

## 2009 Psychology Outstanding Student Awards

As in the past few years, the MSCD Psychology Department is sponsoring Outstanding Junior and Senior Scholar Awards and Outstanding Junior and Senior Researcher Awards. Application materials for these awards are due to the Psychology Department secretaries by Friday, April 3rd, 2009. Eligibility, application materials, and selection criteria are explained below. Application forms are attached and can be accessed on the department Web site: <http://www.mscd.edu/~psych/outstandingstudentawards.htm>  
If you have questions, please contact the Dr. Bob Schatz at [schatz@mscd.edu](mailto:schatz@mscd.edu)

**Outstanding Scholar Award** (Please note that the juniors will be judged against other juniors, whereas seniors will be judged against other seniors.)

*Definition:* This award recognizes the student who has shown outstanding academic achievement in the psychology major, as well as in his/her other coursework.

*Eligibility:*

- G.P.A. in MSCD Psychology courses must be at least 3.75
- Overall G.P.A. at MSCD must be at least 3.5
- Must have completed two semesters at MSCD
- Must have completed 12 credit hours in Psychology at MSCD by the application deadline
- Application must be sponsored by an MSCD Psychology instructor (full or part-time)

*Application Materials:*

- Outstanding Scholar Application Form (see attached)
- MSCD transcripts
  - Scholarly Writing Sample Students will submit what they believe to be the best example of their scholarly writing in the field of Psychology. This submission may be a paper that they turned in to complete a class assignment or it may be a piece of scholarly work created specifically for this award. Review of this work will be blind.
    - Writing sample will be evaluated on quality of:
      - review and integration of scholarly literature
      - critical evaluation of scholarly literature
      - theoretical or practical applications of information reviewed
      - overall writing quality

*Criteria for Judgment:*

- Academic Record
  - Psychology G.P.A. and Overall G.P.A.
  - Difficulty of coursework will be factored into judgments
  - Related scholarly activities (e.g., honors, awards, membership in honor societies)
- Writing sample quality

Academic record and writing sample quality will be considered of equal importance during the decision process. Thus, it is possible that a student can win the award even if he/she does not have the highest Psychology and overall G.P.A.s.

**Outstanding Researcher Award** (Please note that the juniors will be judged against other juniors, whereas seniors will be judged against other seniors.)

*Definition:* This award recognizes the student who has shown an outstanding level of commitment to research in the field of Psychology.

*Eligibility:*

- Must have completed 12 credit hours in Psychology at MSCD by the application deadline
- Must have completed 2 semesters at MSCD
- Application must be sponsored by an MSCD Psychology instructor (full or part-time), preferably the research supervisor

*Application Materials:*

- Outstanding Researcher Application Form (see attached)
  - On which the applicant describes his or her involvement in research
- MSCD transcripts (to verify residency requirement only; G.P.A. is not a criterion for judgment)
- An essay in which students 1) describe one of the research projects in which they've been involved and 2) propose a follow-up study. The description of the research project should include a statement of the problem (e.g., why is it an important topic to investigate), a brief literature review, a statement of the hypothesis or research question, a description of the method and findings (only if the data are collected and analyzed). The description of the follow-up study should include a clear explanation of the logical connection between the completed study and the proposed study, as well as a brief description of the method and expected outcome.
  - This essay must be typed in 12 point font and may be no longer than 2 double-spaced pages (excluding reference pages and tables/figures).

*Criteria for Judgment:*

- The extent and nature of involvement in research (below is a non-exhaustive list of items that indicate extent/nature of involvement in research).
  - How long has student been involved in the project(s)?
  - How many projects has student been involved in?
  - Were the projects class assignments?
  - Are the projects independent research projects or is student involved in a faculty member's ongoing work?
  - What is the nature of the involvement? (e.g., running subjects only or did student help to design the project)
  - Is student involved in the Psychology Department's Research Club?
  - Is the student an author on any presentations or publications?
- Essay quality
  - Evaluations of essay quality will be based on writing quality (e.g., coherence, spelling), as well as content. In terms of evaluating essay content, special emphasis will be given to the sections of the essay that describe how the project fits in with existing literature (i.e., the rationale for the study) and the section that proposes follow-up studies.

When evaluating the extent and nature of research involvement, independent/original student research will be given more weight than research involvement that did not involve an independent/original contribution from the student. Further, the extent and nature of research involvement and essay quality (writing and content quality) will be considered of equal importance in the decision process.

## General Considerations that Apply to Both the Outstanding Scholar and Researcher Awards

1. The Outstanding Student Awards Selection Committee will be responsible for choosing the award recipients. For the Outstanding Student Researcher Award, the committee will select finalists and then may solicit verbal recommendations from the students' research supervisor for further clarification.
2. For all awards, recipients will be chosen by a majority vote. Only one award in each category may be given in an academic year.
3. Awards are to be given once per academic year. However, if no candidate meets the criteria for the award, it will not be awarded.
4. There is no limit on the number of awards a single student may earn.
5. Awards will be presented at the luncheon associated at the Psychology Department Awards Ceremony. All applicants will be notified in writing regarding their status prior to the ceremony.
6. A faculty member may sponsor as many students as he/she believes merits the award(s).
7. Students may apply for a single award more than once; however, they may only receive each award one time.
8. December graduates are eligible to apply for awards given during the following Spring semester (e.g., a student graduating in Fall 2008 may apply for the 2009 award).
9. Students will be encouraged to seek feedback on application materials from faculty members.
10. When research activities are evaluated for the Researcher Awards, there are no research methods (e.g., correlational, archival, experimental) that are *de facto* preferred.
11. After the committee makes its decisions known, faculty sponsors may request oral feedback from the chair of the committee on behalf their students. If the faculty sponsor would like, the committee chair will meet with the student and/or the faculty sponsor to provide the feedback.