

George Mason University (GMU) Industrial and Organizational (I-O) Psychology

Comparison: Master of Arts (MA) & Master of Professional Studies (MPS)

	GMU I-O MA Program	GMU I-O MPS Program
Application Cycle	Deadline is February 1 st	Rolling admission cycles with cohorts beginning in the Fall, Spring & Summer terms
Application Requirements	Application, Resume, College Transcripts, Goals Statement, Two Recommendation Letters, 15 credits of psychology coursework including general/intro, statistics and a psychology laboratory course	Application, Resume, College Transcripts, Personal Essay, Two Recommendation Letter rating forms, prerequisites in Statistics and Research Methods (students can also include an experience statement outlining their proficiency in the pre-requisites)
Number of Credits	32 credits	30 credits
Mode of Delivery	Traditionally in-person at the university's main campus in Fairfax, Virginia	Fully online (asynchronous with optional synchronous components)
Degree Completion Timeline	2 years	Less than 2 years
Length of Course	15 weeks per course 2-3 courses a semester	Approximately 8 weeks per course and typically 2 courses a semester
Semester Offerings	During Fall & Spring semesters (no summer courses offered)	During Fall, Spring & Summers
Cohort	Take courses with other MA students <i>and</i> PhD students. One MA cohort a year of about 12-15 students.	Take courses with other applied MPS students. Three cohorts a year: each cohort can be anywhere between 20-40 students; but each class size is no more than 20 students

Course Content	Course content focuses on covering a full range of models, theories and research related to course topics with an emphasis on research and some application. The courses are typically research consumption and production focused. Students are welcome to view the syllabi for the courses online as a comparison.	The courses are practice and application focused and involve work-focused projects to give students direct experience in applying theories and methods. Students are welcome to view the syllabi for the courses online as a comparison.
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Course Structure	Courses are often designed to support research consumption and production through some lectures and mostly a seminar style approach with discussions focused on scholarly articles facilitated by faculty and students.	Courses are designed to support an application-based transfer of knowledge through asynchronous learning with readings, videos, practice exercises, interaction activities, knowledge check quizzes and application-focused assessments.
Coursework	Deliverables for all courses include a combination of both research proposals and applied projects, which furthers research training.	Deliverables for courses are focused on applied projects with a major business research proposal taking place across the research methods & practicum courses.
Faculty	Courses are developed and taught by full-time academic faculty.	Courses are developed and taught by full-time academic faculty and PhD-holding practitioner-focused adjunct faculty.

Research Experience	<p>MA students are able to get involved in faculty labs working on research projects with full-time faculty and PhD students, which sometimes results in research products (conference submissions and/or publications).</p> <p>MA students hoping to pursue a PhD have often focused on their own or collaborative research projects that have resulted in research products (conference submissions and/or publications).</p>	<p>Students are expected to complete a research project (often focused on addressing an applied problem) in pairs with support from a faculty member and doctoral student across the research methods & practicum courses with no <i>formal</i> expectation of it resulting into a research product (conference submission or peer-reviewed journal publication). Students are able to volunteer their time to work on additional research projects with faculty and doctoral students.</p>
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Work Experience	<p>During the program, MA students typically apply for <i>part-time</i> in-person, hybrid or remote I-O related internship experiences.</p>	<p>During the program, MPS students often work full-time in a variety of positions and industries and the program is designed to support the needs of working professionals.</p>
GMU PhD Application Process	<p>MA students complete the full PhD application to be considered for one of 4-5 yearly spots in the PhD program.</p> <p>As part of the PhD Application, GREs are required. MA students are not required to complete the GRE for the MA admission process and so will need to take the GRE unless they have GRE scores within the last five years.</p>	<p>MPS students complete the full PhD application to be considered for one of 4-5 spots yearly in the PhD program.</p> <p>As part of the PhD Application, GREs are required. MPS students are not required to complete this for the MPS admission process and so will need to take the GRE unless they have GRE scores within the last five years.</p>

<p>PhD Pathway</p>	<p>Students successfully accepted into GMU's PhD program can enter as third year students in the program and have several of their MA courses count towards the PhD requirements because these courses were taught with an emphasis on research training.</p> <p>Admission to the MA program is by no means a guarantee of subsequent admission to the PhD program but it does occur on occasion. In order to be most competitive and to maximize the likelihood of being accepted into the PhD program, MA students should at least meet, if not exceed, the research expectations for first- and second-year doctoral students.</p>	<p>At this time, given the applied focus of the MPS courses, course credits are typically not applicable towards PhD credits in GMU's I-O PhD Program. Students are welcome to apply to the GMU PhD program and, if admitted, will be first year students.</p> <p>The GMU PhD I-O program is a highly ranked research program and having an MPS program within our I-O umbrella with several courses developed and taught by full-time I-O faculty may make students competitive at several other PhD granting institutions across the nation, especially those with a practitioner focus. We are happy to discuss these pathway options. Please check with other institutions for more information regarding course transfers.</p>
<p>Workforce Preparation</p>	<p>Preparation for an applied career in research and consulting (both internal and external).</p>	<p>Opportunities for applied careers in a wide variety of industries and positions including I-O, HR & Management as well as internal and external consulting.</p>