

Department of Psychology  
College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Wyoming

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## **GRADUATE PROGRAM HANDBOOK**

*2020 Edition*

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Welcome to the Doctoral Program in the Department of Psychology at the University of Wyoming. This handbook is intended to acquaint you with our graduate program requirements, explain our current policies, and help you plan your graduate education. Our faculty and staff will be glad to answer your questions and provide additional information. Please read this handbook carefully and keep it for future reference. Regular updates will be provided.

## Student Resources

Essential resources for students, including required forms and petitions, are provided on the department's "current student" webpage:

<http://www.uwyo.edu/psychology/graduate/current.html>

Unless otherwise noted, links to forms referred to in this handbook are available there. You should be familiar with all the important information available on this website.

For diversity and inclusion resources see: <http://www.uwyo.edu/psychology/diversity.html>

## Nature of the Graduate Training Program

The UW Department of Psychology offers the Master of Science (MS) degree in Psychology and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree in Psychology through our programs in Clinical Psychology and Experimental Psychology. The Experimental division includes programs in Cognition/Cognitive Development, Psychology and Law, and Social Psychology.

The American Psychological Association has accredited the Clinical Psychology Training Program since 1972. The Clinical program adheres to the **scientist-practitioner** training model. Research knowledge and experience are viewed as fundamental parts of the student's education and critical to the role of a clinical psychologist. Although there are many possible careers available for clinical psychologists, all require adequate research knowledge. Academic psychologists, who typically work at universities or medical schools, participate in research activities as an integral part of their responsibilities. Private practitioners must be able to evaluate effectively the existing research literature and apply the literature to their activities as appropriate. Fundamental principles of research such as forming and testing hypothesis often guide the process of assessment and psychotherapy. In a service-providing agency, common research activities of clinical psychologists include program evaluation and needs assessment.

The PhD programs in Experimental Psychology are designed to prepare graduates for employment in academia, research institutes, government agencies, or private firms. Students are actively involved in research from the time they enter the program, and they are encouraged to work with a variety of faculty members in related areas.

Students entering our PhD programs earn the master's degree as part of their doctoral training. We do not typically admit students who are interested in completing only the master's degree. Occasionally a "terminal" master's degree is awarded when the student's training is terminated at that level.

Graduate study in Psychology at UW is guided by regulations at the levels of the Psychology Department, the College of Arts and Sciences, and the University. (See the Enrolled Students link under the Graduate Education webpage for a list of Graduate Student Resources at <http://www.uwyo.edu/uwgrad/enrolled-students/>.) You should familiarize yourself with graduate study regulations and policies by reviewing information in the University Catalog. This information is available at <http://www.uwyo.edu/uwgrad/catalog/>. On this website, see especially “Graduate Student Regulations and Policies.”

Degree program requirements may change over time. Students may choose to satisfy the requirements as stated at their matriculation or they may choose to satisfy the new requirements.

### **Advising**

Each student will have a faculty advisor while in the program. Upon entering the program, students are assigned to work with a particular faculty member. Assignments are made based on mutual research and training interests. Typically this faculty member also serves as chair of the student’s master’s committee (or the doctoral committee, if the student enters the program with a master's degree). Students are usually mentored by a faculty advisor from their area of study. If a clinical student’s research is directed by a faculty member from another area, then a clinical faculty member on the committee will serve as the faculty advisor for clinical program matters (and vice versa).

The chair of the master's committee will continue to be your advisor until the doctoral committee is officially appointed.

## **Degree Requirements**

### **Master of Science**

In addition to the general requirements specified in the UW *University Catalog* (available at [http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/University\\_Catalog/index.html](http://www.uwyo.edu/registrar/University_Catalog/index.html)), the following are required: (1) successful completion and oral defense of a thesis; (2) PSYC 5060 Statistical Methods in Psychology – 3 hours; PSYC 5300 Applied Multivariate Analysis – 3 hours; PSYC 5520 Introduction to Research – 3 hours; and (3) at least nine credit hours in 5000-level courses exclusive of those listed above and exclusive of research and thesis research credit. A minimum of 30 semester credit hours is required (including 4 thesis credit hours).

### **Doctor of Philosophy**

In addition to the general requirements specified in the UW *University Catalog*, the following are required: (1) written and oral comprehensive examinations and (2) successful completion and oral defense of a research-based dissertation.

### **Specific Degree Requirements for Students in Clinical Psychology**

Clinical students complete a four-year, on-campus sequence of required courses covering core areas of psychology and clinical competency. A listing of these courses can be found in the Clinical Psychology Program Handbook. In addition, two summer clerkships and an APA accredited internship are required.

**Specific Degree Requirements for Students in Experimental Psychology**

In addition to completing the general program requirements described above, graduate students in the Social Psychology, Cognition/Cognitive Development, or Psychology and Law programs must successfully complete three core courses:

PSYC 5780 Advanced Cognitive Development  
PSYC 5650 Social and Affective Psychology  
PSYC 5120 Neuropsychology of Human Behavior

Students are expected to take graduate courses relevant to their interests when offered and to consult with their advisors about course selection. Students in Social Psychology are required to successfully complete at least four additional graduate courses (total 12 credit hours) in social psychology and participate in social research and laboratory activities (total 8 credit hours). These courses will typically include Social Cognition, Personality Science, and two other topical seminars. Students in Cognition/Cognitive Development are required to successfully complete at least four additional graduate courses (total 12 credit hours) in developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, or other topics approved by the student's advisor, and participate in developmental or cognitive research laboratory activities (total 8 credit hours). Students in Psychology and Law are expected to participate in the Psychology and Law Proseminar each semester and to be active members of the Psychology and Law Research Lab. All students should consult with their advisors regarding these and other specific requirements.

**Transfer Credits and Program Requirement Waivers**

Students completing graduate course work at other institutions prior to entering the UW doctoral program may be eligible to transfer credits into this program. However, courses, clinical training experiences, and a thesis completed for a graduate program elsewhere are not automatically accepted for credit in this program. In consultation with appropriate faculty as designated below, the Transfer/Waiver Committee will decide which transfers and waivers will be accepted. Students wishing to obtain transfer credits or waivers should initiate the following process within their first year.

A. Students entering the program with a master's degree that included completion of a research-based thesis may be allowed to transfer from their master's program a maximum of 21 course credit hours into their UW Doctoral Degree Program of Study. Only courses completed with a grade of "B" or higher will be considered for transfer/waiver. Certain limitations on transfer/waiver exist for clinical students. The Clinical Psychology Program Handbook should be consulted for details.

Step 1: Submit a letter to the director of your training program listing all the requests for transfers and/or waivers that you are seeking.

Step 2: Submit a copy of your thesis to your faculty advisor. If your advisor agrees that your thesis is a research-based project that may qualify for a waiver of the thesis requirement in our program, then proceed to Step 3.

Step 3: Submit your thesis to the Transfer/Waiver Committee for consideration. If your thesis is accepted as having fulfilled our thesis requirement, then you may proceed to Step 4. If your thesis is not accepted, then you will be considered a master's candidate and transfers and waivers will follow "B" below.

Step 4: If you wish to have a course accepted for transfer credit into UW's program, you must provide substantiating documentation to justify the request. Such documentation will include transcripts, course catalog listings, course syllabi, and any other relevant information you can provide. Present your documentation to the professor currently teaching the course for which you would like transfer credit. That professor will provide the Transfer/Waiver Committee with an opinion as to the acceptability of the request and will forward the documentation to the committee.

Step 5: All transfer/waiver requests must be approved by the department chair.

B. Students who have taken graduate courses at another university but who do not have a master's degree or whose thesis is not accepted as fulfilling our thesis requirement may transfer up to 9 credit hours into their University of Wyoming Master's Degree Program of Study, in keeping with university graduate student regulations. The procedure for securing transfer credit/waivers is detailed in section A above.

## Evaluation

As developing Psychologists, all students are expected to know and abide by the American Psychological Association *Ethical Code of Conduct* (available at [www.apa.org/ethics/code/](http://www.apa.org/ethics/code/)).

Students are also expected to abide by UW's *Student Code of Conduct* (available at <http://www.uwyo.edu/dos/conduct/index.html>).

In accordance with University policy, the professor is responsible for the grades assigned in classes. In cases where a student disagrees with a grade assigned by a professor, students will follow the appeal procedure established by the University. This procedure provides the student an opportunity to proceed to the next step if satisfaction is not found at a previous step in the process. This route is: Professor, Department Chair, Dean of Arts and Sciences, College of Arts and Sciences Appeal Board.

In addition to other types of evaluations made by other bodies (e.g., thesis and dissertation committees), students are evaluated at least once each year by clinical or experimental faculty. Additional evaluations occur as circumstances demand. Other members of the Psychology Department and adjunct faculty may be invited to attend evaluation sessions at the discretion of the director of the relevant training program. Their attendance is limited to the discussion of only those students they are teaching or whose committees they chair. A written statement from such faculty members is acceptable in place of attendance at the meeting. The department chair may be invited to attend any portion of the evaluation session.

Continuation in the program is contingent upon the student's receiving satisfactory evaluations. Factors considered in evaluation will be: (1) class performance; (2) aptitude for clinical practice as displayed in practicum components of classes (clinical students only); (3) performance in stipend positions such as assistantships and fellowships; (4) progress in research requirements; (5) adherence to expected completion dates for the thesis and the comprehensive examination; and (6) adherence to ethical principles and the student code of conduct. With regard to class performance, students are expected to perform at an "A" or "B" level in graduate coursework. If a student receives a "C" there will

be an automatic review by faculty of the student's standing in the program which may result in remediation or probation. A total of two or more Cs may be cause for termination.

If a student's performance or behavior is deemed unsatisfactory and warrants termination from the program, the student will be informed of this decision through a written statement from the director of the relevant training program. The student may appeal this decision to the Clinical or Experimental Committee prior to actual implementation. In this appeal, the student may elect (1) to have the student member of the Clinical or Experimental Committee present as a voting member; (2) to have the student member present but not as a voting member; or (3) not to have the student member present. The appeal is initiated by a letter addressed to the Director of the Clinical or Experimental Program. The director must receive the letter no later than 14 days after the student was notified of termination. If the Clinical or Experimental Committee rejects the student's appeal, it may be pursued through the established appeal process of the College and University.

In the first year, evaluations will be made near the end of the fall and spring semesters. In the second year and all following years, students will be evaluated near the end of spring semester. In addition, faculty may meet at midterm each semester to identify and discuss any concerns about students.

Nothing in the above statement of policy shall preclude other forms of evaluation established by the Department of Psychology, the College of Arts & Sciences, or the University.

### **Research Philosophy and Requirements**

Knowledge of theory, research, and methodology gained in the classroom is ultimately applied to research conducted under close faculty supervision. Mentoring is a crucial aspect of our professional training model. Consistent with this orientation, students are accepted into the clinical or experimental program with an assignment to a specific faculty mentor based upon similar research interests. Students are expected to work closely with their mentors to develop and execute research projects.

Students entering the program without a master's degree in psychology will be expected to produce a thesis by the end of the second year in the program. Students entering the program with a master's degree in psychology that includes a research-based thesis may apply to the Transfer/Waiver Committee to have their thesis accepted as fulfilling the program's thesis requirement.

All students will complete a dissertation, usually during the 4th or 5th year. Research projects in addition to theses and dissertations are expected.

Students will receive ongoing and comprehensive review of their performance in the program, including feedback on their research progress. If a student is judged to be dilatory in completing research requirements and expectations without compelling justification, the clinical or experimental faculty may take appropriate action to facilitate productivity, such as requiring a course reduction to permit more time to be devoted to research.



The following schedule illustrates how students can complete the master's degree, the comprehensive examination, and the dissertation proposal by fall of the fourth year (and prior to internship application for clinical students). This schedule accords with faculty expectations regarding the completion of research requirements in a timely manner.

#### Second Semester, 1st year

The student will begin serious consideration of a thesis topic by developing a draft of a proposal.

#### First Semester, 2nd year

The student will form a master's committee, write the final thesis proposal, have the proposal meeting with the committee, and begin to collect data.

#### Second Semester, 2nd year

The student will finish data collection, analyze the data, write the thesis, and successfully defend the thesis.

#### First Semester, 3rd year

The student, with the advisor's guidance and approval, will form the doctoral committee and develop the comprehensive examination questions.

#### Second Semester, 3rd year

The student will complete the comprehensive examination.

#### Second Semester, 4th year

The student will write the dissertation proposal, have the proposal meeting, and collect data. Clinical students must complete the comprehensive examination and defend the dissertation proposal before applying for internship.

#### Second Semester, 5th year (Experimental students) or internship year (Clinical students)

The student will write the dissertation, submit it for committee approval, and successfully defend it.

### **Obtaining a Master's Degree in Psychology**

Course requirements for the master's degree are presented in the section above entitled "Master of Science." Successful completion of the master's degree requires appointment of a master's committee, completion of a Master's Program of Study, and completion of the thesis requirement.

#### **Master's Committee**

A committee is formed by the student in consultation with the advisor (see *Graduate Committee Assignment Form*). The proposed committee should be sent to the Psychology Department Advising Coordinator and then submitted by the Department Chair to the College of Arts and Sciences for final approval. The master's committee consists of the Chair (the student's advisor), at least one other Psychology faculty member, and a faculty member from outside the Psychology Department. For clinical students, one of the members must be a member of the clinical faculty (the chair need not be a clinician). This committee is responsible for advising the candidate concerning course work for the

degree program and thesis research. The master's committee also reviews the thesis and conducts the final examination.

Students often select committee members based on similar interests. However, students may be advised to choose committee members who could expand the student's knowledge or provide an alternative perspective.

### **Program of Study**

A master's degree Program of Study should be filed as soon as the master's committee is approved. (See the *Master's Program of Study Worksheet Form*.) This document, filed with the Registrar's office, is provisional and can be amended should changes in coursework be necessary. All Psychology master's programs are "Plan A," so a minimum of 30 hours of coursework is required, including 4 hours of PSYC5960 (Thesis Research) and the successful defense of the thesis. The master's committee must be assigned before the Program of Study will be approved by the Registrar's office.

### **Thesis Requirement**

In consultation with the advisor, the student is responsible for developing a thesis project proposal, which then must be approved by the student's master's committee. At a time convenient for all members, a formal master's thesis proposal defense meeting is held. The results of this meeting are recorded on the departmental *Milestone Report Form* and submitted to the Psychology office staff for filing.

The advisor and the master's committee are responsible for determining the procedure for proposal defense meetings. A typical format is as follows: The student is initially asked to leave the room so that the committee can discuss preliminary matters such as procedure or concerns. The student returns and may or may not be asked to make a brief oral presentation. The committee then questions the student on the proposed research. At the end of the meeting, the student is again asked to leave the room so that the committee can discuss their evaluation of the proposal. Finally, the student rejoins the committee and learns the outcome of the meeting.

Following the proposal meeting, the student should submit a completed *Proposal Approval Form* to the Psychology office.

After the committee chair approves the completed thesis, it is provided to the other committee members for their review and evaluation. An oral examination is then conducted by the committee. This examination is directed toward the adequacy of the thesis but may also evaluate the student's knowledge and proficiency in other relevant areas. A portion of this examination (typically a research presentation) may be made open to the public by posting the date of the examination in the departmental office one week prior to its occurrence.

The committee's decision is recorded on the departmental *Milestone Report Form* and the *Report of Final Examination Results Form*. Each committee member will also complete a *Graduate Student Assessment Form*. This form (one for each committee member) is available in the Psychology office. Committee members will complete the form at the end of the meeting.

It is the student's responsibility to provide the *Milestone Report Form*, the *Report of Final Examination Results Form*, and sufficient copies of the *Graduate Student Assessment Form* at the meeting and to obtain committee signatures on the *Report of Final Examination Results Form*.

## **Attaining Doctoral Candidacy**

### **Doctoral Committee**

Upon completion of the master's degree, the student should arrange for the formation of a doctoral committee. This committee is responsible for conducting the comprehensive examination and serves as the supervising body for the dissertation. The doctoral committee is comprised of a minimum of five persons, including at least three Psychology faculty members. The committee must include a chair (typically the student's advisor) from Psychology and a faculty member from outside the department. The committee for Clinical students shall consist of at least two Clinical faculty members, one of which must be tenured or tenure-track. The committee for an Experimental student shall include at least two Experimental faculty members, one of which must be tenured or tenure-track. As was the case with the master's committee, the doctoral committee is appointed after the committee chair sends the list to the departmental advising coordinator and the department chair recommends it to the College of Arts and Sciences.

Following the formal appointment of the doctoral committee by the College of Arts and Sciences, the student, in consultation with the committee chair, prepares a program of course work and research leading to the doctoral degree. After approval of this plan by the doctoral committee, it is submitted to the Registrar using the *Doctoral Program of Study Worksheet Form*. Upon approval by the Registrar, the student is formally admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree. In completing this form, care should be taken that all remaining coursework is listed, including remaining clerkships and the internship. Similarly, care should be taken to ensure that the student has completed all requirements of the Clinical or Experimental Program.

The student should be aware that the doctoral committee plays a significant role in the student's graduate education. It is this committee that determines the student's Program of Study, conducts the comprehensive examination, and evaluates the dissertation. Although the Clinical Program is fairly well prescribed, it is within the province of the committee to determine whether the student's academic program provides adequate preparation for a doctoral-level psychologist. It is within the jurisdiction of the committee to impose additional requirements.

### **Doctoral Program of Study**

The *Doctoral Program of Study Worksheet Form* should be filed with the Registrar as soon as the master's degree requirements have been met. It can be amended should changes in coursework be necessary. The doctoral committee must be assigned before the Registrar will approve the Program of Study. Also note that the Program of Study must be on file with the Registrar before the comprehensive examination can be scheduled.

### **Comprehensive Examination**

To be eligible to take the comprehensive examination, a student must have completed the master's degree, arranged for a chair for the doctoral committee, had the committee appointed through the Registrar, and filed a Program of Study with the Registrar.

For course credit while working on the comprehensive examination, students register for the appropriate research course (PSYC 5800-5860).

The comprehensive examination determines whether students are qualified, according to their committee, to proceed to doctoral candidacy. Qualification requires that students exhibit sufficient depth and breadth of scholarly knowledge in relevant research literatures, and that they demonstrate profession-appropriate abilities to discuss critically and write clearly about their own work and that of others. The doctoral committee determines how best to assess a student's candidacy for the doctoral degree.

The comprehensive examination process is designed to assess a student's ability to synthesize and integrate scientific literatures in two papers, culminating in an oral defense. The successful student will demonstrate depth of knowledge within a research area and breadth of knowledge within other relevant areas. Evaluation domains include, but are not limited to, the critical evaluation of the evidence base in the extant literature, the methods employed to generate the evidence base, the generalizability of the findings across relevant diverse groups (e.g., race/ethnicity, sex/gender, age, education, etc.), and the theories used to explain the topics. Additional domains may be determined by the student's committee. The successful student integrates and synthesizes information into a cohesive message informing directions for future research and communicates their findings and conclusions clearly and specifically in written and oral formats. Skills necessary for successful completion of the comprehensive examination are addressed throughout the training program, including class discussions focusing on critical evaluation of research articles, integrative papers and grant proposals written for classes, as well as feedback from mentors and other faculty on the thesis and other research papers.

The first paper for the comprehensive examination will be a critical and integrative review of the literature on a topic in the student's main area of interest and should offer recommendations for further inquiry. This paper can and often does provide the background and foundation for the dissertation. It should be approximately 30 pages in length.

The second paper for the comprehensive examination will typically address a question outside of the student's primary area of interest. It also might focus on a topic of primary interest but from a different perspective (e.g., applying a social psychology theory to a clinical population). This paper should be approximately 15-25 pages in length.

Students are expected to complete the comprehensive examination papers within six months after the successful proposal meeting. The committee can be flexible within these guidelines in accepting a proposal that best fits an individual student's training needs.

In general, students should plan to complete the comprehensive examination by the end of the spring semester of the third year. Students entering the program with an approved master's thesis should successfully propose their examination questions by the end of their first year. Timely completion of the comprehensive examination facilitates completion of the dissertation proposal in the fall of the fourth year and eligibility for internship application.

Following the committee's approval of a student's comprehensive examination questions, a copy of the questions should be placed in the appropriate folder in the Psychology office and thus made available to all graduate students.

Once the written portion of the comprehensive examination is completed, the student arranges an oral defense with all doctoral committee members present. Forms completed at this meeting include the departmental *Milestone Report Form* and the *Report on Preliminary Examination for Admission to Candidacy Form*. The student is responsible for bringing these forms to the meeting.

In addition, as with the thesis, the student is responsible for bringing to the meeting a *Graduate Student Assessment Form* for each committee member. These forms are available in the Psychology office. Committee members will complete this form at the end of the meeting.

### **Completing the Doctoral Degree**

The doctoral committee serves as the candidate's dissertation committee. To avoid potential difficulties, throughout the course of the dissertation the student should consult regularly with the advisor as well as with other members of the committee. To remain in good standing in the program, the student must be continuously registered from the time the committee is formed until the dissertation is completed and accepted.

The dissertation is regarded as the student's major research project during graduate school. As such, it is expected that the dissertation will demonstrate the student's capacity for original scholarly work. Although the department does not require that the dissertation of clinical students be in the clinical area, potential employers or licensing boards may negatively weigh a non-clinical dissertation when evaluating credentials.

Once a dissertation proposal has been approved by the advisor, a formal proposal defense is scheduled. When the proposal is approved by the doctoral committee, a *Proposal Approval Form* should be completed and submitted to the Psychology office. The results of this meeting are also recorded on the departmental *Milestone Report Form* and submitted to the Psychology office for filing.

Following completion of the dissertation, the doctoral committee conducts a final examination, a portion of which (typically a presentation of the project) may be open to the public. The student shall notify the public by posting the date of the examination in the Psychology office one week in advance. The examination will involve the defense of the dissertation and require a thorough acquaintance with the general field of study. A majority vote of the doctoral committee is necessary to pass the final examination.

The committee's decision is recorded on the departmental *Milestone Report Form* and the *Report of Final Examination Results Form*. It is the student's responsibility to provide these two forms at the meeting. As with the thesis and comprehensive examination meetings, the student will also bring a *Graduate Student Assessment Form* for each committee member.

Note that the University requires that students be enrolled during the semester in which they graduate. The *Anticipated Graduation Date Form* should be submitted to the Registrar's office by the middle of the semester in which the student intends to graduate. For additional graduation information, see "Graduate Student Graduation Information" on the UW Office of the Registrar website.

### **Time Limitations of Doctoral Studies**

Graduate student regulations require that the doctoral degree be completed within four years after the successful completion of the comprehensive examination. In addition, the Clinical program requires that the doctoral degree be completed within ten years after initial enrollment.

### **Graduate Student Continuous Enrollment Policy**

Graduate students must maintain at least one credit hour of continuous enrollment (excluding summer sessions), including the semester or session they expect to receive their degree, unless a formal leave of absence is approved.

### **New Parent Accommodation Policy**

The "New Parent Accommodation Policy" is designed to allow new parents to maintain full-time, registered student status and facilitate their return to full participation in graduate activities in a seamless manner without penalty. For further information regarding this important policy, please consult the *Graduate Student Regulations and Policies* webpage in the University Catalog on the Registrar Home Page.

### **Commencement Exercises**

Master's and doctoral degree recipients are encouraged to participate in the College of Arts and Sciences commencement exercises in May or December. Both master's and doctoral degree recipients are hooded by their mentor professors as part of the college commencement exercises.

## **Awards in Psychology**

Awards for outstanding achievement during graduate school are available from several sources.

### *Psychology Department Awards*

The Psychology Department faculty nominates graduate students to receive awards for outstanding achievement in a variety of categories. Any monetary awards may be processed through the Financial Aid Office and therefore may affect need assessments as determined through UW Financial Aid.

### *Wyoming Psychology Association Book Award*

The Wyoming Psychology Association makes a book award to an outstanding graduate student each year. Faculty members nominate students for this award.

### *University of Wyoming Awards*

Various university-sponsored awards are made each year (e.g., Outstanding Teaching Assistants, Outstanding Dissertation). The College of Arts and Sciences is another source of awards for Psychology graduate students.

#### *Awards from Professional Organizations*

Many professional organizations, including the American Psychological Association, the Association for Psychological Science, and the National Science Foundation offer awards to graduate students. Students are encouraged to explore these possibilities.

## **Research Support**

### **Institutional Review Board**

The University of Wyoming mandates that **“Research conducted by faculty and students which involves the use of human subjects in any way must be reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the initiation of the research project.”** The IRB is charged with protecting the rights and welfare of human research subjects recruited to participate in research activities conducted under the auspices of the University of Wyoming. If the research involves interaction or intervention with human subjects in any way, or if a researcher obtains identifiable, private information about a subject (e.g., via survey procedures or existing records), the research proposal must be reviewed by the IRB.

All IRB proposals must be submitted for approval prior to beginning data collection. For master’s theses and dissertations, the student’s advisory committee must approve the proposal prior to its submission to the IRB. Investigators (including graduate students) are required to complete the human subjects research training module at <https://www.citiprogram.org/> prior to submitting a proposal for a review.

There are 3 levels of IRB review: exempt, expedited, and full board. **The IRB committee, not the researcher, makes the determination as to the level of review needed.** In general, research proposals that meet the exempt review criteria are those that propose no more than everyday risk to the participant. This may include surveys of adults (18 years and older) about non-sensitive topics and are usually completed in a few days. Proposals that meet the expedited review level would contain slightly more than everyday risk and the participants are not from sensitive groups such as children, incarcerated people, or those in mental health settings.

All projects that involve more than minimal risk and/or participants from sensitive populations are reviewed by the full Board. The IRB meets approximately every month during the academic year, so if you propose a research project that requires full Board review you must wait for approval until the Board meets. You will be invited and are strongly encouraged to attend the IRB meeting when your proposal will be reviewed. This will give you an opportunity to respond to questions the Board may have or to work out alternative procedures to address Board members’ concerns.

Information on the Institutional Review Board procedures, including the outline proposals must follow, submission deadlines, and meeting dates, can be found on the University website at <http://www.uwyo.edu/research/compliance/human-subjects/index.html>. The proposal should include an explanation of the procedures of your study, the identification

and assessment of the risks involved in participation in the research, the potential benefits of the research, consideration of the informed consent process, selection of subjects, protection of privacy and confidentiality, and the investigator's plans for collection, storage, and analysis of the data. Also include copies of all measures that you plan to administer and the consent form. Both you and your advisor must sign your proposal. IRB proposals and materials may be submitted at any time to Institutional Review Board, Room 308, Old Main, 1000 East University Avenue, Department 3355, by the due date prior to the scheduled meeting. Submission of proposals via email to [IRB@uwyo.edu](mailto:IRB@uwyo.edu) is encouraged.

### **Psychology Research Participant Pool**

All undergraduate students enrolled in PSYC1000 (General Psychology) must fulfill a research participation requirement. One way for students to meet this requirement is by participating in research projects conducted by faculty and students in the Psychology Department. PSYC1000 students typically must participate in 5 hours of research. These students comprise the Psychology Research Participation Pool.

Two faculty members and a graduate assistant administer the participant pool. They aim to ensure that there are enough projects available for students to fulfill their requirements and enough students available for researchers to complete their studies by distributing research credits each semester to faculty and students who intend to collect data. At the beginning of each semester, the research participation committee solicits requests from researchers for the number of credit hours they anticipate using in that semester. Credit hours are then distributed to the researchers.

Some research designs require participants who meet specific inclusion criteria. "Mass Testing" is designed to allow students to earn research credit for completing screening questionnaires that may be used by researchers to select them into particular studies. During Mass Testing sessions, PSYC1000 students complete an online set of questionnaires. Researchers can use their scores on these measures to select students to invite for participation in a study.

## **Psychology Department Policies**

### **Building Security**

Keys issued to graduate students are intended for graduate student use only. Keys may not be shared with or lent to friends, undergraduate students, or anyone else.

### **Departmental Colloquia**

Scholars from within and outside the Psychology Department are often invited to present their research in departmental colloquia. These events are an important part of departmental life and graduate student education. Graduate students are expected to attend colloquia. They are also encouraged to participate in events (e.g., receptions, dinner with the speaker) related to these presentations.

### **Departmental Culture**

For all members of the Psychology Department, there are informal expectations that help maintain a mutually respectful community of scholars. Graduate students are expected to treat other students, staff, faculty, and community members with respect and conduct themselves professionally in the classroom, laboratory, and other campus settings.



Graduate students should be accessible to faculty, to undergraduate students, and to one another by maintaining a visible presence in the department and open lines of communication (e.g., email). Graduate students should consult with their advisor before pursuing employment opportunities that may affect full participation in graduate training (such as jobs outside the department that are not psychology-related).

Elective coursework may also limit a student's ability to fully participate in graduate training and so should be discussed in advance with your advisor.

In scheduling graduate committee meetings such as proposals and defenses, graduate students are expected to respect faculty time constraints by providing considerable advance notice of such meetings to their committees.

### **Grievance Procedures**

Occasionally students may disagree with policies and decisions of faculty in the department. The department's grievance procedures follow:

Personal and academic complaints of one form or another are not uncommon in university life, and it is the department's intention to facilitate the procedures necessary to resolve sources of discontent which may occasionally arise.

I. In the event that a graduate student has a grievance regarding a department policy, department personnel, or a department decision, the student should take the following steps:

- 1) The student should first bring the matter to their advisor. Depending on the nature of the grievance, the advisor may decide to bring the matter to the attention of the relevant graduate program director or the department chair, members of the student's master's or doctoral committee, the faculty of the Clinical or Experimental program, or the full Psychology faculty.
- 2) If the student is not satisfied with the actions taken by the advisor, the student may bring the matter to the director of the relevant program. (If the advisor is also the director of the student's program, the student should bring the matter to the department chair.)
- 3) If the student is not satisfied with the actions of the program director, the student may bring the matter to the department chair.
- 4) Finally, if still not satisfied, the student may consult with the Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences responsible for student appeals. If the grievance alleges prejudice against the student, unwarranted evaluation, or capricious treatment, the matter may be referred to the College of Arts and Sciences Student Appeals Committee for action.

II. Grievances regarding retention in graduate programs, employment as graduate assistants, and charges of academic dishonesty or scientific misconduct (not related to course grades) should be aired through department channels initially. If still not satisfied, such grievances should be taken to the Graduate Student Appeals Board (GSAB). Appeals emanating from thesis or dissertation research will also be heard by the GSAB. However, appeals of course grades or charges of academic dishonesty associated with a course are not handled by the GSAB. These appeals are handled by the procedures of the college in which the course is offered.

III. UW Reg 1-5 details procedures for receiving, investigating, and responding to all reports of discrimination or harassment. Students may elect to take their complaints to the department chair or directly to the Employment Practices-Affirmative Action Office.

### **Leaves of Absence**

Except under unusual circumstances, it is expected that a student will complete graduate training in consecutive semesters and summers during which the student is engaged in full-time training. Any leave-of-absence during the on-campus phase of training must be approved by the Clinical or Experimental Committee. To request a leave, a letter indicating the reasons for the request must be submitted to the Director of the Clinical or Experimental Program. Upon receipt of this letter the program director will present the request to the appropriate committee for its decision. Unless this procedure is followed, absence from the program will result in the student's dismissal from the program. The department chair must approve a student's leave with a letter stating explicitly the length and the conditions under which the student may return to the program.

### **Summer Proposal and Defense Policy**

Student proposals and defenses (for theses, comprehensive examinations, and dissertations) are expected to take place during the academic year, defined for this purpose as beginning one week prior to the first day of classes in the fall semester and ending two weeks after the last day of classes in the spring semester. Graduate committee meetings should not be scheduled during the summer. Obviously, even within these constraints, meeting times will depend on individual schedules of the student and faculty committee members. It is the student's responsibility to plan according to this policy and it is recommended that students make arrangements well in advance.

### **Teaching**

Most Psychology graduate students become involved in teaching during their graduate careers. Students who receive financial support in the form of graduate assistantships will often receive teaching assignments. A variety of factors determine the nature of these assignments. These factors include course offerings, course sizes, student class schedules, and faculty and student preferences.

Students interested in obtaining specific teaching experiences should express their interests to their advisors and the department chair. Opportunities to teach as sole instructor for summer courses (and occasionally academic year courses) are sometimes available, depending on the needs of the department and on faculty assessment of the student's capabilities and experience. In order to teach a course as sole instructor, a student is generally expected to have obtained the master's degree, to have had a graduate-level course on the topic, and to have been a teaching assistant for the course in question. The student must also have the endorsement of the faculty member who normally teaches the course. Such opportunities are contingent on program needs and cannot be guaranteed to be available.

When graduate students serve as sole instructor for a class, they are expected to consult with the supervising faculty member regarding the selection of textbooks, syllabus development, exam format, and other aspects of course preparation. Student evaluations of the course must be obtained.

## Financial Aid and Scholarships

Students wishing to make application for financial aid, including loans, grants, and scholarships not specifically associated with the Psychology Department, should contact the **UW Financial Aid Office** for information.

Graduate students in Psychology may qualify for monetary support made available by Psychology Department scholarship funds. Thanks to gifts made by generous donors over the years, the Psychology Department can access funds that may be obtained by individual students through competitive application. At the beginning of each academic year, the Department Scholarship Committee will notify students of deadlines and procedures for applying for these funds.

Funds may be sought in the following categories:

1. Thesis and dissertation research.
2. Travel expenses related to the presentation of research.
3. Educational expenses.
4. Other research expenses.
5. Emergency expenses.
6. Other (Applications for other categories will be considered).

Students should be aware that monetary awards provided through Psychology Department scholarship funds are processed through the UW Financial Aid Office. These awards therefore affect student need assessments, as determined by the Financial Aid Office.

### Graduate Assistantships

Assistantship assignments are made by the department chair in consultation with the undergraduate program coordinator and directors of the Clinical and Experimental Programs. These assignments are usually for teaching, either as sole instructor for a class or as a teaching assistant for a faculty member. Typical teaching assignments include General Psychology (PSYC1000) and Research Methods in Psychology (PSYC2000). Students who hold a Master's degree, have completed training in teaching and instruction, and who have relevant course knowledge may have the opportunity to be sole instructor for a course. .

To obtain as much financial assistance as possible for students, it is expected that students in their second year or higher will apply for assistantships elsewhere on campus. Before recommending students for graduate assistantships outside of the department, the faculty will consider the student's progress in the program, such as completion of the thesis according to the established timelines. Progress in the program will also be a primary consideration in the award of departmental support.

The period of service for persons on departmental assistantships is from the first day of registration until the last day of final examinations each semester. During the registration period, each student is required to perform duties as assigned by the department chair or a delegated faculty member.

For students with departmental assistantships, any absence must be approved in advance by the supervising faculty member and the department chair. Failure to obtain approval for any absence may result in loss of the assistantship.

Assistantship stipends are paid on the last day of each month, with the first payment being made on September 30th.

The standard assistantship provides a stipend to the student payable in installments over the academic year (September through May). The base stipend for a full-time graduate assistant is \$17,145. Graduate students who are on an assistantship are expected to work an average of 18-20 hours per week. Usually a student who receives a stipend must enroll for at least 9 credit hours and is considered a full-time, full-fee-paying graduate student. Graduate assistants for summer sessions must not enroll for more than six credit hours.

The tuition and fee reduction covers only the tuition and mandatory fees for courses in which the graduate assistant actually enrolls. Graduate assistantship tuition and fee reduction will cover up to 9 credit hours of tuition and mandatory fees. Some non-state funded graduate assistantships may only cover up to 9 credit hours or sometimes more than 12 credit hours, depending on the source of funding. Students should check with the department for individual coverage.

Graduate assistants are not entitled to the difference between the amount stated in an award letter and the actual charges for enrollment. If less than a full stipend is awarded, the tuition and fee reduction is adjusted down to the percentage rate of the stipend. Health insurance will be paid for graduate students on assistantship for the calendar year. Students may refuse the university insurance. The insurance payment, in such cases, reverts to the university.

### **Graduate Student Summer Augmentation Awards**

Funds for summer PhD augmentation are sometimes made available to shorten candidates' time-to-degree. When available, these funds are provided during the summer so that doctoral candidates can pursue remaining doctoral requirements. Applications for these funds, when available, are typically due in January of each year. You will be notified of the application process in advance of the deadline.

### **Graduate Student Travel Support**

University travel funds may be available for graduate students. Application information can be found at <http://uwyo.academicworks.com>. On this website go to "WyoScholarships: Our Opportunities" and then "Graduate Student Travel Funding Request." Students may also apply for support from the Psychology Department as described earlier in this handbook.

### **Summer Employment Opportunities**

Graduate students are encouraged to arrange their summers to maximize progress in their studies. For students who need to work for money during the summer, opportunities affording flexibility and relevance to future professional activities include (but are not limited to):

1. Financial support through research fellowships occasionally offered by institutional entities such as the College of Arts and Sciences.
2. Research assistantships provided by grant-funded faculty members.

3. Teaching for the Psychology Department during summer sessions.
4. Tutoring for programs such as the McNair Scholarship Program.

## **Departmental Facilities**

The Psychology Department main office is located in 135 Biological Sciences. All students should frequently check the mailboxes provided for them for announcements of departmental and university activities.

### **Computer Facilities**

The department maintains a graduate student computer laboratory in Room 302 of the Biological Sciences building. The lab is equipped with advanced computer work stations and a printer linked to a local area network file server. SPSS and Microsoft 365 are available. An open computer lab is also located in the basement of the Biological Sciences building in Room 37.

### **Office Staff**

The departmental Accounting Senior Associate (Dora Montez) assists with processing graduate assistant paperwork, travel expense reports, and purchase of supplies on faculty grants.

The departmental Office Associate (Cheryl Hamilton) has multiple administrative duties and can provide assistance and answer questions regarding office procedures and policies. She also can provide assistance with the fax and copy machines and can take telephone messages for graduate students.

The departmental office Student Advising Coordinator (Hailee Starr) helps with schedule administration, academic records, PERC distribution, and graduate student course assignments and overrides.

The departmental Business Manager (Shaun Ziegler) manages both the business and fiscal operations of the department such as budgets, expenditures, and Human Resources processes. In addition, he assists faculty with the financial management of their grants.

### **Offices, Telephones, Keys**

Graduate students are provided an office in the Biological Sciences building, usually sharing office space with one or more students. Graduate student offices do not have telephones. A telephone is available in the mailroom for department related calls. Telephones are also provided for assessment and participant pool duties. Keys for student offices, mailboxes, and the clinic (for clinical students) are also provided to graduate students.

### **Photocopy Accounts**

Graduate students are provided with two photocopy accounts—a school account and a personal account. The school account should be used for all research assistant and teaching assistant duties. Cost will be covered by the department or faculty grants. The personal account should be used for all personal copies including class readings and other materials related to coursework and graduate training. Students will receive a bill at the end of each month for personal charges.

**Student Files**

Student records are kept in the departmental office and contain information regarding all decisions concerning the student's program and progress. When milestones are achieved or important decisions are made, the appropriate forms, records, or letters will be maintained in the student's file. These include annual student progress reports, progress summary letters, decisions regarding substitution of required courses, and faculty evaluations of student progress. Copies of grade reports and university and department forms are also included in student files.