GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK: 2011-2012

Department of Psychology
College of Arts and Sciences
Georgia State University

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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 details 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.

Students are responsible for knowing about and complying with the Department of Psychology policies and requirements described in this Handbook as well as the policies and requirements of the College of Arts and Sciences detailed 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 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):
8230 Assessment, Consultation, and Evaluation I (ACE I)
9240 Clinical Supervision

Methodology (one of the following):
8010 Research Methods in Psychology

Clinical Electives (two of the following):
8220 Community Interventions, Social Change, and Prevention
8280 Psychology, Advocacy, and Organizing
8620 Introduction to Clinical Neuropsychology
8910 Topics in Clinical 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:

- 9950A Apprentice (4 hrs required)
- 9950B Beginning Assessment (6 hrs required)
- 9950C Advanced Assessment and Supervision (10 hrs required)
- 9950E Psychotherapy
- 9950M Specialized Skills

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 2 hours 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, and also involves participation in a bi-weekly meeting (“First-year seminar”) covering basic clinical skills in interviewing and assessment. Students will also enroll in a minimum of 6 credit hours of Beginning Assessment (9950B) and 10 credits of Advanced Assessment and Supervision (9950C). 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 a supervisor. 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 a caseload 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. Similarly, students must complete 6 credit hours 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. Students must propose their thesis before enrolling for off-campus practica. 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 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 wish to seek an internship in a non-APA-approved center must petition the clinical faculty for approval. The limited number of APA-accredited internship/residency opportunities in the state of Georgia in general, and in the metropolitan-Atlanta area in particular, dictates that students must be prepared to complete this internship elsewhere.

Students wishing to apply for internship should meet with their clinical advisor and with the Director of Clinical Training no later than April 1st 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. Students must have their dissertation proposal accepted by October 1st and must be making acceptable progress toward completion of the research before being permitted to apply for internship. 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 clinical program is a subscriber to the Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC), which oversees the internship application process. Students are encouraged to visit APPIC’s website early and regularly to stay informed of the internship application process, including the amount and types of clinical training typical of successful internship applicants. Students are encouraged to carefully track their clinical activities so that they accumulate the number of clinical, supervision, and preparation hours necessary to meet their professional goals.
COGNITIVE SCIENCES CURRICULUM

Students in the Cognitive Sciences Program must meet all departmental and college requirements. Cognitive Science students also take 3 courses covering research methods and core knowledge in cognitive psychology, as well as 3 elective courses in an area of concentration within the cognitive sciences. Some possible concentrations are listed below, including Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, Evolution of Behavior, and Cognitive/Social/Affective Neuroscience. However, student concentrations may be uniquely shaped in consultation with their respective advisors. Students are not limited to 3 elective courses, and can likely benefit from additional coursework in the area of concentration. Students can also cross-register for graduate courses offered by members of the Atlanta Regional Consortium for Higher Education, with Georgia Tech and Emory University being particularly good candidates, for example to supplement the available curriculum in Cognitive Psychology and Evolution of Behavior.

Required Cognitive Sciences Courses
8010 Research Methods in Psychology (or another methods course endorsed by one’s advisor)
8540 Advanced Cognitive Psychology
851 Special Topics in Cognitive Psychology (see topic examples below)
9940c Specialized Seminar: Cognitive Sciences (i.e., Hard Data Café—see below)

Elective Courses (choose any 3)

Methods
6140 Introduction to Psychophysiology
8430 Psychological Statistics III
8014 Research: Community/Applied Social Psychology

Cognitive Psychology
6130 Sensation and Perception
8551 Cognitive and Linguistic Development
8541 Special Topics in Cognitive Psychology
(e.g., Comparative Cognition, Cognition and Emotion in Communication)
8560 Animal Learning and Cognition
PHIL 6330 Philosophy of Mind
PHIL 6530 Philosophy of Language

Social Psychology
6030 Cross-cultural Psychology
6620 Psychology of Women
8200 Introduction to Community Psychology
8220 Community Interventions and Social Change
8280 Psychology and Public Policy
8510 Advanced Social Psychology
851 Special Topics in Social Psychology
(e.g., Stereotyping and Prejudice, Social Cognition)
8552 Social and Emotional Development
SOCI 8040 Cognitive Sociology
SOCI 8110 Social Psychology (sociology)
SOCI 8201 Social Inequality
SOCI 8212 Race and Ethnic Relations
SOCI 8216 Gender and Society

**Evolution of Behavior**
6116 Primate Behavior
7560 Psychology of Animal Behavior
ANTH 6330 Primate Behavioral Ecology
BIOL 6911 Internship in Zoo Research
BIOL 7440 Fundamentals of Evolution

**Cognitive/Social/Affective Neuroscience**
6630 Hormones and Behavior
8610 Behavioral Neuroscience
8615 Functional Human Neuroanatomy
8616 Neurobiology I: Cellular
8617 Neurobiology II: Integrative
8618 Advanced Behavioral Neuroscience
8630 Developmental Neurobiology
8640 Psychopharmacology
8910 Topics in Neuropsychology
8956 Topics in Behavioral Neuroscience
BIOL 6242 Circadian Rhythms
BIOL 6911 Internship in Zoo Research
BIOL 8950 Topics in Behavior and Neurobiology

**Other Courses of Possible Interest**
6520 Environmental Psychology
8060 Issues of Human Diversity in Psychology
6801 Survival Skills in Academia
9900 Seminar in Psychology
AL 8520 Psycholinguistics
BIOL 6102 Neurobiology
BIOL 6180 Neurobiology Laboratory
EXC 7520 Neuroscience for Communication
MATH/PHYS 8515 Dynamical Foundations of Neuroscience
PHIL 6130 Philosophy of Science
PHIL 8130 Topics in Philosophy of Science
PHIL 8330 Seminar in Philosophy of Mind
PHIL 8530 Seminar in Philosophy of Language
SOCI 8156 Sexuality and Society
WST 8920 Special Topics in Women's Studies
**Directed Readings**

Some elective hours can be filled with Advanced Directed Readings (PSYC 9910). The topic and requirements for the course should be negotiated between the student and the readings supervisor at the beginning of the semester, and the basis upon which the final grade will be assigned should be clearly documented. PSYC 9910 hours are an excellent way to provide individual instruction tailored to a student and faculty member’s mutual interests. However, PSYC 9910 should not be substituted for existing courses on the same topic, which should instead be taken as formal elective courses.

**Research**

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. Students will normally register for hours of PSYC 9920 in recognition of individual research training they receive from their research supervisors. Each student and supervisor should agree at the beginning of each semester on the research topics, activities, and requirements for those PSYC9920 hours, and the basis on which the semester grade (S or U) will be assigned.

**Hard Data Café (HDC)**

Hard Data Café (HDC) is the Cognitive Sciences colloquium series, and all students are expected to attend both departmental and HDC colloquia as a component of their graduate education. Through their first 3 years, Cognitive Sciences students are also required to register for HDC each semester as a 1-credit, pass-fail course (accommodations or exceptions may be possible under unusual circumstances, but require advisor approval). As a course, HDC requires that each student read and comment on papers by speakers (including their peers), and to present their own research during each of the first two years.

*Papers by outside speakers.* One to two articles will be made available at least one week prior to a given speaker’s colloquium. Students post comments on an HDC electronic bulletin board.

*Research presentations.* At the end of their first year, each student will give a 15-minute, conference-style research presentation (12-minute presentation, 3 minutes for questions). During Spring semester of their second year, each student will give a 30-min research presentation (25-minute presentation, 5 minutes for question). At least one week prior, presenters will provide 1 to 2 relevant articles from their own or others’ work for CGS students to read.

*Pre-defense colloquium.* Finally, each student will give a full-length research colloquium within the 6 months prior to their anticipated doctoral dissertation defense date. At least one week prior, the presenter will provide 1 to 2 relevant articles from their own or others’ work for CGS students to read. Note that the pre-defense colloquium is not part of
the dissertation defense per se, and does not replace the dissertation defense presentation, unless so designated by the student’s dissertation committee.

**Cognitive Sciences Minor**

The Cognitive Sciences program offers a minor that consists of 12 semester hours of coursework. These hours include two required courses, Advanced Cognitive Psychology and Special Topics in Cognitive Psychology, as well as two electives jointly agreed upon by the student and the student's graduate advisor, and approved by the CGS program chair. Electives cannot be courses that are used to fulfill course requirements in any other GSU Psychology graduate program. Electives are also typically drawn from among PSYC (including cross-listed PSYC) courses suggested for CGS doctoral students. However, up to one elective class can be a non-PSYC course. The electives requirement can be fulfilled through graduate coursework taken at other institutions, subject to approval. Students from other program areas must explicitly apply to the CGS program for minor status, but can do so either before or after taking the relevant courses.
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.

**Foundational Courses Required for Community & Joint Clinical and Community Students**

8010 Research Methods in Psychology or 8014 Research Methods in Community Psychology (if offered)
8060 Issues of Human Diversity
8200 Introduction to Community Psychology
8430 Psychological Statistics III or 9900 Qualitative Methods [a]
9940B Specialized Seminars in Psychology (3 X 1-credit each)
9960C Community Practicum/9970C Clinical-Community Practicum (3 X 3-credits each)

**Professional Specialization (Take 9 credits of the following) [b]**

8280 Psychology, Advocacy, and Organizing
8230 Assessment, Consultation, and Evaluation I (ACE I)
8260 Assessment, Consultation, and Evaluation II (ACE II, prerequisite ACE I or permission of instructor)
8220 Community Interventions, Social Change, and Prevention
8430 Psychological Statistics III [c]
9900 Qualitative Methods [c]

Notes:

Students in the joint Clinical-Community program must satisfy all Clinical Program requirements. They will probably take 8230 because that course also satisfies Clinical Program requirements. For joint students, 8060 is satisfied with 8050. Joint students may take any combination of community practica (9960C) or clinical-community practica (9970C) to satisfy the practicum requirement.

[a] Clinical-Community students are not required to take either of these courses, but in consultation with their advisor may choose to take one or both to fulfill the professional specialization requirement.
[b] Upon discussion with the advisor and approval of the program faculty students may elect to take one course inside or outside the department that fulfills their training needs as part of this requirement.
[c] One or both of these courses may be taken to fulfill the professional specialization requirement after completing foundational courses (i.e., a course cannot fulfill requirements in both categories at once)

Recommended professional specialization courses for students who anticipate a career focus in:

1. Applied Research and Practice
   8230 ACE I
   8260 ACE II
8220 Community Interventions, Social Change, and Prevention

2. Empowerment/Social Justice
   8220 Community Interventions, Social Change, and Prevention
   8280 Psychology, Advocacy, and Organizing
   9900 Qualitative Methods

3. General Community Psychology
   8220 Community Interventions, Social Change, and Prevention
   Either 8280 Psychology, Advocacy, and Organizing Or 8230 ACE I
   Either 8430 Statistics III Or 9900 Qualitative Methods

**Fourth Year Paper Required for Community & Joint Clinical and Community Students**

Prior to the general examination, and during the fourth year of the student's career, the student will submit a paper to his/her advisor 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.
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  
8015 Theories of Development  
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 is available to graduate students enrolled in graduate work in the Department of Psychology. The minor 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 Developmental) 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 Developmental, Social and Emotional Developmental;), 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 units 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
8910 Topic in Clinical Neuropsychology
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.
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.

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).

Waiving the Master’s Thesis Requirement

Students who enter Georgia State University with a master's thesis from another institution may be allowed to waive the master’s thesis requirement. To do so, they must submit to the Director of Graduate Studies a petition requesting a waiver and describing their prior thesis procedure (the size of the committee, whether there were oral proposal or defense meetings, whether they collected the date or used an intact dataset, etc.), the master’s thesis document, and a letter of support for the petition from the student’s current GSU advisor. All documentation must be submitted before the end of the student’s first semester at GSU. The Director of Graduate Studies, in consultation with the Graduate Program Committee, then decides whether the request is granted.
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. 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, when the General Exam is scheduled, and the outcome (i.e., pass or failure; see Updating the Student’s Master Record later in this handbook).
**General Exam for Clinical Students**

The doctoral examination requires students 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. The general exam is an overall exploration of the breadth and depth of the student’s knowledge and ability to integrate answers across the core competencies.

Each student must select a chair for his or her examination from among the clinical faculty. The clinical faculty functions as the doctoral examination committee. Typically, the exam will be offered twice during the academic year, during the 2nd 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 Associate 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.

Exam questions are written by the clinical faculty. For the exam, students respond in writing to one of two questions in each of four domains: theory, clinical applications, research methods, and ethics. Multicultural issues will be explicitly assessed in two of the four domains. Students are allotted eight hours to complete the exam. Clinical faculty members will grade the exam. Questions are graded on a scale of one to five; a score of three is passing. Students must pass all questions. Students who fail one question will be given the opportunity to complete an additional question from the failed domain. These questions will be graded by the three faculty members who graded the original question, as well as two additional faculty members. Students that pass the question, pass the exam. Students who fail a question in a domain for a second time, as well as students who fail more than one question, fail the exam. Students who fail the exam must re-take it according to departmental policy.

For more specific information about the General Exam for Joint Clinical and Community Students, see this section below.

**General Examination for Cognitive Sciences Students**

The doctoral general examination (GE) allows students to demonstrate their ability to analyze and synthesize what they have learned through their coursework, directed readings, and research experience in the cognitive sciences program. Each student’s exam is based on a readings list received during the first year and subsequently fine-tuned by the student, the advisor, and the GE committee, and then approved by the program. Revisions to the list will be designed to reflect the student’s chosen area of concentration, research experience, coursework, and any additional topics deemed useful by the
student’s advisor or committee. Responsibility for finalizing the readings list rests with
the student and advisor working in concert, followed by approval by the committee,
acting on behalf of the program. The list will include articles, chapters, and books
representing breadth in the cognitive sciences, depth in the student’s area(s) of
concentration, and mastery of the topics and coursework required of all Psychology
Department doctoral candidates. Students are expected to complete all listed readings by
the time of the exam. The exam itself is administered by GE committee, which consists
of at least 3 program faculty members selected by the student and approved by the
program.

The GE has two parts, a written portion and an oral portion. The written portion must be
scheduled to occur within 12 weeks from the date the student’s committee and final
readings list are approved. The written portion includes options to answer 5 questions in
an in-class exam format, or to prepare an area-specific review paper and answer 2
questions. The orals portion is similar in both cases, and must occur two weeks or so after
completion of the written portion.

Passing the GE requires that the student pass both the written and oral portions. Per
department and college policy, no options other than “pass” and “fail” are available to the
committee. In all cases, department and college policy supersedes these program
procedures.

Written Portion

Option 1: Area examination. The written portion of the exam requires answering 5
questions in 8 hours, working alone in an in-class exam format. Questions are selected
from a list of 7 to 8 final questions submitted by the GE committee and based on the
student’s readings list. Three of the questions will be drawn from the student’s
concentration area, one will be from the larger field of cognitive sciences outside this
concentration, and one question will concern methods and/or ethics.

Option 2: Area paper. The area paper reviews a topic within the student’s area of
concentration, which must be approved in advance by the GE committee. The area paper
is limited to 40 APA-style content pages (i.e., excluding title page, abstract, references,
tables, figures, and appendices). The area paper substitutes for the three written-exam
questions (from the Area Exam option) within the student’s concentration. Once the topic
is approved, the area paper is written without feedback from the GE committee or anyone
else, except that the committee chair may examine an outline of the paper once for
completeness (e.g., informing the student if a major topic was omitted). Within 12 weeks
of the date that the GE committee and the readings list are approved, the student must
take a written examination consisting of two questions (one from outside the
concentration and one from methods and/or ethics) and submit the area paper on that day.
Students must answer the 2 questions in 3 hours.

Evaluation. Students must receive an overall passing grade on the written portion in order
to proceed to the oral portion of the general examination. Committee members will grade
written answers and an area paper on a scale of 1 to 5, where a score of 3.0 will be
considered passing. Pursuing the area-examination option, students must pass 4 of 5
written questions. Pursuing the area-paper option, students must receive a passing score on the review paper, as well as passing 1 of 2 written questions.

*Miscellaneous.* Notes and reference materials cannot be used by the student during the in-class written portion of the examination. Students are also not allowed to re-do a question or revise the paper, but it is possible for the committee to request additional information about an answer or the area paper in borderline cases. However, the oral portion of the examination provides the typical opportunity for students to elaborate on their answers.

**Oral Portion**

The oral portion consists of the committee posing questions to the student, and does not typically begin with a presentation or overview by the student. Students are strongly encouraged to review their exam materials prior to the oral portion, as they will be expected to expand on the written answers and/or area paper, as well as to potentially responding to additional questions. Committee members may ask questions about any topic they deem relevant to evaluating the student’s readiness for doctoral candidacy, and are specifically not limited to asking about the topics of exam questions or review papers.

*Evaluation.* Students must pass all portions of the oral examination in order to pass the general examination as a whole. Committee members will determine whether the student has passed or failed the general examination based on combined performance in the written and oral portions.

*Miscellaneous.* Notes and reference materials cannot be used by the student during the oral portion of the examination. However, students should bring a copy of their written answers (including the area paper, if applicable) to the orals.

**General Exam for Community Students**

**Overview**

The General Examination will include both written and oral components. Options for the written component and procedures for the orals are described briefly below. Across all options, students will be expected to demonstrate competence in theoretical, practical, political, methodological (research), and ethical aspects of the focal topic of the exam. Students wishing to pursue options 2-4 must submit a written proposal for approval by the general examination committee and are expected to submit the final product within 2 semesters after approval of their proposal. Students should consult their committee chair for details of specific criteria for each option.

*Written Examination*

1. **Area exam.** 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 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.
The written examination will take place over 2 days. The entire set of questions will be presented to the student the first day and the student will have 16 hours to complete the written exam.  

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

3. **Grant Application.** The student will write a pre-doctoral grant proposal. The proposal should include a conceptual rationale, methodology, and evaluation plan.  

4. **Policy White Paper.** The student will write a white paper, suitable for use in a policy setting, on a policy question related to an area of study. The paper will summarize and critique relevant research, discuss pros and cons of several policy options, and present a justified recommendation.  

**Orals**  
Approximately one week after submission of the written examination, 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 or sections of the exam that were not passed. A second failure would result in a dismissal action being initiated.  

**General Exam for Joint Clinical and Community Students**  
Jointly enrolled clinical and community students take the general exam on the same schedule and using the same structure as the clinical students. See preceding section on General Exam for Clinical Students. The questions also are the same, with the exception of the clinical applications question. The clinical applications question is modified by members of the clinical and community faculty to allow students to demonstrate knowledge gained in community coursework and practica experiences. The joint clinical and community students are responsible for the same core competencies addressed in the clinical general exam.  

**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 pre-doctoral 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 pre-doctoral 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.
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 must have 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 not have 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 Dissertation Committee Nomination form (see Updating the Student’s Master Record later in this handbook) specifying the manner in which the members will satisfy the department’s rules regarding committee composition detailed above and also 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 by a current curriculum vitae for any person not holding a regular appointment in the Department of Psychology. In addition, the student should submit a document summarizing the dissertation topic. 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 committee 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 the dissertation, in whole or in part, be presented in publishable form. Two formats are endorsed by the department (see Thesis and Dissertation Guidelines) but typically dissertations contain a review of the literature in a format that is endorsed by the dissertation committee. In addition dissertations must follow all guidelines specified by the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies should be notified of a student’s scheduled oral defense at least two weeks in advance of the defense.

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 scheduled and the outcome (pass or fail) of the defense (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). Theses and dissertations of previous graduate students are available in the university library for study and present good models of acceptable work as well as the standards of the department, the university, and the profession.

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 a 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.

The College of Arts and Sciences requires that the student submitting the dissertation must be listed as either the sole author or as the first co-author of each article used as a chapter. The inclusion of any articles that are previously published or accepted for publication requires permission from the copyright holder. Articles not yet copyrighted by another party will be covered under the copyright of the dissertation.

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 Ethics Code.
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.

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 in the student’s first year in the program, these evaluations will occur during the spring semester. They will emphasize the current academic year. 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 mid-point of spring semester, students submit to the chair of their program an annual report describing their research and academic activities and accomplishments during the current academic year and their plans for the remainder of the 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 fall semester of the following 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).

**GRADES 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 (note: Earning a ‘B- does not satisfy this requirement). 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 six (6) 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.
DISMISSALS 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 fall semester after an unsatisfactory annual evaluation the previous spring 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 policies 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 general 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://www.cas.gsu.edu/grad_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.

**Continuous Enrollment**

In order to continue actively in an academic program, students must register for at least a total of six (6) semester hours of course work during any period of three consecutive semesters until completion of degree. Also, they must be actively enrolled in the program of study during the semester of graduation.

**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. 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.

Students who do not register for two (2) consecutive semesters will receive a warning from the Graduate Office indicating that failure to register the following semester will result in deactivation of their degree track. The warning will be issued only once.
NOTE: If being away from the University for an academic year or more is part of an internship or project integral to a graduate program, exception to the continuous enrollment requirement is allowed. However, upon completion of the hiatus, the student must re-enter through the Graduate Office rather than online or through Undergraduate Admissions. Students must formally apply for this exception before the period of absence begins.

**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, and 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 with a link to the department’s milestone signature forms (http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwpsy/docs/PSY/MilestoneForms.pdf). 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 form to the Assistant to the Director of Graduate Studies, thereby officially recording the relevant event.

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 (kdhill@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.

The purpose of the leave is to temporarily suspend the clock on the student’s milestones for the period of the leave. Although departmental progress guidelines are adjusted for departmentally approved leaves of absence, this does not exempt students from any College or University policies (e.g. expiration of coursework, Continuous enrollment, inactive status, etc).

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 Cognitive Sciences) 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 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.

3. **Audit for doctoral general exam.** This form 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 9950A, B, C, E, or M.**

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

8. **Authorization for Psyc 9970C.**

9. **Overload Authorization**

10. **Change your advisor** (single program).
11. **Change your advisor** (joint program).