

GRADUATE DEGREE REGULATIONS  
DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

The Department of Psychology has prepared this document to help its graduate students understand its rules, policies, and expectations. The following regulations are applicable to all graduate students in the Department of Psychology and supplement those in the current Graduate School and Faculty Handbook and in the Graduate School Catalog. This revision supersedes all previous versions of the Departmental Regulations. You may petition the Graduate Studies Committee, through your advisor or supervisory committee chairperson, to postpone or waive any departmental regulation that you believe would hinder your progress. In general, however, such deviations are discouraged.

Your attention is also drawn to the following statements in the current Graduate Catalog: "It is the responsibility of the graduate student to become informed and to observe all regulations and procedures required by the program the student is pursuing...Ignorance of a rule does not constitute a basis for waiving that rule."

In no case will a regulation be waived or an exception granted because a student pleads ignorance of the regulation or asserts that he/she was not informed of it by his/her advisor or other authority.

## I. GENERAL INFORMATION

The Department of Psychology consists of six areas (see section II.1). Each area has a training coordinator who may also serve as Graduate Advisor (see below). Each area, through its coordinator, implements an appropriate curriculum and requirements for graduate students in that area.

In addition, a department-wide Graduate Coordinator oversees the quality and implementation of the entire graduate program and ensures compliance with college and university policies. The Graduate Studies Committee consists of the Graduate Coordinator and two other appointed faculty members, and they serve to assist and advise the Graduate Coordinator. The recommendations of these persons are in turn advisory to the Chair of the Department.

### 1. Graduate Advisor.

Upon admission to the graduate program you will be assigned a faculty advisor who is responsible for facilitating your initial registration and who serves as a resource person until you appoint your supervisory committee.

You should formally appoint this committee (see Sections III-2 and IV-2) no later than the end of your second semester or before you will have acquired greater than or equal to 24 credits, in order to retain good standing in the Graduate School. Committee appointment forms are available from the Graduate Records Secretary.

### 2. Stipends. Most assistantships and some fellowships are awarded on a 9-month basis.

In most cases, you must apply for a special award to acquire a summer semester stipend. Applications for financial assistance should be made to your Area Coordinator who will direct the materials to the appropriate committee for consideration. Fellowships are usually awarded by extra-departmental committees; traineeships and departmental assistantships are awarded by committees representing the various areas of training within the department, and research assistantships are allocated by principal investigators of research grants. Graduate students are eligible for up to 4 years of Departmental OPS (Teaching Assistantship) funding. This funding can occur over the course of no more than six years in the program. In no case will you be eligible for support using Departmental OPS (Teaching Assistantships) beyond your sixth year, except by

successful petition to the Graduate Studies Committee. No student will be given responsibility as a Graduate Instructor until he or she has completed the Masters degree or its equivalent. Students receiving assistantships through the department are discouraged from obtaining additional outside employment.

The demands imposed by duties related to a stipend plus those imposed by research and classroom activities make it unlikely that satisfactory progress can be made if additional obligations are incurred. If a student's Committee (see Sections III-2 and IV-2) determines that appropriate progress is not being made or would not be made because of conflicts arising from additional employment, the Committee may recommend termination of a stipend, thereby freeing the student from the time demands associated with an assistantship.

### 3. Work-Related Experience.

All graduate students are required to do departmental research throughout their graduate careers. One or more faculty members will direct all research, teaching or related activities. Generally, but not always, this will be the Committee Chairperson or advisor.

### 4. Ethical Conduct.

You should acquaint yourself immediately with the APA Ethical Principles of Psychologists (2001) concerning your responsibility to the public, conduct of research, dissemination of information, and professional relationships.

All graduate students are required to conduct themselves in accord with APA Ethical Principles. Also, you should not engage in any professional activity except under immediate supervision in a graduate course in which you are formally registered or under the direct supervision of your chairperson or a qualified person designated by your chairperson. APA Ethical Principles and Federal regulations governing the use of human and animal subjects are binding on all psychology graduate students.

5. Changing Area of Specialization. If you desire to change from one area of specialization to another, submit a written request to the Area Coordinator of the latter area for written approval. Approval will be required from the faculty in both areas. The Area Coordinator in the new area will coordinate all details of the transfer with the Graduate Coordinator.

### 6. The Doctoral Co-Major.

Students admitted into one graduate program in psychology occasionally desire to develop a co-major with another training program.

Although such co-majors are possible, they are approved only in very special cases. In order to develop a co-major, the approval of the faculty of the original area and the admissions committee of the new area must be obtained.

Once these approvals are obtained, the Area Coordinators appropriate to the two areas will coordinate the student's program until co-chairpersons are appointed for the student's supervisory committee. The Graduate Coordinator will review all arrangements and agreements.

7. Independent Studies Courses. Independent study courses are PSY 6905 (Individual work), PSY 6910 (Supervised Research), PSY 6971 (Master's Thesis), PSY 7979 (Advanced Research) and PSY 7980 (Doctoral Dissertation). PSY 6910 is limited to 5 credits. PSY 7979 may be taken (no limit on credits) once a student has completed the Masters Degree, or, in the case of a student who opts not to obtain a Masters Degree, as soon as a Ph.D. Committee has been established. PSY 7980 (Doctoral Dissertation) may be taken only after admission to candidacy for the Ph.D.

You may enroll in PSY 6905 after preparing a program to study (with an appropriately expert faculty

member) a topic not covered by established courses. PSY 6905 application forms, available from the Graduate Records Secretary, must be completed, approved by the supervising faculty member and the Graduate Coordinator, then returned to the Graduate Records Secretary who will then provide you the section number.

PSY 6905 may not be used for preliminary work on the Master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, and a student is limited to 10 credits of PSY 6905.

#### 8. Evaluation.

Your progress in your program and your promise as a psychologist are evaluated continuously by the area faculty. Your evaluation is based on the progress you make towards your degree. This progress is gauged in relation to the quality of your academic work, your assigned instructional and research contributions and accomplishments, and your professional and ethical conduct. At the end of each year you will receive formal written feedback by the faculty in your area concerning your progress and continuation in the program.

In addition, certain minimum standards of scholarship are required. A student who earns two unsatisfactory grades (C+, C, D+, D, E, U, X, or an "I" that remains on the record for more than one term) will have his/her records referred to the Graduate Studies Committee which will determine if the student should be allowed to continue in the program. Should the committee rule that a student is to be dropped from the program, the decision may be appealed to the Policy and Planning Committee of the Department. Under no circumstances will students be permitted to continue with three unsatisfactory grades. (Note: A grade of C+ or lower in any required course must be removed by repeating the course or by presenting satisfactory evidence to the area in which the course was taken that at least minimum information necessary to earn a B in the course has been acquired).

Violations of ethical conduct by graduate students will be evaluated by the Graduate Studies Committee.

If, in the judgment of the committee, unethical behavior is of a sufficiently serious nature as to compromise a graduate student's promise as a psychologist, a student can be dropped from the program.

Examples of such serious violations are felony convictions or gross violations of the APA ethical code or Federal guidelines.

The appeal process is the same as in the case of failure to meet minimum standards of scholarship.

#### 9. Continuous Enrollment.

The Department requires continuous enrollment (registration for two of every three semesters).

Failure to maintain this continuity results in the student being dismissed from the program.

Reapplication through regular admission channels, where the student is treated as a new applicant, is then required for readmission.

However, a student may request a leave of absence for a period lasting no longer than one year.

These requests, which must be approved by the Area Coordinator and the Graduate Coordinator, are usually granted if the student is in good standing and has good and sufficient reasons for the leave of absence. At the end of the leave, reentry into the program is automatic.

#### 10. Exceptional Cases.

In exceptional cases, the Graduate Studies Committee may act in lieu of an Area of the Department in the admission of a graduate student and the administration of a student's program. The following conditions would have to be met in these cases: (1) the scholarly interests of the student would not fall within one of the existing areas of the department, (2) the student's interests would be compatible with the supervisory capacities of department graduate faculty, and (3) the Graduate Studies

Committee would approve a preliminary program of study, developed by the prospective student, in conjunction with a member of the department graduate faculty.

## II. THE CORE PROGRAM

### 1.

The core program provides for training in the areas of behavior analysis, behavioral neuroscience, cognitive and sensory processes, developmental psychology, social psychology and history of psychology.

Two credits in three of the following courses, excluding one's own content area, (DEP 6099, EAB 6099, EXP 6099, PSB 6099, PSY 6608, and SOP 6099) are required. Individual areas may require specific courses or additional courses. Each of these courses can also be taken for three credits. Consult with your advisor to determine the number of credits you should take in each course. Three of these courses will be offered in the fall term, and three in the spring term. Students are encouraged, but not required to complete the core program in the first year of graduate school. Students who have prior adequate preparation in any of these courses, as determined by the appropriate faculty, may be declared exempt from taking that specific course. Areas may designate more advanced alternate courses that may be taken to satisfy this requirement.

A student must complete each of the courses in the core program with a grade of B or better. Failure to earn a grade of B or better will result in the student having to take the course again, or otherwise demonstrate a "B"-level of proficiency in the course content to the satisfaction of the course instructor. Failure to earn a B or better a second time is evidence of unsatisfactory scholarship, and the student's record will be forwarded to the Graduate Studies Committee which will determine whether the student will be allowed to continue in the program.

### 2. Statistics.

The core program requires completion of six hours of graduate statistics, but you may petition the appropriate statistics instructor for a waiver of this requirement if you have already had courses in this area. Approved petitions will be forwarded to the Graduate Coordinator. It is your responsibility to determine that a copy of the approved waiver is in your folder in the Psychology Office.

## III. MASTER OF SCIENCES DEGREE

### 1. Master's Degree Option.

You may elect to proceed directly to the Ph.D. degree or take a Master's degree as part of your preparation for the doctorate.

If you elect the latter, you may choose the MS degree with thesis or the non-thesis MS. (NOTE: The major difference between the options is the way research competency is demonstrated. ALL STUDENTS MUST PRESENT AN ACCEPTABLE WRITTEN REPORT OF ORIGINAL RESEARCH, which will usually entail empirical studies.)

2. Master's Degree Supervisory Committee. If you elect to take the MS degree, you must arrange for the appointment of a Supervisory Committee no later than the end of your second semester in residence or before you will have acquired greater than or equal to 24 credits in order to maintain good standing in the Graduate School. This committee is the official body of the faculty designated by the Graduate School to plan your program, guide and evaluate your progress and direct your research.

It consists of at least two members of the Graduate Faculty and either a faculty member from another department or a third member of the psychology faculty whose research area of specialization is different from yours.

The chairperson of this committee need not be in the area of your Ph.D. specialization.

To form a committee, you must select a member of the Psychology Graduate Faculty who agrees to serve as chairperson.

Together you recommend other members for approval by the appropriate Area Coordinator, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Chairperson. The Committee must have at least one member who is on a full-time appointment in the Department of Psychology.

Changes in membership of the committee may be made if necessary (e.g., you change areas of interest or a member leaves the university), but proposed changes will usually be approved by the Graduate Coordinator only with the prior approval of members of the original committee. Note that the Master's Supervisory Committee is automatically terminated with the awarding of the Master's Degree.

### 3. Master's Degree with Thesis.

The general requirements for this degree are stated in the Graduate Catalog. In addition, the department requires students electing this option to submit an abstract of a formal research proposal to the Supervisory Committee for approval. You must complete successfully at least 6 credits of PSY 6971.

You must complete the core program prior to the date the MS degree is to be awarded and be registered for 3 credits of PSY 6971 in your final term.

The oral examination will be conducted by the Supervisory Committee on the thesis and other aspects of your program.

All faculty members are invited to participate in every oral examination, and student observers are welcome at the option of the candidate and the committee chairperson. The oral examination ordinarily will take place during the fall or spring semester; this exam will be given during the summer only with the consent of all members of the supervisory committee.

All thesis and dissertation research must be approved by the University Institutional Review Board (University Human Subjects Committee) or by the University Animal Care Committee before any subjects (including pilot subjects) are tested. Approval of a project by the thesis or doctoral committee in no way substitutes for such approval of these University Committees. Students who violate this regulation will be solely liable for any legal action stemming from their research activities.

4. Master's Degree Without Thesis. The requirements for the non-thesis master's degree differ from the thesis degree in that:

a.

thirty two hours of regular coursework (excluding courses for which grades of S or U are given) must be completed successfully.

During the term you expect your degree, you must be enrolled for 3 credits of course work that can be counted toward your graduate program (S/U credits are excluded).

b.

you must have passed an oral examination not more than six months prior to the date the degree is awarded.

c. in lieu of a thesis, submit to the Supervisory Committee either.

(1) a research paper for which you were the sole or senior author and which appeared in a refereed professional journal, or

(2) a copy of a research manuscript for which you are the senior or sole author and which has been accepted for publication in a refereed professional journal.

5. Summary of the Major Requirements For the Master's Degree.

- a. Appoint a Supervisory Committee
- b. Complete core program
- c. Complete the statistics requirement
- d.

Submit thesis research proposal or proposal to satisfy the research requirement for the non-thesis degree to Supervisory Committee and Psychology office

- e. Submit acceptable thesis or research paper to Supervisory Committee.
- f. Pass oral examination for the Master's Degree
- g. Complete the departmental form: "Verification of Completion of Requirements for Graduate Degree" available from the Graduate Records Secretary.

#### IV. DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

1. Doctoral Specialization.

You are expected to work towards the Ph.D. degree whether or not you elect to take the Master's Degree as part of your training.

The Ph.D. program is designed to encourage specialization of skills and competencies within one of several broad areas:

behavior analysis, behavioral neuroscience, cognitive and sensory processes, counseling, developmental, and social.

2. Ph.D. Supervisory Committee.

This committee consists of at least four (4) members. Your Chair and at least two other members must hold Graduate Faculty Status in the Department of Psychology. In addition, the composition of the committee must be as follows:

Chair, from your area of study; second member from your area of study; third member from within the Department of Psychology but outside of your area; fourth member from outside the Department of Psychology. In order to maintain your good standing in the Graduate School, this committee must be appointed the semester following completion of the Master's program or, if not pursuing a Master's degree, within two semesters after entering the department for the first time as a graduate student.

To appoint the committee, select a member of the Graduate Faculty in your area who is willing to chair the committee.

Together you recommend the other members, solicit their agreement to serve, and present the proposed committee to your Area Coordinator, the Graduate Coordinator, and the Department Chairperson for approval. Appropriate forms are obtainable from the Graduate Records Secretary. The committee may be changed, if necessary, with the approval of the members of the original committee and the Graduate Coordinator. The Graduate School does not permit changes in your supervisory committee during the semester in which you receive your degree, except by petition.

### 3. Research Requirement.

If you commence work on the Ph.D. without taking the Master's degree, you are required to demonstrate research competence at least equivalent to the competency required to complete an acceptable Master's thesis. This competence may be established by submitting:

- a. a paper for which you were the sole or senior author which has been published in a refereed professional journal, or
- b. the manuscript for which you were the sole or senior author which your Ph.D. committee judges as acceptable evidence of research competency.

The research requirement must be satisfied prior to your taking the qualifying examination.

### 4. Distribution Requirement.

In order to insure breadth to your training, you are required to complete a minimum of 12 credits outside your area of concentration in psychology. Courses in the core sequence and courses required of all students in your area may not be used to satisfy this requirement.

To fulfill this requirement you may complete any combination of 12 credits from within or outside the department and outside your area of specialization, subject to the approval of your Ph.D. committee.

5. Ph.D. Qualifying Examination. The basis of your qualifying examination will be the program of study you submit to your committee at least 90 days prior to the examination. The program of study consists of a detailed statement of your unique professional goals and of the preparation you have received and need to receive in order to enable you to reach these goals. It includes specified content areas (e.g., topics, concepts, references) that you will be accountable for in your qualifying examinations. This content is to be determined jointly by you, the faculty of your graduate training area, and your supervisory committee. Your supervisory committee must approve a document prepared by you that describes this jointly-determined content.

The qualifying examination, which is both written and oral, is administered and evaluated by your Ph.D. Committee.

You should schedule the examination by the time you have earned 80 credit hours and at least two semesters prior to the date of your graduation. The examination is concerned with the content and associated skills in your area of specialization, background information, skills required for dissertation research, and general competence. Upon the recommendation of the Ph.D. Committee, an "area" paper may constitute the written portion of the qualifying examination. The qualifying exam ordinarily will take place during the fall or spring semester; this exam will be given during the summer only with the consent of all members of the supervisory committee.

### 6. Doctoral Dissertation. The dissertation is completed in your area of specialization.

Otherwise, the departmental regulations concerning the dissertation proposal and defense are identical to those for the Master's described in III-3 above. The Doctoral dissertation must be an original, scholarly contribution to the discipline of Psychology. Most will entail empirical studies. Ph.D. candidates must complete a minimum of 12 credits of PSY 7980 and be registered for 3 credits of PSY 7980 during the final term.

The final oral defense of the dissertation is scheduled at least two weeks after the dissertation abstract are deposited with the Graduate Records Secretary. The final defense ordinarily will take place during the fall or spring semester; this defense will be given during the summer only with the

consent of all members of the supervisory committee.

7. Practicum and Internship.

Practicum and internship assignments are administered through the Director of Training in Counseling Psychology.

Internship credit will not be allowed before admission to candidacy for the Ph.D.

8. Summary of the Major Requirements for the Ph.D. Degree.

- a. Appoint Ph.D. Supervisory Committee
- b. Satisfy core requirements and either Master's Degree or research requirement.
- c. Submit program of study to Ph.D. Committee for approval
- d. Complete distribution requirements
- e. Submit dissertation proposal to Ph.D. Committee for approval
- f. Pass Ph.D. qualifying examination
- g. Apply for admission to candidacy
- h. Pass oral defense of completed dissertation
- i. Complete internship, if applicable
- j. Complete the departmental form: "Verification of Completion of Requirements for Graduate Degree"

V. AREA REQUIREMENTS

You are advised that each of the areas of training has additional or special requirements for its students.

It is your responsibility to obtain these supplemental requirements from your Area Coordinator.

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