

Doctor of Philosophy in Transpersonal Psychology (PhD)

Degree Type

Doctor of Philosophy

(Online + Low-residency)

The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Transpersonal Psychology degree program offers a unique and exciting opportunity to study the theories and practices of transpersonal psychology. Grounded in the pioneering work of the Institute of Transpersonal Psychology, founded in 1975, the PhD program is structured around a three-year course of study that is offered in an online format with low-residency seminars; occasionally, courses may be offered on the Costa Mesa and/or Palo Alto campus.

The PhD is designed for adult learners with a qualifying master's degree who seek an exceptional educational environment that combines personal growth and community support with application of transpersonal insights and research to students' chosen professional field. Students are invited to build a holistic and multi-faceted framework for analyzing the challenges and opportunities of human relationships, cognition, and spirituality in a concentration field. The program fosters diverse and novel professional applications of transpersonal principles. The central goal is to enhance positive individual, professional, and social transformation.

Students work closely with members of the faculty who facilitate social and emotional learning, cultivate mindfulness, and encourage meaningful research-based applications to their personal and professional goals and aspirations.

To complete the program in three years, students carry nine units per quarter, initially focusing on Core Courses and Elective Courses. Students must complete GPHD8997 Introduction to Proposal Writing ("Mini Proposal") by the middle of their second year (Quarter 1) to begin Dissertation registration and move through the sequence of Dissertation courses offered each quarter. Maximum time allowed to complete the degree is seven years from the start of the PhD program.

Note about Additional Fees: In addition to tuition, seminar attendance for the PhD program requires students to budget for travel, room, and board.

Program Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the Doctor of Philosophy in Transpersonal Psychology program, students will be able to:

- Analyze and explain human behavior in a variety of contexts and situations using theoretical models, empirically supported methods, and research in the field of transpersonal psychology and the wider field of psychology.
- Employ best practices in social science and humanistic research methodology in the design and conduct of original psychological research.
- Integrate knowledge about and sensitivity to the experiences and perspectives of diverse populations, including but not limited to race, culture, socioeconomics, age, gender, sexual orientation, and disability, in research and applications of transpersonal psychology.
- Communicate effectively using a variety of media and genres to meet the needs of the circumstances and intended audience across a range of personal and professional purposes and settings.
- Reflect upon their own whole-person development, including growth in mind, body, spirit, creativity, and community, and identify opportunities for continuing development.
- Integrate relevant moral and ethical frameworks with key concepts and practices drawn from transpersonal psychology in the development of solutions to professional and community problems.

Degree Requirements

To receive a PhD in Transpersonal Psychology, students must successfully complete a minimum of 75 units. The following are specific degree requirements:

- **33 units in Core Courses**
- **24 units in Concentration or Elective Courses**
- **18 units in Dissertation Courses**
- **Submission of an approved dissertation**

Core Courses (33 units)

Core Courses introduce students to foundational theories and research methods in transpersonal psychology. As part of the Core, students must attend and successfully complete four residential seminars (i.e., GPHD7000 taken 4 times*) during their matriculation in the PhD program.

Item #	Title	Credits
	GPHD7000-7004 Four Residential Seminars - 2 credits each	8
GPHD6101	Foundations of Transpersonal Psychology	3.0
GPHD6218	Advanced Seminar in Transpersonal Psychology	3.0
GPHD9610	Integral Research Skills: Advanced Topics in Transpersonal Psychology	3.0
GPHD6205	Critical Thinking and Scholarly Writing	3.0
GPHD6103	Qualitative Research Methods	3.0
GPHD6104	Quantitative Research Methods and Basic Statistics	3.0
GPHD7804	Psychology of Cognition, Affect, and Consciousness	3.0
GPHD8997	Introduction to Dissertation Proposal Writing ("Mini-Proposal")	4.0

Electives (24 units)

Students deepen their knowledge of transpersonal theory, research, and applications through the selection of Elective Courses.

Electives Currently Offered

Item #	Title	Credits
GPHD5130	Positive Psychology–Gratitude, Compassion, and Forgiveness	3.0
GPHD6203	Introduction to Transpersonal Therapies	3.0
GPHD6206	Transpersonal Finance	3.0
GPHD6214*	Anomalous States of Consciousness	3.0
GPHD6304	Topics in Consciousness Studies	3.0
GPHD6310	Consciousness and Healing: Integral Perspectives	3.0
GPHD6411*	Psychology of Extraordinary Dreams	3.0
GPHD6415	Death and the Afterlife: Comparative Epistemologies	3.0
GPHD7210	Transpersonal Leadership	3.0
GPHD7215	Aging, Individuation, & Wholeness Across the Lifespan	3.0
GPHD7223	Somatic Psychology and Mind-Body Healing	3.0
GPHD7226	Transformative Learning Theory	3.0
GPHD7229	Spiritual Competencies	3.0
GPHD7330*	Archetypes, Myths, & Symbols	3.0
GPHD7803	Emerging Worldviews: The Art and Science of Transformation	3.0
GPHD7805*	Eco-spirituality: Our Spiritual Connection to Gaia	3.0
GPHD8206*	Ecopsychology–Remembering Our Place in The Natural World	3.0
GPHD8207*	Sustainability, Culture, and Sacred Ecology	3.0
GPHD8208*	Nature-Based Programs and Wholeness	3.0
GPHD8216	Transpersonal Perspectives on Eros and Gender	3.0
GPHD8222	Psychology of Religion and Spirituality	3.0
GPHD8452	PTSD, Psychology and Healing Methods	3.0
GPHD9600	Advanced Topics in Transpersonal Theory and Research	1.0
GPHD9825	Research Practicum I	3.0
GPHD9827	Research Practicum II	3.0

Other Electives

Item #	Title	Credits
GPHD6207	Psychology of Cognition and Emotion	3.0
GPHD6210	The Entrepreneurial Mind and Transpersonal Psychology	3.0
GPHD6216	Psychology of Meditation & Mindfulness	3.0
GPHD6305	Critical Hermeneutical Thinking	3.0
GPHD6865	Parapsychology	3.0
GPHD7203	History and Systems of Psychology	3.0
GPHD7219	Psychology of Organizational Change	3.0
GPHD7222	Lucid Dreaming and Waking Life	3.0
GPHD7224	Stages and Applications of Integral Transpersonal Psychology and Psychotherapy	3.0
GPHD7225	Personality Theory and Transpersonal Studies	3.0
GPHD7228	Psychedelics: Transpersonal and Clinical Applications	3.0
GPHD7402	Contemplative Practices: Paths toward Conscious Evolution	3.0
GPHD7506	Creativity Studies and the Imagination	3.0
GPHD7510	Case Study Method	3.0
GPHD7513	Hermeneutic Phenomenological Research Methods	3.0
GPHD7518	Research of Religious and Spiritual Experience	3.0
GPHD7519	Mixed Methods Research	3.0
GPHD7527	Philosophy of Mind	3.0
GPHD7530	Brain, Complexity, and Transpersonal Experience	3.0
GPHD7543	Meditation in Light of Neuroscience	3.0
GPHD7615	Advanced Research in Ecopsychology	3.0
GPHD8210	Psychology of Learning	3.0
GPHD8211	Ethics and Multicultural Issues in Psychology	3.0
GPHD8600	Neuropsychology of Consciousness	3.0
GPHD8990	Advanced Topics in Research: Grounded Theory	3.0
GPHD8996	Neurobiological Foundations of Psychology	3.0

Dissertation Courses (18 Units)

The dissertation is structured as a sequence of six, 3-unit courses. For each quarter's course, students are expected to accomplish a specified number of activities related to dissertation planning, researching, and writing. The courses guide students through the various steps in developing a faculty committee and a research proposal, conducting research and analyzing data, and writing and defending a comprehensive report.

Item #	Title	Credits
DOC9001-1	Dissertation: Committee Formation and Final Proposal	3.0
DOC9002-1	Dissertation: Participant Recruitment and Initial Data Collection	3.0
DOC9003-1	Dissertation: Data Collection and Analysis	3.0
DOC9004-1	Dissertation: Analysis and Writing	3.0
DOC9005-1	Dissertation: Final Draft Review and Defense	3.0
DOC9006	Dissertation: Completion and Approval	3.0

Committee Chairs are required to evaluate and grade each quarterly registration in a Dissertation Course on a Pass/Fail basis and use the course descriptions to gauge appropriate and timely progress toward degree completion. Students may be required to repeat a Dissertation Course if the outcomes for that course have not been attained by the conclusion of the quarter. Only under exceptional circumstances may students appeal for an extension of the dissertation timeline.

Advancement to Candidacy

The Advancement to Candidacy process is designed to enable students to demonstrate their attainment of academic writing and critical thinking skills at a level appropriate for the conduct of independent dissertation research. To complete the Advancement to Candidacy process, students must complete the following milestones:

- GPHD8997 Introduction to Dissertation Proposal Writing ("Mini-Proposal") (4)
- Enroll in DOC9001-1 Dissertation: Committee Formation and Final Proposal (3), during which a meeting with the Committee concerning the Dissertation proposal is held and the proposal is approved

Item #	Title	Credits
GPHD8997	Introduction to Dissertation Proposal Writing ("Mini-Proposal")	4.0
DOC9001-1	Dissertation: Committee Formation and Final Proposal	3.0

Taken together, these six units provide students with the opportunity to identify a Dissertation Chair, assemble a Dissertation Committee, and submit and seek approval of the Dissertation proposal.

See **Enrollment Status** (pages 10–11) for more information on the definition of **Candidacy** and the number of units for full-time enrollment prior to and during Candidacy.

Failure to complete any step of the dissertation process may result in the student being required to complete additional coursework or withdraw from the doctoral program. Students are expected to make continuous academic progress throughout their enrollment at the University, including while completing their dissertation work. The Sofia University Dissertation Office can provide further details about the dissertation process. Students are encouraged to review the Sofia University Dissertation Handbook available from the Dissertation Office early in their studies.

Total Credits	75
Course Sequencing	

Optional Certificates

Certificate in Dream Studies

Sofia University's certificate in Dream Studies is offered in our School of Transpersonal Psychology. It is one of the few Dream Studies certificate programs in an accredited University in the United States. The program has an interdisciplinary orientation, exploring dreams from transpersonal, integral, psychological, scientific, mythological, spiritual, religious, and cross-cultural perspectives. Courses cover subjects that include sleep, dreams, and states of consciousness; ordinary, extraordinary, and anomalous dreams; dreams as they relate to health and creativity; a practicum in dream sharing with individuals and groups; personal mythology and dreamwork; and a final Certificate integration group presentation.

With five courses to complete over four-terms, this 13-credit curriculum is taught by Sofia Faculty. This certificate is designed for students, researchers, counselors, therapists, and anyone with a desire to explore dreams in a way that is applicable to personal development and/or careers in higher education, research, counseling, coaching, writing, and other careers where healing, creativity, imagination, inspiration, and transformation are important.

The Dream Studies certificate can be earned alone or in combination with our Transpersonal Psychology Masters or Doctoral Programs.

The following courses fulfill Dream Studies certification requirements:

Item #	Title	Credits
GPHD6214*	Anomalous States of Consciousness	3.0
GPHD6411*	Psychology of Extraordinary Dreams	3.0
GPHD8202*	Transpersonal Approaches to Dreams and Dreaming	3.0
GPHD7330*	Archetypes, Myths, & Symbols	3.0
GPHD8299*	Certificate Integration/Artistic Presentation	1.0

Certificate in Ecopsychology

Sofia University's certificate in Ecopsychology is offered in our School of Transpersonal Psychology. It is currently only available to students enrolled in the MATP or PhD programs in Transpersonal Psychology. It is available as a stand-alone certificate available to all qualified applicants after WSCUS approval. It is one of the few Ecopsychology certificate programs in an accredited University in the U.S. The program has an interdisciplinary orientation, exploring ecopsychology from the perspective of spirituality, transpersonal psychology, sustainability, culture, sacred ecology, and practical application. Courses cover subjects that include eco-spirituality; ecopsychology; sustainability, culture, and sacred ecology; nature-based programs and wholeness, a practicum, and a final Certificate integration group presentation.

With five courses to complete over four-terms, this 13-credit curriculum is taught by Sofia Faculty. This certificate is designed for students, researchers, counselors, therapists, and anyone with a desire to explore the relationship between human beings and Nature in a way that is applicable to personal development and/or careers in higher education, research, counseling, coaching, writing, and other careers in which protecting Nature and healing the human-Nature bond for the benefit of both is important.

The Ecopsychology certificate can be earned alone or in combination with our Transpersonal Psychology Masters or Doctoral Programs. The following courses fulfill Ecopsychology certification requirements:

Item #	Title	Credits
GPHD8206*	Ecopsychology–Remembering Our Place in The Natural World	3.0
GPHD8207*	Sustainability, Culture, and Sacred Ecology	3.0
GPHD8208*	Nature-Based Programs and Wholeness	3.0
GPHD7805*	Eco-spirituality: Our Spiritual Connection to Gaia	3.0
	GPHD TBD Certificate Integration/Artistic Presentation	1