

Cognition and Development



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The Program in Cognition and Development at Emory approaches the study of cognition from multiple perspectives including adult and child behavioral perspectives, neuroimaging and neuroscientific perspectives, computational perspectives, and emotional/social/situated perspectives.

The Cognition and Development program's multi-faceted training features the following:

- The program covers six primary areas of study: Memory, Language, Conceptual Processes, Grounded Cognition, Emotion, and Social/Cultural Processes
- Students and faculty attend and participate in a variety of talks and research groups designed to foster interaction across labs and experimental approaches

We train students for research and teaching at the forefront of cognition and its development. Our goal is to ground students in an interdisciplinary understanding of the basic issues in cognition from the perspectives of cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, cognitive and affective neuroscience, and computational modeling. Through research training, coursework, and teaching, students acquire the professional skills necessary for careers in academic research and teaching institutions, as well as in other public and private research settings.

Research

The primary research areas across the faculty and students within the program include conceptual processing and the perceptual grounding of knowledge representation, language, social and emotional cognition, and memory. We employ a wide range of techniques and methodologies including observational, interview/questionnaire, forced-choice, reaction time, looking time, perceptual discrimination, functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), Transcranial Magnetic Stimulation (TMS), and event related potentials (ERP). The size and diversity of the greater Atlanta area along with the prestige of Emory University ensures that we have easy access to populations of all kinds including children, the elderly, and special populations such as Spanish speakers and individuals with autism or depression. Our participant pools are highly ethnically diverse.

DISCOVER

the unexpected

Graduate Training

Research

The primary activity during each student's graduate training is research. Students select a research mentor in their first year with whom they will work predominantly. We encourage students to develop multiple projects in different labs or to develop collaborative projects with multiple faculty members, and it occasionally happens that students change primary mentors as their research interests shift.

Master's theses are typically conducted during the second year. The student writes a thesis proposal by the beginning of his or her second year, describing an empirical project that s/he plans to conduct with an advisor. The master's project is completed by the beginning of the third year when the student defends his or her thesis before a committee.

The Qualifying Examination is typically taken during the Winter of the third year or Summer following the third year. Students develop a comprehensive literature review on an approved topic, and defend the paper before an examining committee.

The Dissertation is typically proposed during the student's fourth year. Students typically take between one and three years to complete the dissertation.

Coursework

The Cognition and Development Program curriculum is designed to instill an interdisciplinary appreciation of basic issues in cognition and psychology as a whole from the perspective of developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, cognitive and affective neuroscience, computational modeling, and cognitive science. Additional special topics seminars, including "workshop seminars" in which prestigious guest lecturers from around the country participate, are offered each semester.

Our website has sample syllabi for graduate courses, as well as a list of other course requirements. Visit www.psychology.emory.edu/cognition/courses.html.

Each semester, students also participate in additional research-oriented, community-building activities:

COGNITION AND DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR — faculty, students and post-docs meet every other week to hear about a recent research project by a student or faculty member from Emory or a neighboring university. Receptions after the presentations allow program members the opportunity to interact informally on a regular basis.

RESEARCH GROUPS — clusters of students, faculty, and post-docs interested in particular topics or issues meet weekly to discuss projects and current issues. Current research groups include the Language group, the Space, Time and Causal Reasoning group, the fMRI group, the Trauma and Coping group, and the Culture and Cognition group.

DEPARTMENTAL COLLOQUIUM SERIES — external and internal speakers on a wide range of topics. Typically four outside speakers per year and four to six departmental faculty give talks with informal receptions afterwards.

THE BOYD MCCANDLESS LECTURE IN DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY provides an additional opportunity to invite a distinguished developmental psychologist to Emory. Recent McCandless lecturers have included Helen Neville, Dedre Gentner, Judith Dunn, Paul Harris, and Susan Goldin-Meadow.

Training in Teaching

Training in teaching is based on the Teaching Assistant Training and Teaching Opportunity (TATTO) program, administered by the graduate school. The program provides a mentored introduction to teaching, where students assume progressively greater responsibilities.

- During the Summer between first and second year, all students complete a three-day teacher training course with faculty drawn from across the University.
- During the second year, all students enroll in a departmental teaching practicum, which provides information and support as students begin their first teaching experiences serving as a teaching assistant for the Psychology department's undergraduate statistics course for one semester.
- Students complete their formal teacher training with a one-semester teaching associateship, teaching a lab section of the department's undergraduate experimental methods course.
- After completing the teaching associateship, students may apply for an appointment as a Dean's Teaching Fellow, or pursue other opportunities to serve as a teaching assistant or to teach independently.

New Building with Dedicated Resources

In May of 2009, the Department of Psychology—including the graduate programs in Cognition and Development, Neuroscience and Animal Behavior, and Clinical Psychology—moved to a new, much larger building.

The new building takes advantage of the latest approaches to teaching and research with technology seamlessly integrated into learning spaces, laboratories designed to fit faculty research needs, and informal spaces designed for interaction

among faculty and students. In addition to expanded lab spaces, offices, and classrooms, the building has a dedicated Child Study Center and neuroimaging resources.

The five-story building is part of Science Commons, located adjacent to Atwood Hall (chemistry) and a stone's throw from the Mathematics and Science Center.

Find out more at www.college.emory.edu/sciencecommons.

Collaboration at Emory and Beyond

Our faculty are highly collaborative, and students frequently have the opportunity to work with researchers from various departments, research centers at Emory, or in the greater Atlanta community including:

- EMORY'S ANTHROPOLOGY DEPARTMENT which shares a strong interest in psychological and social/communicative practices
- Emory's LINGUISTICS PROGRAM, an interdisciplinary program drawing on faculty from 15 departments that trains students in the systematic study of human language and communication
- EMORY UNIVERSITY'S CENTER ON MYTH AND RITUAL IN AMERICAN LIFE (MARIAL), supported by the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation's Program on Dual-Career Working Middle Class Families that studies the functions and significance of ritual and myth in the American South
- THE YERKES NATIONAL PRIMATE RESEARCH CENTER is one of only eight National Institutes of Health-designated national primate research centers. Yerkes is home to the LIVING LINKS CENTER, studying human evolution by investigating our close genetic, anatomical, cognitive, and behavioral similarities with great apes.
- THE BIOMEDICAL IMAGING TECHNOLOGY CENTER (BITC), a collaborative center between Georgia Tech and Emory University with a core mission of conducting cutting-edge research in functional neuroimaging and biomedical imaging
- THE CENTER FOR MIND, BRAIN, AND CULTURE an interdisciplinary program that focuses on questions regarding the mind, brain, and behavior across and within cultural contexts.

Cognition Project

In addition to these collaborative resources, our program oversees the EMORY COGNITION PROJECT, directed by Dr. Robyn Fivush. The Emory Cognition Project provides a forum for theoretical and empirical investigations of major topics in the field. Approximately every other year, the Project invites leading researchers to come to Emory to discuss a specific set of issues from a variety of theoretical and disciplinary viewpoints. The proceedings of many of these conferences have been published as edited volumes in our ongoing book series, the Emory Symposia in Cognition and Development. The Project also maintains the Cognition Library in the Psychology Department.

Recent Cognition Project conferences include:

- Memory, Stress, Attachment, and Coping
- Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience
- Symbol Use and Symbolic Representation: Developmental & Comparative Perspectives

Our website has a complete list, as well as a list of the edited volumes published on the basis of these conferences. Visit www.psychology.emory.edu/cognition/ecp.html.

Students

Our program typically has about 15 students in residence. We admit 2 to 3 new students per year. We are a relatively small and close-knit intellectual community, and faculty members are committed to close individual mentoring relationships.

Admission to the Cognition and Development (C&D) program is highly competitive. Applications are evaluated based on grades, GREs, personal statements, research background, and letters of recommendation. However, we weigh scores less heavily than we do the degree of fit between the goals of the student and the research interests of the faculty members. Our website has more information about the admission process. Please visit www.psychology.emory.edu/cognition/admission.html.

Our website also has information about our current students, with contact information and descriptions of their research interests. Please visit www.psychology.emory.edu/cognition/students.html.



Faculty

We have a core faculty of ten. A number of us have joint appointments in related departments, programs and centers. We also have a number of affiliated faculty members with primary appointments in other fields including anthropology, philosophy, neurology, and theology.

LAWRENCE W. BARSALOU, PH.D. Professor. Stanford University, 1981. Research Interests: Grounding of the human conceptual system in the brain's modality-specific systems, with special interest in symbolic operations, abstract concepts, situated conceptualization, and dynamic representation.

PATRICIA BAUER, PH.D. Professor. Miami University, 1985. Research Interests: Development of memory from infancy through childhood, with special emphasis on the determinants of remembering and forgetting; and links between social, cognitive, and neural developments and age-related changes in autobiographical or personal memory.

ROBYN FIVUSH, PH.D. Samuel Candler Dobbs Professor, Chair. The City University of New York, 1982. Research Interests: Early memory with an emphasis on the social construction of autobiographical memory and the relations among memory, narrative, trauma, and coping.

STEPHAN HAMANN, PH.D. Associate Professor. University of Toronto, 1993. Research Interests: Declarative and nondeclarative memory in humans; emotion and emotional memory; methodologies include cognitive tasks, neuroimaging, TMS, and study of neuropsychological patients.

STELLA FELIX LOURENCO, PH.D. Assistant Professor. University of Chicago, 2006. Research Interests: Spatial perception and cognition, which includes geometric coding in young children, sex and socioeconomic differences, spatial reasoning in atypical populations, and influences of tool use in spatial representation.

LAURA NAMY, PH.D. Associate Professor. Northwestern University, 1998. Research Interests: Cognitive mechanisms underlying early word learning, symbol acquisition, and conceptual development in infants, toddlers, and preschoolers.

LYNNE NYGAARD, PH.D. Associate Professor. Brown University, 1991. Research Interests: Mechanisms underlying the perception of speech and auditory events; perceptual learning of talker-specific properties of speech; emotion and language; auditory imagery for spoken language.

PHILIPPE ROCHAT, PH.D. Professor. University of Geneva, Switzerland, 1983. Research Interests: Development of the perceived self, symbolic functioning, selective imitation, face recognition, cross-cultural differences in the development of the sense of entitlement, ownership, sharing, and negotiation.

PHILLIP WOLFF, PH.D. Assistant Professor. Northwestern University, 1999. Research Interests: The representation of relational concepts, computational models of causal meaning and reasoning, and cross-linguistic approaches to the study of word meaning.

Our website includes links to individual faculty pages with research interests, publications, links to research projects and other items. Visit www.psychology.emory.edu/cognition/faculty.html.

Contact Information

The Psychology Department Graduate Administrative Assistant is Paula Mitchell. She can be reached at 404-727-7456 or paula.mitchell@emory.edu regarding general questions about the graduate program requirements and application procedures and status.

The Director for the Program in Cognition and Development is Dr. Stephan Hamann. He may be reached at 404-727-4261 or shamann@emory.edu with specific questions about the program that are not addressed on our webpage.



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Requests for Additional Information:

RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS

James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies
209 Administration Building
201 Dowman Drive
Atlanta, GA 30322

404-727-6028 (ask for the Cognition and Development program in the Psychology department)
Fax: 404-727-4990

<http://www.graduateschool.emory.edu>
<http://www.psychology.emory.edu/cognition>