Brown University’s Department of Cognitive, Linguistic, and Psychological Sciences (CLPS) is dedicated to the multidisciplinary study of mind, brain, behavior, and language. It offers three Ph.D. programs: in Cognitive Science, Linguistics, and Psychology. Entering students are accepted by the department and formally choose one of the three Ph.D. programs after completing the first year. The department does not accept students interested in obtaining terminal Master’s degrees.

Application


Required: GRE General scores; TOEFL scores for non-native speakers of English. We do not require completion of specific coursework; rather, we accept students from a diverse range of training programs and with very different research backgrounds. Experience with research and some familiarity with appropriate methodological and analytic tools is a plus. Submission of an original writing sample with the application is recommended. For general application requirements, please see the Brown Graduate School web pages (http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/application-information).

A critical element in judging applications is our assessment of the fit between the applicant’s intellectual and research interests and those of one or more faculty members. We strongly recommend that, before applying, you carefully read the departmental website (http://www.brown.edu/Departments/CLPS) and give particular attention to the research descriptions supplied by each faculty member. Many applicants have found it useful to correspond with individual faculty members before applying, but this is not required. Please note that we cannot estimate the probability of being admitted before you have applied. Our admission decisions are based on the complete application, which is considered by multiple members of the faculty.

Admission to the CLPS Ph.D. programs is highly selective. About 15 percent of applicants are invited for interviews, and about half of the interviewees receive offers of admission. Accepted students receive five years of financial support (tuition and stipend).

Faculty

Dima Amso (Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience)
James Anderson (Cognition, Computational)
David Badre (Cognitive Neuroscience, Cognitive Control)
Sheila Blumstein (Cognitive Neuroscience, Speech and Lexical Access)
Rebecca Burwell (Cognitive and Behavioral Neuroscience)
Mary A. Carskadon, Department of Psychiatry and Human Behavior (Neurobiology of human sleep)
Russell M. Church (Behavioral Neuroscience)
Uriel Cohen Priva (Phonology and Language Production)
Cynthia Garcia Coll, Education Department (Child development in the context of immigration)
Ruth Colwill (Behavioral Neuroscience, Animal Behavior)
Fiery Cushman (Social, Cognitive Neuroscience)
Fulvio Domini (Perception and Action, Computational)
Michael Frank (Computational Cognitive Neuroscience, Reinforcement Learning)
Pauline Jacobson (Syntax and Semantics)
Laura Kertz (Linguistics and Language Processing)
Joachim Krueger (Social, Decision Making)
Bertram F. Malle (Social, Theory of mind)
James Morgan (Development, Psycholinguistics)
Thomas Serre (Computational Cognitive Neuroscience, Perception and Action)
Andrea M. Simmons (Behavioral Neuroscience)
Steven Sloman (Cognition, Decision Making)
David Sobel (Cognition, Development)
Joo-Hyun Song (Perception and Action, Attention)
Kathryn Spoehr (Cognition)
William H. Warren (Perception and Action)
Takeo Watanabe (Perception and Action, Cognitive Neuroscience)
Leslie Welch (Perception)
Jack C. Wright (Social, Personality)
Facilities

As part of Brown University's Plan for Academic Enrichment, CLPS has been formed from the former faculties of the Department of Cognitive & Linguistic Sciences and the Department of Psychology, as well as several new hires. CLPS is housed in a newly renovated 36,000 square foot building with state-of-the-art laboratories, classrooms, and meeting spaces. Research facilities include:

- The Virtual Environment Navigation Lab (VENLab), one of the world’s largest ambulatory virtual reality facilities
- A wide-area motion capture system for full-body kinematics
- A high-performance 200-node computing cluster
- A research-dedicated 3.0T MRI system
- A 64-channel Event Related Potential (ERP) system
- Multiple laboratories for animal behavior research (e.g., rats, zebra fish, canines)
- Several high-resolution eye-trackers
- Multiple laboratories for behavioral research with children and adults; individually, in dyads or in groups; with digital audio-video recording, processing, and production
- A large suite of individual testing rooms for computer-presented experiments

Research Areas

Behavioral neuroscience/Comparative. Neural bases and computational models of: interval timing, auditory perception, flow sensing, memory, and higher cognitive functions; neurodevelopment, plasticity, and regeneration; canid communication and social cognition. Faculty: Burwell, Church, Colwill, Simmons.

Cognitive neuroscience. The neural basis of cognitive functions such as attention, perception, learning, memory, executive control, decision making, language. Faculty: Amso, Anderson, Badre, Blumstein, Burwell, Frank, Heindel, Watanabe.

Cognitive psychology. Human memory, learning, knowledge and conceptual representation, judgment, reasoning, and decision-making either among adults or from a developmental perspective. Faculty: Badre, Frank, Heindel, Sloman, Sobel, Spoehr.

Higher-level cognition. Inductive inference; causal reasoning; moral reasoning, decision-making; mathematical reasoning; knowledge and concept acquisition; social cognition and theory of mind and their development. Faculty: Anderson, Badre, Cushman, Frank, Krueger, Malle, Sloman, Sobel, Spoehr, Wright.

Perception and action. Computational, psychophysical and ecological approaches to the study of perceiving shape and motion, recognizing objects and scenes, processing auditory events, attention, perceptual learning, and controlling action. Faculty: Domini, Serre, Song, Simmons, Warren, Watanabe, Welch.

Language acquisition. Empirical and computational study of typical and atypical infant speech perception, word recognition and word learning, phonology, syntax. Faculty: Morgan.

Neural/computational models of cognition and language. Neural and computational models of processes such as motor control, vision, categorization, learning, reasoning, and language. Faculty: Anderson, Blumstein, Frank, Morgan, Serre, Sloman.

Phonetics and phonology. Acoustic properties of phonetic categories of speech; physiological basis of articulation and perception; phonetic and phonological theories, phonetic/phonological interface. Faculty: Blumstein, Cohen Priva, Morgan.

Psycholinguistics and language processing. The experimental study of language processing across linguistic domains and the relationship between experimental and theoretical approaches to language. Faculty: Blumstein, Cohen Priva, Kertz.

Semantics and syntax. Formal semantics, the syntax-semantics interface, lexical semantics, the interaction of information structure, discourse and pragmatics with semantics and syntax, categorial grammar and related theories of syntax. Faculty: Jacobson, Kertz.

Social psychology. Social cognition, theory of mind, moral judgment, perception of personality, person-situation interactions, self-image, social projection, intergroup perception, strategic behavior. Faculty: Cushman, Krueger, Malle, Wright.

Department of Cognitive, Linguistic, and Psychological Sciences

Department Chair
William Heindel

Department Associate Chair
Kathryn Spoehr

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Bertram Malle

Graduate Advisors
William Warren (Cognitive Science)
James Morgan (Linguistics)
Bertram Malle (Psychology)