resource Management, and METRO. In addition, students are encouraged to attend and participate in professional conferences as well as take advantage of opportunities within the Columbia University system and the New York City area.

What is the atmosphere like within the program?

The atmosphere within the social-organizational psychology program can be described as collaborative, friendly, and relatively informal. Oftentimes, students work in groups on assignments or get together socially. Program faculty are accessible to students, and are supportive and open to students’ ideas, questions, and concerns.
What kinds of student activities/organizations are there?

There are about 25 student organizations at Teachers College, representing various aspects of the school’s diverse student body. In addition, Student Life organizes a range of activities on a regular basis, including workshops, social events, and networking opportunities. For more information, please visit the Student Life website at http://www.tc.columbia.edu/campus/?Id=Student%20Life&Info=Student+Organizations.

CAREER PROSPECTS

What kind of jobs do students get after obtaining their Ph.D.?

Our students are trained as both researchers and practitioners. Thus, jobs obtained after completion of the Ph.D. vary. Among the jobs our students obtain are: faculty members in university or business school settings, consulting positions in consulting firms, industry positions, and public sector positions. These positions include work in the areas of social psychology, organizational psychology, human resource management, organization change and development, negotiation and conflict resolution, research and statistics, leadership, work-family, coaching, compensation systems, and organizational dynamics.

Are career/placement services available to students seeking jobs in the academic community or private/public sectors?

Teachers College Career Services offers consultation and placement services, as well as workshops on job search strategies and skills. In addition, Career Services organizes job fairs in which corporate recruiters visit the campus and provide other career related networking opportunities. For more information, please visit the Career Services website at http://www.tc.columbia.edu/careerservices/index.asp. Faculty, alumni, and peers also play an important role in helping students obtain jobs.