GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK: 2007-2008

Department of Psychology
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University

David A. Washburn, Chair
Marise B. Parent, Director of Graduate Studies
Kristy Hill, Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies
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INTRODUCTION

The Graduate Program Handbook describes requirements for earning advanced degrees in the Department of Psychology, College of Arts and Sciences, Georgia State University. It gives departmental and program curricula along with departmental policies and procedures that govern graduate students. Graduate students in the department are expected to be familiar with all of the requirements, policies, and procedures described herein.

In addition to the requirements and policies described here, students are also responsible for knowing about and complying with the policies and requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences as described in the Graduate Catalog.

In general, students must adhere to the course and other requirements in effect when they enroll, as described in the edition of the Graduate Program Handbook that corresponds to the year they entered. However, students may elect to be governed by a later edition of the handbook. To do so, they should submit a request in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies.
THE CURRICULUM

Coursework and other requirements specified by both the department and the individual programs are described in this section of the handbook.

DEPARTMENTAL CORE CURRICULUM

All students are expected to complete the departmental core curriculum within two years of entering the program. The departmental core consists of five courses. All students take the following four courses:

8410 Psychological Research Statistics I
8420 Psychological Research Statistics II
8490 Scientific and Professional Ethics in Psychology
8500 History of Psychology

Additionally, students are also required to take at least one methodology course as specified by their program.

Students who have taken similar graduate courses previously and for that reason believe that any of these required courses should be waived should make such requests in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies during their first semester of study. (See Waiving Required Courses later in this handbook.)
CLINICAL CURRICULUM

The following clinical and clinically-related course work and activities constitute the course of study for all students in the Clinical Program. Clinical students also complete all departmental and college requirements. Additional requirements for students enrolled in both the Clinical and either the Community or the Neuropsychology and Behavioral Neuroscience Program are described under those programs.

**Required General Psychology Courses**

**Biological Bases of Behavior:**
8610 Behavioral Neuroscience

**Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior:**
8540 Advanced Cognitive Psychology

**Social Bases of Behavior (one of the following):**
8510 Advanced Social Psychology
8200 Introduction to Community Psychology

**Human Development (one of the following):**
8551 Cognitive, Perceptual and Linguistic Development
8552 Social and Emotional Development
8662 Adolescent Development

**Required Clinical Courses**
8020 Assessment I
8030 Assessment II
8050 Diversity Issues in Clinical Psychology
8650 Psychopathology
8670 Therapy I
8680 Therapy II

**Consulting and Supervision (one of the following):**
8260 Clinical and Community Consultation
9240 Clinical Supervision

**Methodology (one of the following):**
8010 Research Methods in Psychology
8014 Research Methods in Community and Applied Social Psychology

**Clinical Electives (two of the following):**
8220 Community Intervention and Social Change
8230 Program Evaluation
8280 Psychology and Public Policy
8620 Introduction to Clinical Neuropsychology
8630 Developmental Neuropsychology
8640 Psychopharmacology
9130 Seminar in Advanced Approaches to Assessment *
9140  Neuropsychological Assessment
9230  Seminar in Advanced Approaches to Psychological Interventions*
* may be taken more than once if topic is different

**Supervised Clinical Work**

Clinical students must take a minimum of 30 credit hours of supervised clinical experiences distributed among the following practicum courses:

9950C Assessment (minimum of 9 credit hours)
9950E Psychotherapy
9950M Specialized Skills

In addition, all clinical students must register for 1 hour of Apprenticeship (9950A) fall and spring semesters of their first year in the program. This experience places first year students in clinical supervision with advanced students who are doing assessment and therapy.

Clinical students will complete a sufficient variety of practicum experiences to ensure a breadth of training in assessment and intervention. Students are expected to enroll in clinical practica every semester they are active in the program. Students will maintain a record of their activities for inclusion in their annual reports and internship applications using the spreadsheet provided to them by the Director of Clinical Training.

Students will enroll for 3 hours of Psychotherapy (9950E) or Specialized Skills (9950M) each semester they provide intervention services to clients under the supervision of one supervisor. Students will also enroll in a minimum of three credit hours of Assessment (9950C) or Specialized Skills (9950M) each semester they provide assessment services. Students will enroll for additional hours of credit based upon the services to be provided as determined by the supervisor. It is expected that advanced students will continue to carry at least one client in the Psychology Clinic throughout their time in the program.

Students must complete two semesters of assessment practica on-campus under the supervision of members of the clinical program faculty or staff before they may enroll in assessment practica for work conducted off-campus and/or under the supervision of clinicians who are not members of the clinical program faculty. Similarly, students must complete two semesters of intervention practica on-campus under the supervision of members of the clinical program faculty or staff before they may enroll in intervention practica for work conducted off-campus and/or under the supervision of clinicians who are not members of the clinical program faculty. The Psychology Clinic and the Regents Center for Learning Disorders are examples of on-campus practicum sites.

**Professional Development**

Students will engage in at least two of the following three sets of activities to foster their professional development and strengthen their professional identity. Advisors will assist students in meeting these requirements and certify that they have been satisfied. Students should ensure that certification is recorded in students' clinical files.
1. Author or co-author of a presentation at a state, regional, or national meeting.
2. Author or co-author an article or chapter in a psychological journal or book.
3. Prepare or assist faculty in preparing a proposal for extramural funds.

**Pre-Doctoral Clinical Internship**

Clinical students are required to complete a 2000 hour one-year pre-doctoral internship in accordance with standards of the Education and Training Board of the American Psychological Association. Generally, credit for the clinical internship will be granted only for training completed within APA-approved centers. Students who find it necessary because of personal circumstances to seek an internship in a non-APA-approved center must petition the clinical faculty for approval.

Students wishing to apply for internship should meet with their clinical advisor and with the Director of Clinical Training no later than April 1 of the year preceding the internship appointment to review their readiness to begin the application process. Approval to apply for internship will be based on a determination of the student’s academic and clinical competence, a history of ethical and professional behavior, and satisfactory progress on the dissertation. Before being permitted to apply for internship students must have their dissertation proposal accepted and be making acceptable progress toward completion of the research. All other program requirements must also be completed. The clinical advisor will present the student to the Clinical Committee for approval. The Director of Clinical Training will inform the student of the committee’s decision.

The typical Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) internship/residency setting requires applicants to have between 800 and 1000 hours of practicum work. The practicum work includes direct client contact during the therapy/assessment session itself and supervision activities, as well as preparation for the therapy/assessment session and preparation of reports. This program will use the APPIC internship/residency formula to guide the distribution of time among preparation, supervision, and client contact for its practicum work. The APPIC formula states that approximately 25% of supervised clinical work hours should consist of direct client contact, with the remaining 75% consisting of related supervision and preparation activities. Students preparing themselves for the typical internship/residency should therefore accumulate 200-250 hours of direct client contact plus 600 to 750 hours of related activities. However, some students may choose to apply only to internships/residencies that require less than 800 hours of practicum work. Other students may find it possible to substitute other qualifications and accomplishments, such as appropriately supervised intervention research or employment involving the provision of clinical services, for some of the hours of practicum work required by the typical APPIC program. Students are therefore encouraged to track carefully their clinical activities so that they accumulate the number of clinical, supervision, and preparation hours necessary to meet their professional goals.
COMMUNITY CURRICULUM

Students in the Community Psychology Program must meet all departmental and college requirements. Students who plan to seek licensure should also take four courses that satisfy the Clinical Program’s general psychology course requirement.

Courses Required for Community Students

8060 Issues of Human Diversity in Community Psychology
8014 Research Methods in Community Psychology
8200 Introduction to Community Psychology (plus one hour of Psyc 9910, Adv. Directed Readings)
8220 Community Interventions and Social Change
8230 Program Evaluation
8430 Psychological Statistics III or 9900 Qualitative Methods
9900 Prevention
9940B Specialized Seminar in Psychology (3 x 1)
9960C Practicum in Community Psychology (9 hours)

Two of the following:
8240 Psychology and Public Policy
8260 Clinical and Community Psychological Consultation
9900 Ecological Theory and Assessment
9900 Community Organizing

Courses Required for Joint Clinical and Community Students

8014 Research Methods in Community Psychology
8200 Introduction to Community Psychology
8220 Community Interventions and Social Change
8230 Program Evaluation
9900 Prevention
9940B Specialized Seminar in Psychology (3 x 1)
9960C Practicum in Community Psychology (9 hours)

Two of the following:
8240 Psychology and Public Policy
8260 Clinical and Community Psychological Consultation
9900 Ecological Theory and Assessment
9900 Community Organizing

Note. In addition, joint students satisfy all Clinical Program requirements. They will probably take 8260 because that course also satisfies Clinical Program requirements. For joint students, 8060 is satisfied with 8050 and 9960C may be satisfied with related clinical practica, upon approval from the Community faculty.
DEVELOPMENTAL CURRICULUM

Students in the Developmental Psychology Program must meet all departmental and college requirements.

Courses Required for Developmental Students

8012 Developmental Methods
8430 Psychological Statistics III
8551 Cognitive, Perceptual and Linguistic Development
8552 Social and Emotional Development
9940A Developmental Seminar.

There are no other required courses as such. Instead, in consultation with their advisor, students propose a course of study to the Developmental Program faculty, typically during their first semester in the program. They specify the courses they plan to take and provide a rationale for their choice. Once approved by the program faculty, this becomes a binding course of study for the student, although requests for subsequent modifications can be made. Courses that might be specified include, but are not limited to:

6130 Sensation and Perception
6400 Psychology of the Atypical Child
8060 Issues of Human Diversity in Psychology
8200 Introduction to Community Psychology
8510 Advanced Social Psychology
8540 Advanced Cognitive Psychology
8610 Behavioral Neuroscience
8662 Adolescence
9900 Special Topics in Developmental Psychology
9660 Infancy
COMM 6400 Development of Communication and Language

Minor in Developmental Psychology

A minor in developmental psychology consists of 12 semester hours of coursework that has been approved by the Developmental Program faculty. Students apply to the Developmental Program faculty for the minor either before or after taking either of the two foundation developmental courses (8551 Cognitive and Linguistic Developmental, 8552 Social and Emotional Development) and under most circumstances before taking other coursework for the minor. For example, a minor might consist of one or both of the foundation courses (i.e., Cognitive and Linguistic Development, Social and Emotional Development), Developmental Methods, or any of the content courses appropriate for developmental psychology offered in the department.
NBN CURRICULUM

All students in the Neuropsychology and Behavioral Neuroscience Program must fulfill all requirements of the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Psychology. In addition to course work, practica, and other academic/research pursuits available at the university, students are encouraged to take advantage of research and professional experiences, conferences, workshops and seminars related to neuropsychology and behavioral neurosciences nation- and world-wide.

Courses Required for NBN Students
(Track 2: Specialization in Behavioral Neuroscience)

8010  Research Methods in Psychology
8615  Functional Human Neuroanatomy
8616  Neurobiology I: Cellular Neurobiology
8617  Neurobiology II: Integrative Neurobiology
8618  Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience
8620  Introduction to Clinical Neuropsychology

In addition, each Track 2 student proposes an integrated plan of study that meets all departmental requirements and provides a clear focus that can be met by the faculty in the program and department. This plan of study can include courses listed in Track 1 below, those courses listed as program electives below (that can be taken as Psyc 9920 – Advanced Directed Readings), and additional courses available in other departments of the college.

Examples of other relevant courses include:
Physiological Basis of Motivated Behaviors
Behavioral Endocrinology
Mammalian Reproduction: An Ecological Perspective
Neural and Humoral Basis of Feeding
Circadian Rhythms
Reproduction
Aggression, Hormones, and Behavior
Neurobiology of Learning and Memory
Psychopharmacology
Survival Skills in Academia

Courses Required for Joint Clinical and NBN Students
(Track 1: Specialization in Clinical Neuropsychology)

8010  Research Methods in Psychology
8610  Behavioral Neuroscience or 8618 Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience
8615  Functional Human Neuroanatomy
8620  Introduction to Clinical Neuropsychology
9140  Neuropsychological Assessment
9900  Topics in Cognitive Neuroscience
9900  Efficacy of Neuropsychological Intervention
9950C  Assessment (minimum 9 credit hours, on-campus)
9950E  Psychotherapy (minimum 12 credit hours)
9950M  Practicum: Specialized Skills (minimum 6 credit hours advanced assessment
    and/or intervention, and minimum 3 credit hours of Assessment Supervision)

Note. In addition, joint students satisfy all Clinical Program requirements (which includes
    8610). This course of study is consistent with the guidelines proposed by the Houston
    Conference on Specialty Education and Training in Clinical Neuropsychology.

**Elective Courses for NBN or Joint Clinical/NBN Students**

6130  Sensation and Perception
6140  Introduction to Psychophysiology
8540  Advanced Cognitive Psychology
8630  Developmental Neuropsychology
9900  Seminar: Professional Development
SOCIAL/COGNITIVE CURRICULUM

Students in the Social/Cognitive Psychology Program must meet all departmental and college requirements.

Courses Required for Social/Cognitive Students

8010 Research Methods in Psychology (or another methods course endorsed by one’s advisor
8430 Psychological Statistics III
8510 Advanced Social Psychology
8540 Advanced Cognitive Psychology

One of the following:
6140 Introduction to Psychophysiology
8610 Behavioral Neuroscience

In addition, each student must complete:

Two Special Topics courses in Social Psychology
Two Special Topics courses in Cognitive Psychology

Courses for Primary and Secondary Emphases

By the end of the first semester, each student must select a primary emphasis, with 9 additional hours required from the list of courses below. The other topic becomes the student’s secondary emphasis by default.

For primary emphasis in social:
8060 Issues of Human Diversity in Psychology
8200 Introduction to Community Psychology
8552 Social and Emotional Development
9900 Special Topics in Social Psychology (in addition to the two required courses noted above; may be repeated)

For primary emphasis in cognitive:
6130 Sensation and Perception
8551 Social and Emotional Development
8560 Animal Learning and Cognition
9900 Special Topics in Cognitive Psychology (in addition to the two required courses noted above; may be repeated)

Elective Courses

Four are required. The 12 elective hours come from courses above or from other courses inside or outside the department. Special topics courses and research hours may be repeated as elective hours.
Students are expected to be involved in research throughout their graduate training. Their research projects include theses, dissertations, and other activities. Students are encouraged to initiate projects, carry them through to completion, and present their work at professional meetings and in journal articles. In addition, they are expected to attend departmental colloquia and meetings of the Hard Data Café, a biweekly Social/Cognitive research colloquium.

**Social/Cognitive Minor**

The Social/Cognitive program offers a minor that consists of 12 semester hours of coursework. These hours include four required courses – Advanced Social Psychology, Advanced Cognitive Psychology, Special Topics in Social Psychology, and Special Topics in Cognitive Psychology. Students from other program areas should apply to the Social/Cognitive program for minor status, either before or after taking one of the required courses.
WAIVING REQUIRED COURSES

The preceding sections detailed courses required by the departmental core or by specific programs. However, students may occasionally petition that a required course be waived in their case.

**Departmental Core Courses**

Requests that a departmental core course be waived are made in writing to the Director of Graduate Studies. Typically such requests are made when a student has taken a similar graduate course elsewhere. Students must make such requests in writing during their first semester of graduate study at GSU and should supply syllabi and other relevant information concerning the course they took previously. The Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with faculty members who teach similar courses, then decides whether such requests should be granted.

**Courses Required by Programs**

Requests that courses required by the various programs be waived are made to the chair of the appropriate program. Typically such requests are made when a student has taken a similar graduate course elsewhere or has otherwise demonstrated competence, or thinks that a course other than one that satisfies a program requirement would better serve his or her education. As a general rule, students should make such requests during their first semester of graduate study at GSU and should supply any information or documentation relevant to their request. If the request is granted, the chair of the program should send a memo to the Director of Graduate Studies detailing which requirements have been waived for that student.
**DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

All students in the program are considered doctoral students because only students who plan to earn the PhD are admitted. This section of the handbook describes requirements for the PhD, including requirements for the Master of Arts and the General Examination and, for clinical students, the pre-doctoral internship, all of which are prerequisites for the PhD.

**MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE**

**Master’s Coursework**

For the MA degree students must complete a minimum of 33 semester hours of graduate coursework, which includes
- 15 semester hours of departmental core courses,
- 12 semester hours of other psychology courses, and
- 6 semester hours of Master’s Thesis Research (Psyc 8999).

**Master’s Thesis and Committee**

The thesis is completed under the direction of a committee consisting of a chair (the thesis advisor) and at least two additional members. The chair must be a faculty member in the Psychology Department who is a member of the Graduate Faculty. At least one of the other members must be a faculty member from the Department of Psychology. The third member may be a person who has a faculty appointment in a department at Georgia State University or another university or research institution. A student who wishes to have someone serve on his or her committee who does not meet these criteria may add that person as a fourth member.

When working on their theses, students enroll for at least six semester hours of Psyc 8999, Master’s Thesis Research. The thesis must be defended satisfactorily in an oral examination. It is expected that the thesis will be successfully defended within 2½ years of entering the program (see Progress Guidelines later in this handbook).

It is the student’s responsibility to let the Assistant to the Director or Director of Graduate Studies know when the MA committee is formed, when the committee accepts the thesis proposal, and when the thesis is successfully defended (see Updating the Student’s Master Record later in this handbook).

**Transfer of a Master’s Degree from Another University**

Students who enter Georgia State University with a master’s degree from another institution may be allowed to waive the 33 semester hours required for a MA. To do so, they must ask the Director of Graduate Studies to evaluate their master’s degree before the end of their first semester at GSU, providing appropriate information and documentation. Three outcomes are possible.

1. If the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, finds that the course work and the written thesis are essentially equivalent to those required at GSU, then GSU master’s requirements are waived. The student need only satisfy the hours required for the PhD.
2. If the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, finds that the course work is essentially equivalent to that required at GSU but the master’s thesis is not, then the hours required for an MA are waived except for the six thesis research hours, and the student must complete a master’s thesis equivalent. The same standards apply as for a master’s thesis (including registering for six hours of Psyc 8999), except that the final copy does not need to be bound or submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, College of Arts and Sciences. Instead, one copy of the thesis equivalent must be submitted to the Director of Graduate Studies.

3. If the Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, finds that the course work and the written thesis are not essentially equivalent to those required at GSU, then the student must satisfy all GSU master’s requirements.
DOCTORAL GENERAL EXAMINATION

Students are required to take and pass a doctoral general examination stressing psychological knowledge and conceptual and integrative skills. The exam may take different forms across programs, as described below, but in each case is intended to be an independent demonstration of integration and competence.

General Examination Committee

Doctoral general examination committees comprise at least three members, at least two of whom must be faculty members in the Psychology Department. The chair of the committee must be a member of the Graduate Faculty. Committees of students who are jointly enrolled in both clinical and community or clinical and NBN programs must have representatives of both programs on their committees; at least two must be members of the clinical program. Similarly, students who elect to have a minor should have members of both major and minor programs represented on their committee.

When preparing for their general exam, students enroll for at least nine semester hours of Psyc 9980, Readings for General Examination. Before students can enroll, a chair must be named and the Assistant to the Director or Director of Graduate Studies informed.

Students may not sit for the Doctoral General Examination until the Audit for the Doctoral Exam has been completed. At least one semester before students plan to sit for their exam, they should ask the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies to initiate the audit. Students must have completed all departmental and program requirements before they request the audit. Exceptions for up to two program requirements may be made by the chair of the student’s program, although the student will remain obligated to complete these requirements before graduation. For students in the Clinical program, the two required advanced electives, as well as the required course in either Consultation or Supervision, are also not required before sitting for the general exam.

Note: Clinical students who are jointly enrolled in the Community Program may be required by the Community program curriculum to complete the course in Consultation prior to sitting for the general exam.

It is expected that the general exam will be passed within five years of entering the program (see Progress Guidelines later in this handbook). According to College of Arts and Sciences Policy, a student who fails the general examination the first time may retake the examination once following a minimum interval of six months; a second failure results in a dismissal action being initiated. The exam must be passed at least one academic year prior to conferral of degree.

It is the student’s responsibility to let the Assistant to the Director or Director of Graduate Studies know when the chair of the committee is named, when the audit is requested, and the outcome when the General Exam is taken (pass or failure; see Updating the Student’s Master Record later in this handbook).
General Exam for Clinical Students

The doctoral examination is designed to offer students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to analyze and synthesize what they have learned through their coursework, practicum, and research experiences in the clinical program. To prepare for the exam, students should rely upon the syllabi, readings, notes, and related materials from the courses that they have taken, as well as on their clinical and research experiences. A list of expected core competencies in the areas addressed in the exam, theory, research design, clinical applications, ethics, and diversity issues, will be made available to students to assist them in preparing for the exam. Students are expected to take the exam at the end of their third or the beginning of their fourth year after completion of their thesis and required coursework. Each student must select a chair for his or her examination from among the clinical faculty. The questions are written by the clinical faculty who function as the doctoral examination committee. The questions will be the same for all students sitting for the exam in a given semester. Typically, the exam will be offered twice during the academic year, during the 10th week of the fall and spring semesters; however, at least two students must commit to take the exam in order for the exam to be offered in a given semester. Students wishing to sit for the exam in the fall semester must inform the Director of Clinical Training in writing by the middle of preceding semester. Students are cautioned to take the required nine hours of Psychology 9880 across two or more semesters in order to not create a registration overload.

The exam is composed of written and oral elements. In the written portion, students respond to one of two alternative questions in each of four domains (theory, clinical applications, research methods, and ethics). Multicultural issues will be explicitly addressed in two of the four domains. Students are allotted eight hours to complete the written portion. Clinical faculty members will grade the written exam on a scale of one to five; a score of three is passing. Students must pass three of the four domains of the written exam in order to take the oral portion of the exam. The oral portion of the exam typically occurs two to three weeks after the written exam and is administered by the student’s chair and two other clinical faculty members. This examination allows the student to elaborate and remediate those questions, or parts of questions, that were not answered satisfactorily, and also may include an elaboration of answers that were satisfactory as well as an overall exploration of the breadth of the student’s knowledge and ability to integrate answers. At the conclusion of the oral portion of the examination, the committee meets and determines whether or not the student has passed the examination.

General Exam for Community Students

Prior to the general examination, and during the fourth year of the student’s career, the student will submit a paper entitled, “The Making of a Community Psychologist,” otherwise known as the fourth year paper. This paper will allow students a chance to identify scholarly and personal influences that have contributed to their identity and self-definition as community psychologists. Rather than assessing knowledge, competency and ability to complete doctoral work, this paper is a process and product designed to help students reflect on their identities at a critical juncture in their careers, as well as a means for the faculty to better understand the students, including their past, present and
future selves. On rare occasions, students may be asked to revise or clarify this statement, but it is not an examination per se.

The general examination will occur over a one week period. On the first two days, students will respond to a series of integrated questions focused around a specific issue or situation. Students will discuss theoretical, practical, political, methodological (research), and ethical aspects of the situation. The entire set of questions will be presented the first day. The ethical issues raised will be briefly listed, but not discussed in the examination. The student will be on the honor system and may not consult either written materials or colleagues during the exam.

One week later students will engage in a discussion with her or his committee regarding the written examination. Again, students should not discuss their examination with others prior to this part of the examination, nor should they consult written materials. The exception to this prohibition will be the ethics questions and issues, for which students may use any resources to prepare for a discussion during the oral portion of the exam. During the oral portion, faculty will be given the opportunity to ask for clarification and students will have the opportunity to elaborate or expand their answers to the questions. The ethics question will be given more complete attention during the oral exam. Faculty may also ask related questions regarding the student’s knowledge and competencies.

The student will earn one grade (pass-fail) for the entire written and oral examination. If the student does not pass the test, he or she will be given a second opportunity to complete the entire examination. A second failure would result in a dismissal action being initiated.

**General Exam for Joint Clinical and Community Students**

The structure and domains of the written and oral portions of the general examination are the same as that of the general exam for clinical students (see preceding section on General Exam for Clinical Students). The joint clinical and community students are responsible for the same core competencies addressed in the clinical general exam and for a reading list in the area of Community Psychology. In addition, readings that address the integration of Clinical and Community Psychology will be provided. The student’s general exam committee is co-chaired by a faculty member from the Clinical and from the Community Psychology Programs, and two other faculty, one from each program also serve on the committee. Faculty from both programs prepare a set of questions for the jointly-enrolled students that allow them to demonstrate their competence in both fields and their understanding of the differences and the points of convergence between the two areas.

**General Exam for Developmental Students**

The student and general exam committee together develop and agree to a list of readings on which, in large part, the examination will be based. Once the examination is scheduled, committee members submit questions to the chair, who then, in consultation with committee members, prepares an examination. To provide choice, questions may be asked in groups, with the student required to answer only some questions from each group. The examination will cover developmental theory, methods, contemporary
empirical work in a specified area, and ethics. The examination itself occurs across an eight hour period. One to two weeks after the student has completed the written examination, a two-hour oral defense of the examination is given. This examination allows the student to elaborate and remedy those questions, or parts of questions, that were not answered satisfactorily, and also may include an elaboration of answers that were satisfactory as well as an overall exploration of the breadth of the student’s knowledge and ability to integrate answers. At the conclusion of the oral portion of the examination, the General Examination Committee meets and determines whether or not the student has passed.

**General Exam for NBN Students**

Behavioral neuroscience (Track II) students, in concert with their general exam committee, must select one of the following options for satisfying the written component of the general exam:

1. **Area exam**
   The student will delineate a major topic area and prepare an extensive reading list which will be approved by the committee. The chair of the committee will generate an exam from a list of questions submitted by each of the members of the committee, and the student will have one day to answer those questions.

2. **Area paper**
   The student will write a publication-quality review of the major area. This paper can be used as the introduction to the dissertation proposal, if appropriate.

3. **NRSA (or other grant) application**
   The student will write a predoctoral grant proposal. This proposal may or may not actually be submitted to the appropriate granting agency, depending on the assessment of the committee, but it should be prepared as if it is to be submitted.

Each of the above options is followed by an oral exam scheduled by the committee. The purpose of the oral exam is to give the committee a chance to address potential shortcomings in the written component of the exam. In the case of the predoctoral grant application, the committee may generate a reading list with which the student is expected to be familiar. In all cases, the committee shall assess the depth and breadth of the student’s knowledge of behavioral neuroscience and psychology as it relates to the major area.

**General Exam for Joint Clinical and NBN Students**

The general exam for clinical neuropsychology (Track I) students will be the standard general exam for clinical students. The relevant basic neuroscience and neuropsychology knowledge of these students will be assessed separately during the oral defense of the dissertation proposal.
General Exam for Social/Cognitive Students

The doctoral examination is designed to offer students the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to analyze and synthesize what they have learned through their coursework, directed readings, and research experiences in the social-cognitive program. To prepare for the exam, students should rely upon the syllabi, readings, notes, and related materials from the courses that they have taken, as well as on their research experiences. In addition, the examination committee may provide a more specific reading list. Students are expected to take the exam at the end of their third or the beginning of their fourth year after completion of their thesis and required coursework. The general exam committee consists of a chair and at least two other faculty members selected by the student and approved by the program faculty. Typically, the exam will be offered twice during the academic year, during the 10th week of the fall and spring semesters. Students wishing to sit for the exam must inform the Chair of the Social-Cognitive program in writing by the middle of preceding semester. Students are cautioned to take the required nine hours of Psychology 9880 across two or more semesters to avoid a registration overload.

The exam is composed of written and oral elements. In the written portion, students respond to five questions from a subset of questions across three domains—cognitive psychology, social psychology, and research and quantitative methods (including ethics). Three of the questions will come from the student’s major concentration (i.e., social or cognitive psychology), one question will come from the student’s minor concentration (i.e., social or cognitive psychology), and one will come from research and quantitative methods. Committee members will generate the questions for each exam and may focus the questions comparatively or biologically (e.g., toward comparative cognition or social neuroscience) when appropriate for a student’s interest, training, and professional goals. Students are allotted eight hours to complete the written portion. Committee members will grade the written exam on a scale of one to five; a score of three is passing. Students must pass four of the five questions of the written exam in order to take the oral portion of the exam. The oral portion of the exam typically occurs two to three weeks after the written exam and is administered by the student's chair and two other social-cognitive faculty members. This examination allows the student to elaborate and remediate those questions, or parts of questions, that were not answered satisfactorily, and also may include an elaboration of answers that were satisfactory as well as an overall exploration of the breadth of the student's knowledge and ability to integrate answers. At the conclusion of the oral portion of the examination, the committee meets and determines whether or not the student has passed the examination.
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE

Doctoral Coursework

For the PhD degree students must complete a minimum of 62 semester hours of graduate coursework beyond the MA, which includes

- 33 semester hours of program requirements and electives,
- 9 semester hours of Reading for the General Exam (Psyc 9980),
- 20 semester hours of Doctoral Dissertation Research (Psyc 9999).

Dissertation Committee

The dissertation is completed under the direction of a committee consisting of a chair (the dissertation advisor) and at least three additional members. The chair and at least two of the other members must be faculty members in the Psychology Department who are members of the Graduate Faculty. The fourth member may be a person who has a faculty appointment in a department at Georgia State University or another university or research institution. At least one member of the dissertation committee must be someone who has not previously served on either the student's master's thesis committee or general examination committee. A student who wishes to have someone serve on his or her committee who does not meet these criteria may add that person as a fifth committee member.

When nominating the members of the dissertation committee, the student, in consultation with his or her committee chair, will submit a Nomination of Dissertation Committee form (see Updating the Student’s Master Record later in this handbook) specifying the manner in which the members will satisfy the department’s intent that committees include: (a) expertise in content areas relevant to the dissertation topic, (b) expertise in methodology relevant to the research plan, and (c) a range of philosophical or theoretical orientations. The form should be accompanied with a current curriculum vitae for any person not holding a regular appointment in the Department of Psychology. The Graduate Program Committee will review the composition of each dissertation committee to ensure that it complies with the requirements of those guidelines.

When working on their dissertation, students enroll for at least 20 semester hours of Psyc 9999, Doctoral Dissertation Research, 3 hours of which may be taken before the dissertation proposal is approved.

Dissertation Proposal

A written dissertation proposal is required and must be formally approved by the committee meeting as a whole. Students must first pass the General Exam in order to be permitted to have a dissertation proposal meeting. The proposal often assumes the proportions of a major paper and details the rationale, methods, and procedures for the proposed work.
Dissertation and Defense

Each dissertation committee will insure that some portion of the dissertation is presented in a form that is appropriate for submission to a journal. The literature review, the research study per se, or both should be in form that is appropriate for submission. The general style guide for the dissertation is the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (most recent edition), but the requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences also must be satisfied. The College of Arts and Sciences requirements specify the quality of paper, the margins, preliminary pages (title page, table of contents, et cetera), and pagination.

The student’s oral defense of their dissertation is scheduled by the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies. Dates and times for dissertation defenses are designated the semester before the defense is to occur and students are asked to indicate their choices of the available dates and times; this must be done no later than the first week of the semester involved. A schedule of a semester’s dissertation defenses is posted early each semester.

The dissertation oral defense is open to all faculty, students, and other interested individuals. The defense begins with a formal presentation of the dissertation. After members of the dissertation committee have asked their questions, questions are sought from members of the audience. At the close of the orals, the committee will confer in private to consider approval of the dissertation and its defense.

It is the student’s responsibility to let the Assistant to the Director or Director of Graduate Studies know when:

1. the PhD committee is formed,
2. the committee accepts the dissertation proposal,
3. the dissertation is successfully defended (see Updating the Student’s Master Record later in this handbook).
THESIS AND DISSERTATION GUIDELINES

General Guidelines for Theses and Dissertations

The College of Arts and Sciences Office of Graduate Studies requires that each student assume full responsibility for the correctness in content and form of the thesis or dissertation (see College of Arts and Sciences Dissertation Guidelines). These guidelines specify standards with respect to composition, typography, and certain Graduate Board policies and requirements. For form and style, students are also required to follow the current edition of the APA Publication Manual.

Currently, the department accepts two different styles of dissertations (see Departmental Dissertation Guidelines).

Two dissertation formats are endorsed by the department.

Format 1:

Abstract. The abstract for the dissertation must be no more than 350 words, but an abstract for a manuscript to be submitted to a journal should be no more than 150 words (960 characters). Thus, the abstract for the dissertation should be divided into a 200-word abstract of the literature review and a 150-word abstract of the research. In the latter, you should concentrate on the results and the interpretation of the results. The method may be described, but specific measures, statistical analyses, and procedures should be described very succinctly.

Chapter 1. In the first chapter, you should provide a thorough review of relevant research and theories. Models of literature reviews are published in the Psychological Bulletin.

Chapter 2. You should discuss succinctly the research and theories that are the basis for the research that you performed. The focus should be on integrating the research and theories to provide a justification for the research that you performed rather than on the details of previous research. The introduction to a research article in a standard journal can be used as a model for this chapter. You should include a statement of the goals, questions, and hypotheses for the research that you performed.

Chapter 3. In the method chapter, you should describe the relevant details of the method that you employed in the research. In general, you should provide sufficient information to allow a knowledgeable reader to replicate your research. Normally, you should include a description of the participants, the material used (including tests or questionnaires), and the procedure.

Chapter 4. In the results chapter, you should present the results, including statistical analyses. However, the focus should be on the data rather than on the analyses, and you may use tables and figures to provide a summary of the data. The tables and figures in the dissertation should be presented on the page on which they first are mentioned or on the immediately following page. In contrast, for a manuscript submitted
for publication, the tables and figures should be presented at the end of the manuscript. Tangential results and supplemental analyses may be presented in appendixes.

**Chapter 5.** In the discussion chapter, you should interpret the results that you presented in Chapter 4. You should state the relation of the findings to the goals, questions, and hypotheses that you stated in Chapter 2. You should discuss the implications of the research for the relevant theories and for applications. You may discuss the strengths, weaknesses, and limitations of the study, but it is neither necessary nor advisable to discuss every conceivable problem with the research.

**References.** In the list of references, you should include every reference that is cited in the text and should not include any references that are not cited in the text. The format for references as described in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (4th ed.) must be followed rigorously.

These guidelines are for a dissertation based on a single experiment or study, and modifications will be needed for dissertations involving multiple experiments or studies. Ultimately, the student, the chair of the dissertation committee, and the dissertation committee should select a format that is appropriate for the research.

If these guidelines have been followed, the conversion of the dissertation into manuscripts to be submitted to a journal should be straightforward. The first part of the abstract, Chapter 1, and the references cited in Chapter 1 may comprise one manuscript. The second part of the abstract, Chapters 2 to 5, and the references cited in Chapters 2 to 5 may comprise a second manuscript. Other options, such as submitting a single manuscript based on the entire dissertation, also may be considered.

**Format 2:**

The alternative dissertation style is known informally as the European format because it derives its name from the traditional dissertation document that has been used in Europe for hundreds of years. In the United States, it is used by the Psychology Departments of Harvard, Princeton, Johns Hopkins, Cornell, Brown, and Dartmouth to name just a few notable examples.

The European dissertation contains a first chapter that consists of a thorough synthetic review of the literature of the type we might be familiar with in *Psychology Bulletin*. The next chapter or chapters consists of copies of (a) published papers, (b) manuscripts in press, (c) manuscripts submitted, and/or (d) manuscripts in preparation. Because they may have been published, submitted, or targeted for different journals with different journal styles, the chapters may not all be formatted in the same style (e.g., they may or may not be in APA style). As is found in published papers, each chapter would have an Introduction, Methods, Results, and Discussion section. The number of these chapters, of course, will vary according to the publication rate of the subfield of Psychology in general, and of the researcher and mentor, specifically. The final chapter also has a summary/review-type style; however, it is written from a more global perspective. That is, it answers the question, How does this work fit into the big picture? This chapter most likely will have a speculative quality to it and may entertain the directions for future research on the topic by the author or by other investigators. This final chapter is not a
recapitulation of the middle chapters. This chapter offers the author the unique opportunity to speculate without the fetters that constrain typical research papers.

To complete the process, students must submit copies of their thesis or dissertation to the College of Arts and Sciences Office of Graduate Studies ONLY in digital .pdf format. All electronic files submitted for partial fulfillment requirements must conform to the university and Library of Congress national standards before final approval is granted by the Graduate Office. Students should also inform themselves as to the dates by which acceptable copies must be provided in order to graduate a given semester.

**Policy on the Use of Consultants for Dissertations and Theses**

Doctoral dissertations must be the product of the student to whom the degree is awarded. A doctoral committee’s approval of a student’s dissertation is not only an approval of the manuscript and of the research described in it but also a certification that the student is qualified to conduct research in the areas examined. Basic to that certification is the knowledge that the student was primarily responsible for designing the study, analyzing the data, and discussing the results, with minor help from his or her advisor, committee members, and others.

Hiring someone to conceptualize, design, analyze, or write a dissertation or thesis undermines the purpose of a dissertation or thesis and is inconsistent with the mission of a research university. With regard to the use of consultants, no student is allowed to obtain help with the design and analysis of his or her thesis or dissertation without prior approval from his/her committee. Paid assistance for any aspect of the preparation of the thesis or dissertation (e.g., data collection or editing) should be agreed upon in advance in writing by the student’s committee. Violation of this policy may result in the student’s dismissal from the department and revocation of the degree, if already received. The student’s committee should ensure that the student is capable of conducting the research and carrying out the analyses described in the research proposal. At the very least, this will mean that the student has taken the necessary coursework or obtained adequate training to carry out the research appropriately.

**Publication of Theses and Dissertations**

Theses and dissertations are expected to provide important contributions to knowledge, which is one of the purposes of a PhD program. The department affirms the importance of submitting these contributions to peer evaluation for possible sharing with the scholarly community at large. To this end students are strongly encouraged to submit papers based upon thesis and dissertation research to scholarly journals for possible publication.

Students should collaborate with their committee chairs to submit their work for publication. If a student does not make the effort to publish and if the committee chair has a strong investment in the research effort and its findings, the chair may prepare articles based on the research. Students and faculty should be mindful of APA guidelines pertaining to authorship and other credits as prescribed in the APA Publication Manual.
PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

Students must adhere to the progress guidelines and performance standards of both the College of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Psychology. This section of the handbook describes these guidelines and standards, describes circumstances that may lead to a dismissal action being initiated, and summarizes appeal procedures.

EXPECTED PROGRESS GUIDELINES

Graduate students in the Department of Psychology are expected to make timely progress in their program of study. Specifically, they are expected to achieve critical milestones within the time limits defined by the progress guidelines below. Failure to do so is regarded as a failure to maintain the levels of academic performance required by the department and, as such, is considered grounds for scholastic termination by the College of Arts and Sciences.

Critical milestones are assessed in years since the student entered the program. For example, students are expected to have their MA proposal accepted after being in the program for a year and a half. They are placed on probation if their MA proposal has not been accepted after two years (which would be the beginning of their third year), and a dismissal action may be initiated if they have not had their MA proposal accepted by the end of their third year (which would be the beginning of their fourth year). Years are adjusted for time spent on program-required pre-doctoral internships, for approved leaves of absence, and for other circumstances such as approved medical leave or disability as detailed elsewhere in departmental, college, and university policies.

For each milestone, the number of years expected, the number of years after which the student is placed on probation, and the number of years after which a dismissal action may be initiated are given in the table below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone</th>
<th>Expected within</th>
<th>Probation after</th>
<th>Dismissal after</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MA proposal accepted</td>
<td>1½</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA defense passed</td>
<td>2½</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. Core completed</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GE Committee formed</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Exam passed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD proposal accepted</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD defense passed</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Milestones for the MA do not apply to students who entered with an approved MA, but students who entered with an approved MA, significant graduate coursework credited from previous programs, or both, would be expected to reach further milestones at appropriately earlier points in time. Timelines will be determined individually at the time credit is given.
If a student’s progress indicates probation, the student will receive notice of this from the Director of Graduate Studies (this is termed a scholastic warning by the College of Arts and Sciences). At this point, the student should submit a memo to the Director of Graduate Studies documenting how he or she intends to achieve the relevant milestone before reaching the criterion for initiating a dismissal action.

If a student’s progress indicates initiation of a dismissal action, the student will receive notice of this from the Director of Graduate Studies. Students may appeal the pending dismissal action by petitioning the Graduate Program Committee but they must do so before the end of the semester in which their progress first indicated initiation of a dismissal action. If they appeal, students should submit to the Director of Graduate Studies an individualized plan, supported by their advisor, detailing dates by which they intend to meet any milestones yet unachieved.

**ANNUAL STUDENT REPORTS AND REVIEW OF STUDENTS**

Students are evaluated annually by their advisors in consultation with other faculty members in their program and the department, as appropriate. Beginning the student’s second year in the program, these evaluations occur each fall semester. They emphasize the previous academic year but may also consider the current year, up to the time the evaluation is written. All aspects of a student’s activities and performance are reviewed, including progress, academic performance, professionalism, and ethical orientation. Evaluation of clinical students also involves the assessment of their clinical skill.

The goal of the review is to assess each student’s performance and progress in his or her program in order to better assist and guide them as part of the advisement process. The annual review summarizes and reflects the faculty’s judgment regarding each student’s ability to complete more advanced academic work, to function successfully as a service provider if required by the student’s program, and to master all aspects of professional training relevant to the student’s program area.

At the beginning of fall semester, students submit to the chair of their program an annual report describing their research and academic activities and accomplishments during the previous academic year and their plans for the remainder of the current academic year. In addition, clinical students detail their clinical activities. This report is considered during the annual review of students.

Students are provided written feedback on the results of the review during the semester in which the review takes place and are afforded the opportunity to discuss these results with their advisor. The annual review also serves as the basis for the development of a corrective action plan if significant problems or weaknesses are identified. In those instances when a student’s performance is judged to be unsatisfactory, the letter of evaluation will include notice of probationary status (i.e., scholastic warning). This is independent of any scholastic warning that may be occasioned by failure to meet progress guidelines.

Students receiving such a warning from their program will be evaluated again at the end of the spring semester of that academic year. If at that time the faculty judges that the circumstances have not changed and the student’s performance is again rated as
unsatisfactory, a dismissal action will be initiated. As with appeals for failure to meet progress guidelines, students may appeal their pending dismissal; see Appeal Procedures later in this handbook.

PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR AND CONTINUANCE IN THE PROGRAM

All Students

All students are bound by standards of professional conduct as specified by the American Psychological Association (see Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct). Violations may result in initiation of a dismissal action.

Clinical Students

The clinical committee utilizes the following criteria to govern its decisions concerning students’ continuance. Students found to be in violation of one or more of the following criteria are subject to dismissal from the Clinical Program by majority vote of the clinical faculty. The committee’s judgments are made within the context of students’ expected levels of performance and accomplishment given their seniority in the program.

1. The student must complete the required and elective program and departmental course work, and other departmental, college, and university graduate degree requirements appropriate to their status in the department in a competent and timely manner.

2. The student must demonstrate the ability to develop, conceptualize, and complete major research projects in an independent manner, and to describe and explicate, both orally and in writing, the significance of such research as demonstrated in thesis and dissertation work, additional research projects, and research courses.

3. The student must demonstrate the ability to analyze, integrate, and make use of psychological knowledge gained from courses and independent reading in a unified, meaningful way as demonstrated by the student in course work, practicum and internship activities, the doctoral general examination, and thesis, dissertation, and other research work.

4. The student must display sensitivity and respect for the cultural, racial, and individual diversity of their clients, research participants, staff, and other professionals. The student must relate to clients, research professionals, staff, and other professionals in a mature, responsible, cooperative, and professional interpersonal manner.

5. The student must practice the levels of clinical judgment and skill appropriate to their level of training. The student must show the ability to use psychological knowledge to competently and adequately develop and carry out appropriate clinical treatments with a range of actual clients.

6. The student must recognize the limits of his or her professional skills and abilities and work within these limits. The student must recognize when supervision from a more experienced clinician is needed.
7. The student must work well under supervision while in the program and show the potential to function independently as a scientist-practitioner upon completion of the PhD.

8. The student will not present or describe himself or herself as a “psychologist” until licensed as such or employed in a state or federal government position that carries the psychologist job title.

9. The student must be free of personality or behavior problems that would prevent the student from functioning effectively as a clinical psychologist.

10. The student must adhere to generally accepted scientific, professional, and ethical standards of behavior and judgment that include refraining from any behaviors which would be subject to sanctions by the American Psychological Association.

Students who wish to appeal a decision of the Committee should review the procedures described later in this handbook (see Dismissals and Appeals).

**GRADUES AND GRADE POINT AVERAGE**

**Letter Grades**

The College of Arts and Sciences and the Department of Psychology expect students to maintain superior performance in course work. The College of Arts and Sciences requires that a grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 be maintained and stipulates that a graduate student is subject to dismissal for failure to achieve a 3.0 cumulative GPA by the end of the next 18 semester hours of enrollment in letter-graded courses after the GPA has fallen below 3.0.

The department requires a GPA of 3.0 across all departmental courses. A student whose Psychology GPA falls below 3.0 is subject to dismissal for failure to achieve a 3.0 cumulative Psychology GPA by the end of the next 18 semester hours of enrollment in letter graded courses after the GPA has fallen below a 3.0. It is important to note that courses taken outside the Psychology Department are not used to compute this GPA, although these courses are computed in the overall GPA monitored by the college.

Letter-graded courses used to satisfy degree requirements (i.e., courses required by the department, the program, or both, including electives whose hours are required for the MA or PhD) must be passed with a grade of B or better. When the student earns a lower grade in one of these courses, it must be retaken until a B or better is earned. Only the most recent attempt is computed in the Psychology GPA. All course attempts are included in the GPA calculated by the Registrar’s Office. When there exist various courses that meet the same requirement, the student is allowed to take another course in that set. In this case, both grades are computed in the GPA. Although there is no formal limit to the number of times a course may be repeated, taking a course repeatedly with continued poor grades could adversely affect the GPA criterion, the progress guidelines, or both.
Satisfactory and Unsatisfactory Grades

Certain courses in the department are graded only as satisfactory (S) or unsatisfactory (U). These include thesis hours, doctoral general exam hours, and dissertation hours, as well as practicum hours. Although these hours are not included in the student’s GPA, unsatisfactory performance is considered a serious matter.

Theses, exams, and dissertations.
Thesis, exam, and dissertation hours earn grades of in progress (IP) while they are being taken. When a defense or exam is passed, these grades are changed to satisfactory (S). However, when a defense or exam is failed, these grades are changed to unsatisfactory (U). The student has 8 months to correct the deficit by passing the defense or examination. If this does not occur, the Director of Graduate Studies will initiate a dismissal action.

Practica.
Like thesis, dissertation, and exam hours, practica are graded as S or U. Satisfactory performance implies that the following questions, where applicable, have all received affirmative responses from both departmental and on-site supervisors.

1. Did the student demonstrate the ability to analyze, integrate, and make use of psychological knowledge gained from courses and independent reading?

2. Did the student display sensitivity and respect for the cultural, racial, and individual diversity of their clients and research participants?

3. Did the student practice levels of judgment and skill appropriate to his/her level of training?

4. Did the student recognize the limits of his/her professional skills and abilities and work within these limits? Did the student recognize when supervision from a more experienced practitioner was needed? Did the student respond to the supervisor’s input and feedback in a conscientious and responsible manner?

5. Did the student relate to clients, staff, and other professionals in a mature, responsible, cooperative, and a professional interpersonal manner?

6. Did the student adhere to generally accepted scientific, professional, and ethical standards of behavior and judgment? Did he or she refrain from any behaviors which would be subject to sanctions by the American Psychological Association?

A student who receives a U in practicum should anticipate remedial action as recommended by the student’s advisor and program chair. Any student receiving a U in practicum will receive a letter of scholastic warning from the Director of Graduate Studies. If an additional U in practicum is earned, the Director of Graduate Studies will initiate a dismissal action. Students who wish to appeal should review the procedures described later in this handbook (see Dismissals and Appeals).
Grade Appeals

The department follows the current procedures and policies of the College of Arts and Sciences regarding grade appeals and complaints. See the College of Arts and Sciences Student Grievance Policy.

DEPARTMENTAL POLICY ON CHEATING

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology strongly affirm the following principles:

1. Work presented by students in fulfillment of class requirements or other requirements of an academic program should be that student’s own work, and not that performed by someone else.

2. Granting of credit for such work implies that the piece of work has been accomplished for a particular course or requirement.

3. The same piece of work should not be presented for credit for two different courses or requirements without special arrangements being made with relevant faculty.

4. Falsification of any kind of data, including clinical work samples, is a violation of academic and ethical principles.

The department follows the University’s Policy on Academic Honesty described in the General Catalog for Georgia State University and the College of Arts and Sciences Graduate Bulletin.
DISMISSEALS AND APPEALS

Dismissal Procedures

The Department of Psychology is committed to supporting students in their progress through the program in every way consistent with the maintenance of acceptable academic and professional standards. There are, however, occasions when the standards of the College of Arts and Sciences or the Department of Psychology are not met and dismissal (called scholastic termination by the College of Arts and Sciences) must be considered.

It is the College of Arts and Sciences that ultimately assumes responsibility for both the admission of students and, in rare cases, their dismissal. Nonetheless, a psychology student is subject to program, department, and college standards. The procedure for dismissal and appeal differs somewhat when a program standard (e.g., practica performance), a departmental standard (e.g., progress guidelines), or a college standard (e.g., cumulative GPA) is violated.

When a program standard is violated, the student will first be required to meet with his or her advisor and program chair. If the student does not resolve the deficiency to the satisfaction of the program, the program chair will forward a recommendation to initiate a dismissal action to the Director of Graduate Studies, who will inform the student. Information on appeal procedures is provided below.

When a departmental standard is violated, the dismissal action will be initiated by the Director of Graduate Studies. This will occur only after the student has failed to address or correct the deficiency during any specified probationary period.

When a college standard is violated, the dismissal action is taken by the Associate Dean for the Social and Behavioral Sciences. As is true at the departmental level, this will occur only after the student has failed to correct the deficiency during any specified probationary period.

Appeal Procedures

Reasons for initiating dismissal at the program level include:
1. two unsatisfactory practica performances (6 hours total of U),
2. an unsatisfactory annual evaluation spring semester after an unsatisfactory annual evaluation the previous fall semester, and
3. violation of professional ethical principles endorsed by the American Psychological Association.

Reasons for initiating dismissal at the departmental level include:
1. failure to present an acceptable individualized plan to the Graduate Program Committee within the semester the student’s progress met the criterion for dismissal,
2. failure to pass a thesis or dissertation defense within eight months after a failed defense, and
3. failure to maintain a Psychology GPA of 3.0 after the probationary period of 18 semester-hours.
In either case (program or departmental level reason), the student will receive notice from the Director of Graduate Studies that dismissal is being considered. The student may appeal this, in writing, to the Director of Graduate Studies, although such an appeal must be received no later than 20 business days after notice was given. The appeal will be considered by the Graduate Program Committee. At the meeting called for this purpose, the student has the opportunity to present evidence, including any testimony from faculty with whom he or she has worked, that he or she is capable of successful completion of the graduate program and that the conditions leading to the dismissal action represent atypical behavior or the presence of temporary, mitigating circumstances. The committee will inform the student of their decision within 30 business days of receiving the appeal.

Actions of the Graduate Program Committee may include, but are not limited to: (a) Let the dismissal action stand, in which case the student may not continue in the program. (b) Place the student on probation and specify remedial actions which must be taken before the student may continue in the program. Such actions are at the discretion of the Graduate Program Committee as informed by faculty who are familiar with the student’s work. Retaking courses with low grades is one possible action. A deadline for completing such remedial action must be specified. (c) Allow the student to complete requirements for a terminal master’s degree.

If an appeal is granted and the student is placed on probation, the student’s advisor and Director of Graduate Studies will monitor whether the student has met the specified requirements by the specified deadline. If the student has not done so, the Director of Graduate Studies will again initiate a dismissal action. The student may again appeal the action to the Graduate Program Committee.

If the student believes that a decision by the Graduate Program Committee has been arbitrary, capricious, or discriminatory, he or she may appeal its decision in writing to the chair of the department. This action must be taken within 20 business days of the date of the Graduate Program Committee’s decision.

If the student does not appeal the decision or if the appeal is denied at the Departmental level, the Director of Graduate Studies will forward the recommendation for dismissal to the Associate Dean for Social and Behavioral Sciences in the College of Arts and Sciences. The Associate Dean will notify the student that this has occurred. The student may then appeal the decision through normal channels within the College of Arts and Sciences.

Reasons for initiating dismissal at the college level include:
1. a second failure of the doctoral general exam, and
2. failure to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 after the probationary period of 18 semester-hours.

In such cases, the Graduate Program Committee is not empowered to consider an appeal. The student may, however, request support from the Graduate Program Committee for an appeal to the appropriate college committee. The student should refer to the College Graduate Bulletin for instructions on appeal procedures at this level.
Grievance Procedures

The department follows the current procedures and policies of the College of Arts and Sciences regarding grade appeals and other complaints. Students who believe that they have been treated in an unethical, unprofessional, or unfair manner by university faculty, staff, administrators, or fellow students should act to correct the situation. Several procedures are available to do so. First, students may bring the situation to the attention of their advisor, the chair of their graduate program, the Director of Graduate Studies, or the chair of the department. At the college level, students may bring their complaint to the attention of the Associate Dean. Students may also discuss the situation with the University’s ombudsperson. Finally, students may follow formal grievance procedures. See the College of Arts and Sciences Student Grievance Policy.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

A variety of university, college, and departmental administrative matters are described in this section. Students should also be familiar with college polices as described in the Graduate Bulletin.

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE MATTERS

Registration for Courses

There are two opportunities to register for courses each semester. Regular registration is held during the middle of the preceding semester. Late registration is held the week immediately before the beginning of the semester. Typically students register via the internet. Computer registration is available on campus at times and locations listed on the following URL: https://www.gosolar.gsu.edu/webforstudent.htm

Student appointment times are valid beginning at your assigned time and continuing through the last day for each registration phase. Regular registration appointments are assigned with priority to students scheduled to graduate and, then to continuing students according to the total credit hours earned.

Students needing a particular course should register and pay for it during regular registration since it cannot be assumed that spaces will remain in the course through late registration.

Special Authorization

Many courses, designated by an asterisk in the Schedule of Classes, require special authorization because there are specific prerequisites for the courses. Students must obtain authorization at least one day before their registration appointment time. Authorization for thesis or doctoral exam hours is granted by the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies in advance of registration for all students with an approved chair. Authorization for dissertation hours is granted in advance for all students with an approved committee. Authorization for independent studies and directed research is obtained by submitting a form signed by the supervisor to the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies. When a course requires permission of instructor, authorization is
obtained from the instructor. Authorization for clinical practica is granted by the Practicum Coordinators of the Clinical or Community Programs.

**Overloads**

Approval is required to register for more than 23 hours of credit for any semester. Students who wish to enroll for 24 or more hours should complete the overload form and submit the form to the Director of Graduate Studies one week before registration and must be prepared to supply a strong and compelling justification. Such requests must also be approved by the Associate Dean for Social and Behavioral Sciences in the College of Arts and Science.

**Application for Graduation**

Students must apply for graduation two semesters in advance of their expected date of graduation. This applies to both the MA degree and PhD degree. Applications and additional information are available on the College of Arts and Sciences’ website (http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwgas/graduation.html). If a student is unable to finish by the semester originally specified, it is the student’s responsibility to change the date by contacting the Graduation Office. Once a student has applied to graduate, an audit of the student’s records will be completed by the Office of Graduate Studies, College of Arts and Sciences (8th floor Haas-Howell Bldg). It is the student’s responsibility to discuss any discrepancies with the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies in Psychology.

**Residency Requirements**

In order to earn a graduate degree at Georgia State University, students must earn the majority of their graduate program credit hours from Georgia State University.

**Inactive Status**

Students who have not registered for course work at GSU for one year (i.e., three consecutive semesters, including summer semester) will be placed on inactive status by the Registrar’s Office of the University. Such students, if they wish to resume their studies, must file a reentry application with the Office of the Registrar. Such reentry applications are automatically approved when students have been on a program-required internship or when they have been granted a department-approved leave of absence. Whether other applications for reentry are accepted or denied will be decided on a case by case basis and require the approval of the Graduate Program Director.

**Time Limits on Coursework Presented for Degrees**

All credits presented for the master’s degree must have been earned within seven calendar years of the date of the degree. All credits for the doctoral degree must have been earned within ten years of the date of the degree. Courses taken earlier must be retaken or, alternatively, students may file a Petition for Deviation from Graduate Bulletin Regulations with the Office of Graduate Studies. Before filing such a petition, students should consult with the Director of Graduate Studies.
DEPARTMENTAL MATTERS

Updating the Student’s Master Record

The Director of Graduate Studies is responsible for maintaining records relating to students’ progress in the program. This database contains dates when students met milestones, names of their advisor, names of chairs and members of their committees, etc. No committee is regarded as officially formed, nor no defense is regarded as officially passed, until appropriate notice has been given to the Assistant Director or Director of Graduate Studies and until the information is recorded in the database.

When students enter the program, they are provided a signature booklet. Each time a progress milestone is met (thesis committee formed, thesis proposal accepted, thesis successfully defended, general exam committee chair named, etc.), students gather the appropriate signatures, note the correct dates, and turn in the relevant page from the signature booklet to the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies, thereby officially recording the relevant event. The signature booklet contains a page for each event that needs to be recorded and notes the signatures required for each.

Authorization to register for thesis research (Psyc 8999), readings for the general examination (Psyc 9980), and dissertation research (Psyc 9999) will be granted only after the signature of the respective committee chair has been filed. In addition, authorization for more than three hours of Psyc 9999 will be granted only after a dissertation proposal has been approved by the student’s dissertation committee.

Current Student Addresses

For a variety of reasons, both the university and the department need to have each student’s current mailing address and telephone number on file (e.g., otherwise you may not receive registration information). If your mailing address or telephone number changes, please let the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies know immediately (an email message is fine). You must also notify the Registrar’s Office via GoSolar of any change in address. Likewise, if your wish to change your name of record, you must inform both the department and the Registrar.

Much of the communication in the department takes place electronically. Thus all graduate students are required to have an e-mail address and to check their messages frequently (the university provides email accounts to any student who does not already have one). The department will only use the e-mail account that is provided by the university to contact students (i.e., studentname@student.gsu.edu). You should also provide an alternative e-mail address (i.e., one hosted by Yahoo, Gmail or HotMail) to the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies, preferably via email (psykdh@langate.gsu.edu). Otherwise you may miss vital communication.

Faculty Advisor

Faculty advisors provide academic, professional, and practical guidance to students during their graduate studies. Students are expected to meet with their advisors during their first semester to discuss their interests and begin planning their program of study.
All students are assigned advisors when they enter the department but they may change their advisors at any time. Clinical students, including those enrolled in the joint Clinical/Community or Clinical/NBN programs, are required to have an advisor who is a member of the clinical faculty. Students enrolled in a joint program or those pursuing minors may have a second advisor in their other or minor program of study.

**Leaves of Absence**

Students who wish to take a leave of absence for personal or medical reasons should submit such requests in writing to the chair of their program. The chair will then forward the program’s recommendation to the Director of Graduate Studies for consideration by the Graduate Program Committee. Such requests must specify the intended duration of the leave of absence, specified with exact dates that span one or more semesters. A maximum of one year may be requested at a given time although extensions may be requested by following the same procedure.

Occasionally, students are advised by their program to take a leave of absence. Such a leave must be documented by a letter from the chair of the program to the department’s Director of Graduate Studies. The duration of the leave and conditions for readmission should be specified in the letter.

Although departmental progress guidelines are adjusted for departmentally approved leaves of absence, any time limitations for completing degrees as specified by Georgia State University or the College of Arts and Sciences are unaffected.

**Changing Programs**

Students are accepted for graduate study in one of the five programs in the department (Clinical, Community, Developmental, Neuropsychology and Behavioral Neuroscience, or Social/Cognitive) or in one of the two joint programs (Clinical and Community or Clinical and NBN). A letter of support from each program will be required in order for the request to be approved.

**Minor Programs**

Students wishing to acquire additional breadth of content and a second area of competence may, in consultation with their advisor, select a minor from a program other than their major program. A minor requires the completion of 12 semester hours in the minor program. The specific requirements for each minor are described along with the program’s curriculum earlier in this handbook. A request for a minor program may be made after acceptance to the major program. A student’s minor program will be incorporated in their general examination.

**Forms**

There are several forms with which students should be familiar. All are available from the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies, most can be downloaded from the departmental web page, and most have been referenced earlier in this handbook in the appropriate context. These include:
1. **Nomination of thesis committee.** This form must be submitted to the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval. This form will not need to be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee unless a deviation from department policy is being requested.

2. **Nomination of general exam committee.** This coupon must be submitted to the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies for approval. This form will not need to be reviewed by the Graduate Program Committee unless a deviation from department policy is being requested.

3. **Audit for doctoral general exam.** This coupon must be submitted to the Assistant Director at least one semester before the student intends to sit for their exam.

4. **Nomination of dissertation committee.** This form must be submitted to the Assistant to the Director or Director of Graduate Studies for approval by the Graduate Program Committee.

5. **Authorization for Psyc 9910/9920, Advanced Directed Readings/Advanced Directed Research**

6. **Authorization for Psyc 9960C, Practicum in Psychology, Community.**

7. **Overload Authorization**

8. **Change your advisor** (single program).

9. **Change your advisor** (joint program).