Interest in psychology at the undergraduate level continues to grow. There have been over 70,000 bachelors’ degrees awarded every year in psychology since 1994–1995 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). In 1978–1980, 42,093 psychology bache-
lor’s degrees were awarded; just 20 years later, that number increased to 74,060, representing a 73.2% increase. This growth is also reflected in the interest in graduate programs of psychology. In the same 20-year time frame, master’s degree awards increased by 31.3% and doctorates awarded increased by 31.2%. When growth at the undergraduate ranks accelerates past the growth at the gradu-
ate level, this is bound to cause some stress for undergraduate students intending to continue their education in psychology.

Eye on Psy Chi is a wonderful resource for undergraduate students thinking about graduate school. Psy Chi has a long tradition of providing tips on how to apply and to make the best of the oppor-
tunity, with a host of recent articles (Arnold & Horigan, 2002; Buskist, 2001; Delam, 1998; Lanumers, 2002; Snidale, 1989; Terre, 2002). Graduate admissions in psychology has its own lit-
erature as well, studying a range of issues including diversity (Hines, 1986; Purdy, Reinhert, & Swartz, 1989). There is also a wealth of information available (in addition to Eye on Psy Chi materials) to help prospective gradu-
ates students contemplate the process (Bositz, Crespy, & Richek, 1997; Keith-Spiegel & Widerman, 2000; Nocrovec, Sayette, & Mayes, 2002; Ware, 1984). Even the odds of acceptance into graduate school is a topic that has been previously addressed (Hovinka, 1985).

This article does not attempt to duplic-
ate the fine work of others. Instead, it is intended as an update for those under-
graduate students interested in graduate school. While many students contem-
plate getting a master’s degree or a PhD, it becomes obvious in the data presented here that the PsyD is becoming a popular option. For additional insights about the PsyD, see Norcross and Castle (2002).

Primary benefit from this article rests in Table 1, where the number of applications, number of applicants pre-

Notes on Reading the Table

The data presented in Table 1 were compiled by the American Psychological Association (APA) Research Office. The data come from APA’s Graduate Study in Psychology (2003), a compendium of American Departments of Psychology offering graduate education. The number of applications, number of applicants accepted, and number newly enrolled are reported verbatim from the APA Research Office; I have added the col-

Psychology may be included in the book, while other, similar departments else-
where may not be included. Third, I only present three degrees: PhD, PsyD, and MAMS. The actual data from APA are more detailed and include other degree options.

Given those limitations, the data in Table 1 are quite valuable, because it is the best data available (to my knowl-
edge) on the relative competitiveness and poplarity of subspecialties in psychol-
ogy. It is important, however, not to overreach with this data. For instance, in 2001–2002 there were 18,392 applica-
tions to PhD clinical programs. This does not mean 18,392 separate students. Many students apply to many schools; in more competitive programs, it is not uncom-
mon for a student to apply to many schools, at both doctoral (PhD, PsyD) and master’s levels.

The data in this table provide indirect measures for what I label competitiveness

1 believe that data in the “number newly enrolled” column can be seen as an index of the popularity of a specialty area. PhD clinical tends to be both com-

petitive and popular, but not all specialty areas share those characteristics. For instance, a developmental PhD program is somewhat popular (843 newly enrolled), but not as competitive (24.8% accepted). These comparisons become more mean-
gingful when looked at across degree programs. For instance, the master’s degree in counseling (N = 2,270) is much more popular than the PhD in counseling (N = 423), but the PhD counseling
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty Area</th>
<th>PhD</th>
<th>PsyD</th>
<th>MA/MS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Applications</td>
<td>Number of Applications Accepted</td>
<td>Percentage of Applications Accepted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical</td>
<td>18,892</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Neuropsychology</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>33.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>23.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling</td>
<td>4800</td>
<td>704</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>605</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>41.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School</td>
<td>1031</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>28.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Health Service Provider Subfields</td>
<td>3049</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>559</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparative</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental</td>
<td>2204</td>
<td>546</td>
<td>24.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>153</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>36.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Experimental</td>
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<td>267</td>
<td>21.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial/Organizational</td>
<td>2631</td>
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<td>15.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>General</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>58.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neuroscience</td>
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<td>169</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personality</td>
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<td>81</td>
<td>17.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Physiological</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>41.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quantitative</td>
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<td>53</td>
<td>46.9</td>
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<tr>
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<td>450</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Research Subfields</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Fields</td>
<td>471</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>43,920</td>
<td>6963</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** The data in this table were compiled by the American Psychological Association (APA) Research Office, based on the 2003 volume of Graduate Study in Psychology. Shaded areas indicate the Departments of Psychology offering degrees in those specialty areas in 2001–2002.

**Observations:**

Most of the value of this article will come from students gaining knowledge about the graduate admissions process, and by examining the competitiveness and popularity of various specialty areas in psychology. However, there are some observations and surprises I would like to point out after examining the information in the table.

The popularity of clinical and counseling psychology regs supreme. With PhDs, clinical is ranked #1 (N = 1,230) and counseling is ranked #2 (N = 412). With PsyDs, clinical is ranked #1 (#1 = 1,218) and counseling is ranked #2 (#N = 2,370) and clinical is ranked #2 (#N = 1,413). Given these trends, undergraduate departments of psychology must take into consideration the interests of students in these areas, particularly as it applies to curriculum matters and internship opportunities.

I was surprised at the popularity of PsyD clinical programs. While the clinical PhD is more competitive (10.5% accepted) than the clinical PsyD (10.8% accepted), both types of programs enrolled...
New Odds for Grad Admissions

- 20 approximately the same numbers of students. (Clinical PhD: 1,218 students.) I was also surprised at the variety of specialty areas in which one could earn a PsyD; while I knew about clinical, counseling, and school psychology, I must admit that the remaining specialty areas were unexpected.

The competitiveness for PhD pro-
grams has also been a bit surprising. While faculty have long talked about “getting into a PhD clinical graduate program is tough; harder than getting into medical school,” there are a number of PhD pro-
grams that are competitive. The thought
remains true. Of the 33,625 applicants to
American medical schools in 2002, 49% were accepted. (Association of American Medical Colleges, 2003)

Using a 20% acceptance rate or lower as a “tough” program to get into, clinical training remains the most difficult (10.5%), but some of the others are surprising: clinical neuropsychology (17.0%), counseling (14.8%), comparative (16.3%), industri-
organizational (15.2%), personality (17.1%), and social (18.0%). It’s not just PhD clinical that is tough anymore! And, if you have an interest in comparative, psychological, psychobiology, or psycholinguistics, your only options are to pursue a PhD.

Do not be discouraged by this infor-
mation. Undergraduate students desiring an advanced degree in psychology have many options. The master's degree can be used as a stepping stone to the doctorate. Also, for many specialty areas, the master's degree is the entry degree for professionals in that field (e.g., counsel-
going, school, industrial/organizational). What matters more is that you apply to the right place. The master's degree programs are generally much more manageable in many cases.

What should students and faculty take from this information? I believe that knowledge is power, and that students should know their odds when considering future opportunities.

Faculty members have an obligation to deliver accurate informa-
tion in a timely manner, and it has been previously noted that changes in graduate admissions can affect undergraduate instruction. As a result, some students may want to consider this information as one factor that influences their overall deci-
sion making. In the end, faculty should mentor and assist students in reaching their own goals, whatever those goals may be.

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Regional Faculty Advisor Awards

- 26 gratitude for this award," to the Lord, the students who took the initiative to submit her name, to the National Psi Chi Office, and to the Academy (I just can’t go without humor)!

Phil D. Waren, PhD, is professor and chair of psychology at Missouri Western State College. He received his BA at the University of Missouri-Columbia and his MA and PhD (1980) in physiological psychology from Carleton University in Ottawa, Canada. Except for a year as a visiting research associate in the Department of Neurology, University of Missouri School of Medicine, he has been at Missouri Western since 1980.

Dr. Waren established the MSWC Psi Chi chapter in 1989 and has been its faculty advisor since 1989. He has also served Psi Chi as a member of the Midwest Region Steering Committee, as a faculty consultant, and is currently a contributing editor for the Psi Chi Journal of Undergraduate Research.

Dr. Waren has received several teaching awards, including the Missouri Governor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching, the Burlington Northern Foundation Faculty Achievement Award. He is a frequent contributor to teaching conferences and routinely involves his students in his research on the neuropsy-
chology of learning and memory. He has authored 25 publications or professional conference presentations with undergraduate students and has spon-
sored more than 100 papers at Psi Chi and other student conferences.

Akhil Wang (Psi Chi Southern Regional Vice-President, University of Central Florida), presents Christina S. Smiti, Charleston Southern University (SC), with the 2004 Psi Chi Southwestern Regional Faculty Advisor Award