

**POLICIES AND RULES**  
**FOR**  
**GRADUATE STUDY**  
**IN**  
**PSYCHOLOGICAL**  
**SCIENCES**

Prepared by:

The Program Heads Committee  
Department of Psychological Sciences  
University of Connecticut  
Storrs, CT 06269-1020  
Revised: June 2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
<b>I. FOREWORD.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>II. PROCESS FOR SEEKING ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVISORS .....</b>	<b>5</b>
A. Major Advisors of Master’s and Ph.D. Candidates	5
B. Associate Advisors of Master’s and Ph.D. Candidates	5
<b>IV. TRANSFERRING FROM ONE PROGRAM TO ANOTHER.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>V. FEEDBACK MECHANISMS AND GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>VI. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS .....</b>	<b>6</b>
A. General Policies	6
B. Departmentally Sponsored Remunerative Positions	8
C. External Funding Sources	10
<b>VII. DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION (The Programs) .....</b>	<b>11</b>
A. Behavioral Neuroscience	11
B. Clinical Psychology	11
C. Developmental Psychology	11
D. Industrial & Organizational Psychology	11
E. Perception, Action, Cognition	11
F. Social Psychology	11
<b>VIII. THE MASTER’S PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>12</b>
A. The Advisory Committee	12
B. Program Requirements	12
<b>IX. THE PH.D. PROGRAM.....</b>	<b>14</b>
A. The Advisory Committee	14
B. Ph.D. Plan of Study	15
C. General Examination	17
D. Dissertation Proposal	18
E. Dissertation	19
F. Final Ph.D. Oral Defense	19
<b>X. GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS.....</b>	<b>21</b>

## I. FOREWORD

This is a compilation of policies and regulations prepared by the Department of Psychological Sciences Program Heads Committee. It incorporates changes made since the last compendium issued by this Committee. The Committee comprises the Heads of the formally recognized programs, the Associate Head for Graduate Studies, the Associate Head for Undergraduate Studies, the Associate Head for Research and Resources and the Department Head. The major functions of the Committee are to promote orderly procedures and excellence in graduate training. The policies adopted and herein described are designed to accomplish these purposes. They are consistent with, but go beyond, the minimal formal rules of the Graduate School.

It should be noted that there are requirements stipulated by the Departmental programs which must be met that are not described here. Please see Program Heads for unique program requirements. Also, the individual student's studies are the responsibility of his or her particular Advisory Committee (see Sections VIII and IX), and that Committee may have requirements in addition to those of the Graduate School, the Psychological Sciences Department, and the programs of the Psychological Sciences Department.

Please note that these policies are subject to change and the Department Head may make exceptions to these policies when necessary. A revision to this handbook will be issued in the event of significant policy changes.

J. Barnes-Farrell, Ex-officio, Associate Head for Research  
and Resources  
J. Chrobak, Ex-officio, Associate Head for Undergraduate  
Studies  
M. Coppola, Head of Developmental Program  
J. Green, Department Head  
V. Magley, Head of Industrial/Organizational Program  
E. Markus, Ex-officio, Associate Head for Graduate Studies  
S. Milan, Head of Clinical Program  
N. Ramirez-Esparza, Head of Social Program  
J. Salamone, Head of Behavioral Neuroscience Program  
W. Tabor, Head of Perception, Action, Cognition Program

## II. PROCESS FOR SEEKING ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM

Applicants may apply for admission to only one of the six programs which compose the Department. Two of the six programs (Behavioral Neuroscience and Perception-Action-Cognition) have two Concentrations; applicants must specify which one they are applying to. The Clinical Program has optional sub-concentrations; interest in one or more of these does NOT need to be specified in the application. Descriptions of the programs and their different program Concentrations are in section VII of this brochure. Application deadlines begin on December 1<sup>st</sup>. Specific program deadlines can be found at <http://grad.psych.uconn.edu/prospective/phd/application-deadlines/>.

For an applicant to be admitted to graduate study, it is necessary that the application be reviewed and approved by three agencies. The principal one is the Committee within the program being applied to that represents the applicant's area of Concentration. Approval by the other two agencies will ordinarily follow. The Program Heads Committee of the Department is the second reviewing agency, and in this sphere of its activities it is represented by the Associate Department Head/Coordinator of Graduate Studies. Final approval of applications must be given by the Dean of the Graduate School.

The Program Heads Committee has adopted the following criteria for judging the qualifications of candidates for admission. Note that meeting all the qualifications does not guarantee acceptance:

- a. Three letters of recommendation.
- b. Overall GPA of 3.0 or higher; Psychology GPA of 3.4 or higher.
- c. Strong performance on the General Test of the GRE. (MCAT scores in lieu of GRE scores are acceptable for applications to the Behavioral Neuroscience Program).  
Note: Generally, GRE score reports are considered valid for admission consideration if they are still "reportable" by ETS. GRE scores are only valid for five years (from original test date to submission of UConn application.). If the scores are no longer within the "reportable" period but the university has an official copy of the report on file, the decision whether or not to accept the score report will be at the discretion of the Head of the Program to which the applicant is applying.
- d. Unqualified endorsement by an appropriate department faculty member who can serve as the student's Major Advisor.
- e. International and non-native English speakers please note Graduate School requirements regarding submission of English Proficiency scores.

If an applicant does not all of the requirements stated above, the relevant Program Head may present the rationale for making an exception to the Associate Department Head for Graduate Studies. Only the Associate Department Head for Graduate Studies can grant a waiver of the requirement(s).

## NOTES:

1. University regulations stipulate that candidates who fail to meet the minimum criteria set by the Graduate School for regular status are not eligible for Graduate Assistantships.
2. Faculty admitting students who do not meet the University's English Proficiency Requirement for Teaching Assistant positions may be required to sign a "Department TA Support Agreement" before the admission will be approved by the Associate Department Head for Graduate Studies. See section VI.B.2. (p.8) of this handbook for additional information on the English Proficiency Requirement for Teaching Assistant positions.
3. Students admitted to the Clinical Psychology Concentration will be required to pass a Criminal Background Check prior to matriculation in the PhD program.

## III. RESPONSIBILITIES OF ADVISORS

### A. Major Advisors of Master's and Ph.D. Candidates

Per Graduate School policy, to be part of the graduate program students must have a major advisor. Major advisors are assigned by the relevant Program Head at the time of the student's admission to the graduate program<sup>1</sup>. The designated faculty member will usually serve as the Major Advisor throughout the student's graduate studies. Any faculty member who has been appointed to the Graduate Faculty may serve as major advisor for a Master's and/or PhD student. The Advisory Committee is usually comprised of the Major Advisor and two Associate Advisors, one of whom is outside the student's home program.

The Major Advisor must be willing and able to direct the advisee's thesis and/or dissertation and give such help and advice as are necessary to promote the advisee's progress. The director of an advisee's thesis and/or dissertation must be the Major Advisor. The responsibilities of a Major Advisor for the advisee can be terminated when the latter voluntarily becomes inactive as a student for a semester, when the Major Advisor leaves the department and/or decides they can no longer mentor the advisee, when arrangements are made for the appointment of a new Major Advisor, or when the Advisory Committee, in keeping with the regulations of the Graduate School, recommends that the student's program of study be terminated. A change in a graduate student's Major Advisor is made with the mutual agreement of the student and the new Major Advisor, by filing the relevant form with the Office of the Registrar.

Graduate students may ask the Head of their program (Program A) to allow someone who is a primary member of another program (Program B) to serve as their Major Advisor. Granting such permission does not differentiate that student from other students in that program (Program A) either financially or academically. In this case the student's two Associate Advisors may both be from within the student's program or one can be from within the Program and one from outside the program.

### B. Associate Advisors of Master's and Ph.D. Candidates

When a faculty member agrees to serve as an Associate Advisor for a master's or Ph.D. student, that Advisor is expected to participate actively in the planning of the thesis or dissertation proposal. He or she must also review the thesis or dissertation prior to the oral defense.

---

<sup>1</sup> In some cases, the Major Advisor's role is initially assumed by the Program Head as a matter of convenience.

## IV. TRANSFERRING FROM ONE PROGRAM TO ANOTHER

Students wishing to transfer from one program to another should discuss this with their current Major Advisor. The program the student wishes to join must be willing to accept the student and to assume responsibility for the student's academic and research plan. Financial support is usually assumed by the new program and Major Advisor; however alternative arrangements are possible if mutually agreed upon by the two Programs.

## V. FEEDBACK MECHANISMS/GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Faculty members are obligated to provide periodic feedback to students. Feedback is constructive information about a student's progress. In some programs (i.e., Clinical), feedback will address both academic progress and personal-stylistic concerns that affect a student's professional functioning.

Feedback should follow certain guidelines that help ensure students' rights to due process in evaluation. Feedback shall (a) be provided in a periodic and timely manner, (b) consist of evaluation of both academic and research progress.

Grievances may arise from failure to agree about feedback or may result from a student's perception about being mistreated. The philosophy of the department is to settle grievances in a collegial manner that respects the rights and obligations of the contending parties.

A student who has a grievance should follow this procedure:

1. The student first goes to his or her Major Advisor and presents the grievance. The advisor will attempt to settle the matter to the satisfaction of the student.
2. If satisfaction is not achieved, the student next meets the Head of the program. The Program Head attempts to resolve the matter.
3. If that fails, the student then goes to the Department Associate Head for Graduate Studies. The Associate Head then attempts to settle the issue.
4. If Step 3 fails, the student may file a complaint with the Graduate School following the Complaint Resolution Procedure outlined in the Graduate Catalog.

Note: Another avenue is the Ombuds Office, a confidential and neutral resource available to assist graduate students. For details and contact information (<https://ombuds.uconn.edu/>).

## VI. FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

### A. General Policies

Two categories of financial support are available to help defray the cost of graduate education. One type is based on student financial need, the other is based on academic merit. More than one type of aid may be given concomitantly to a particular student.

1. **Financial Need-Based Awards:** The following types of aid require that the applicant complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as well as the UConn Office of Student Financial Aid Services Graduate Enrollment Form. UConn's on-time application deadline for continuing graduate students is March 1 each year; newly admitted students must apply by May 1 or by the date of their admission. Forms of aid provided under this category include:

- Federal Work-Study
- Federal Direct Stafford Loans
- Federal Direct PLUS Loans (not need-based however FAFSA is required)
- UConn Tuition Remission Grants

Information may be obtained on the Office of Student Financial Aid Services graduate student webpage. Anyone who believes he or she qualifies should apply. Aid of the types listed above can only be awarded to students who have gone through the qualifying process.

**2. Academic Merit-Based Awards:** The following do not require proof of financial need.

- Graduate Assistantships (Teaching or Research)
- Pre-doctoral Fellowships
- Summer Fellowships
- Dissertation Fellowships
- Diversity Fellowships
- Special graduate fellowships
- Graduate School Travel Funding
- Traineeships
- Department Travel Funding
- Department Workshop Funding

These awards may encompass different requirements: see below, the Graduate Catalog, and/or external funding agency requirements.

Additional information may be obtained on the Graduate School website.

- a. Students admitted as candidates for a terminal M.S. degree are not eligible for departmental financial support.
- b. Graduate Assistant (GA) positions provide teaching (teaching assistantship: TA) or research (research assistantship: RA) support to the University. The terms and conditions of GA positions are contained in the collective bargaining agreement between the University of Connecticut and the Graduate Employee Union (see <http://www.uconngradunion.org/> for additional information).
- c. Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships are awarded by the Graduate School on a semi-annual basis. (Application deadlines are typically late-November and mid-May.) Graduate School application requirements include: documentation of successful completion of the General Examination; submission of a Dissertation Proposal (ready for full approval by the Graduate School and including full and current IRB or IACUC approval for the use of any human and/or animal subjects involved in the research or SCRO approval for the use of any human stem cell); and total personal income below a specified threshold. Full information and requirements can be found on the following Graduate School webpage: <https://grad.uconn.edu/financing/fellowships/dissertation/>

The application form will then be signed by the Associate Head for Graduate Studies.

- d. Individual faculty members of the Psychological Sciences Department should not seek funds for student support directly from University sources such as Deans or Vice Provosts. Rather, these requests should be channeled through the Department Head.
- e. Summer Fellowship holders are normally required to remain on campus while they hold the Fellowship and they must be making progress toward their degree. However, they may be allowed to be elsewhere if the Major Advisor attests that they can make better progress by being elsewhere.
- f. Department Travel Funding: Graduate students in their first 5 years of studies are eligible for up to \$500<sup>2</sup> of travel funding per year<sup>3</sup>, except for the year Grad School travel funding is received. This funding is restricted to first authors presenting University of Connecticut research material. More information including the funding form can be found on the Department's website (<https://psych.uconn.edu/travel/>).
- g. Department Workshop Funding: Graduate students in their first 5 years of studies are eligible for up to \$500<sup>2</sup> to attend a workshop. More information including the funding form can be found on the Department's website (<https://psych.uconn.edu/travel/>).

A graduate student is permitted to work more than 20 hours per week only with the approval of the student's Advisory Committee and the permission of the Dean of the Graduate School.

## **B. Departmentally-Sponsored Remunerative Positions**

1. Appointments to departmentally sponsored remunerative positions are made on a competitive basis.
2. Students for whom English is not a native language must demonstrate English Proficiency in order to be eligible to hold a teaching assistantship position. Please see the University of Connecticut English Proficiency policy for TAs for additional information. Such students must obtain certification of English proficiency by April 30<sup>th</sup> of the first year of study, in order to remain eligible for departmental support beyond their first year. (Note: In the case of a student who is not being supported by TA funding in the first year, to become eligible for TA funding in future years, the student would be required to demonstrate English proficiency by April 30<sup>th</sup> of the academic year prior to the academic year in which they intend to first hold a TA position.)
3. The department encourages students to serve as teaching assistants (TAs) and instructors of record (IORs) especially in courses related to their doctoral studies. Such experience can facilitate their post graduate careers. Students admitted with funding will normally be eligible for Departmental support (e.g. TAs and Pre-Doctoral Fellowships) for a maximum of ten semesters from the time they are admitted to a graduate program in Psychological Sciences. Exceptions to the above include:

---

<sup>2</sup>The actual sum may change in a given year dependent on the availability of departmental funds.

<sup>3</sup>Fiscal year 1 July – 30 June



- a. Students in Clinical Psychology and Industrial/Organizational Psychology (I/O) who go on an external internship during their first ten semesters will be granted an extension in Departmental support by one or two semesters, depending on the length of their external internship.
  - b. In all other instances, for students to be eligible for Departmental funding beyond the above stated maximums, the student's Major Advisor or Program Head must request this extension from the Associate Head for Graduate Studies. In doing so, the faculty member will be expected to document that the student is making satisfactory progress toward the Ph.D. Normally, satisfactory progress will include, at a minimum, having completed a Master's thesis or its equivalent, having passed the General Examination, and having a Dissertation Proposal approved by the dissertation Advisory Committee and the Graduate School. If extended eligibility is granted, the Associate Head for Graduate Studies will notify the Department Head, and Departmental funding may continue for a maximum of two additional semesters.
  - c. The cohort of students whose research was impacted by COVID-19 during the 2020-2021 academic year will be given a one-year extension to the 10 semester rule.
5. Students will normally first serve as TAs for PSYC1100 or PSYC1103. Students with satisfactory teaching evaluations will then be given the opportunity to serve as TAs in upper level classes and as IORs. When assigning TA positions consideration will be given to student's experience and preferences, however final allocation will also be based on faculty requests and the needs of the Department.
  6. Students who have questions or concerns about the assignments given in their TA/RA Offer Letter, need to address these issues with their Major Advisor and Program Head. If necessary, the Program Head will then make recommendations to the appropriate staff member and/or Associate Head for Research and Resources.
  7. **Performance of Duties by Graduate Students:** Assistantships are important duties that must be carried out responsibly. Students must perform these duties, as indicated in the Supplemental Description of Duties form. For more information about assistantships' right and responsibilities review the collective bargaining agreement between the University of Connecticut and the Graduate Employee Union (see <http://www.uconngradunion.org/>).

All Teaching Assistants (TAs) are assigned **proctoring duties** in addition to their regular TA assignments. The graduate student TA Coordinator coordinates proctoring assignments. Proctoring is an important TA responsibility; failure to meet proctoring assignments can have undesirable consequences for the professor and the students. Missed proctoring assignments may be penalized with loss of eligibility to apply for Departmental travel funding, as outlined below:

- a. Major Advisor, Program Head, Associate Head for Research and Resources, and Department Head will be informed of all missed assignments.
- b. 1st Missed Assignment:  
The amount of Departmental travel funding that the Graduate Assistant is eligible to apply for is reduced by 50% (in current academic year if missed assignment occurred in Fall semester; in following academic year if missed assignment occurred in Spring semester).
- c. 2nd Missed Assignment:

The amount of Departmental travel funding that the Graduate Assistant is eligible to apply for is reduced by 100% (in current academic year if missed assignment occurred in Fall semester; in following academic year if missed assignment occurred in Spring semester).

Appeals based on extenuating circumstances may be brought to the Associate Head for Research and Resources for consideration. For additional information on proctoring responsibilities please see the “Proctoring FAQs” and “Departmental Policy Regarding Proctoring Assignments” documents, available from the TA Coordinator.

### **C. External Funding Sources**

1. In general, it is the responsibility of the student to identify potential external sources of funding. In some cases, for large or common fellowships, a notice will go out to graduate students from the Department.
2. If an external funding competition limits the number of applications per department, **the deadline to submit applications to the department for ranking/nomination is two weeks prior to the external agency deadline**. Applications should be submitted to the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator.

## VII. DEPARTMENTAL ORGANIZATION

**Department Head**            James A. Green

**Associate Department Heads:**

**Research and Resources:** Janet Barnes-Farrell

**Graduate Studies:** Etan Markus

**Undergraduate Studies:** James Chrobak

The department is organized into six programs, with 8 graduate concentrations. These are listed below. For more details on the concentrations see <https://grad.psych.uconn.edu/prospective/phd/overview/>

A list of faculty in each program is at <https://psych.uconn.edu/faculty/> and a list of staff is at <https://psych.uconn.edu/psychological-sciences-staff/>

**A. Behavioral Neuroscience**

1. Areas of Concentration: a. Behavioral Neuroscience b. Neurosciences
2. John Salamone (Program Head)

**B. Clinical Psychology**

1. Area of Concentration: Clinical (optional sub-concentrations in Child Clinical, and Clinical Neuropsychology, as well as department-wide certificates in Health Psychology and Quantitative Methods can be decided at a later time, in consultation with major advisor)
2. Marianne Barton (Director of Clinical Training)  
Stephanie Milan (Program Head)

**C. Developmental Psychology**

1. Area of Concentration: Developmental
2. Marie Coppola (Program Head)

**D. Industrial/Organizational Psychology**

1. Area of Concentration: Industrial and Organizational
2. Vicki Magley (Program Head)

**E. Perception-Action-Cognition**

1. Areas of Concentration: a. Ecological Psychology b. Language and Cognition
2. Whitney Tabor (Program Head)

**F. Social Psychology**

1. Area of Concentration: Social
2. Nairan Ramirez-Esparza (Program Head)

## VIII. THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

Students enrolled in all PhD program Concentrations except Ecological Psychology are expected to complete a Master's degree as part of the PhD program. (Students who enter the PhD program with a Master's might be eligible for a waiver of the Master's requirement by the Program Head of the relevant Concentration.) The Master's program requires a minimum of 30 course credits<sup>4</sup>. Ordinarily, the Master's degree should be completed within three years; all work for the Master's degree must be completed within six years.

Note: Information on the Master's program is also accessible online in the [academic sequence guide](#)

To become a candidate for a master's degree, the student must file an approved [Plan of Study for the Master's Degree.pdf](#) form with the Office of the Registrar. The Plan of Study will officially establish the Advisory Committee (see below) and indicate the courses that will comprise the Master's program (see Requirements below). The Advisory Committee should be established before 12 credits of degree program coursework have been completed. The Plan of Study should be submitted to the Office of the Registrar and a copy submitted to the Psych Grad Programs Office by the end of the fourth week of the student's final semester before Master's degree completion.

Once a Master's Plan of Study form has been filed with the Office of the Registrar, any changes to the Plan (coursework, switching from Plan A to Plan B) must be reported to the Office of the Registrar using the [Request for Changes in Plan of Study.pdf](#) form

### A. The Advisory Committee

The student's Advisory Committee shall include at least three members, namely:

1. The Major Advisor
2. One Associate Advisor who, with the Major Advisor, is a faculty member in the graduate student's area of Concentration.
3. An Associate Advisor, not in the student's area of concentration. This person may be a faculty member from within the Department or, with proper qualifications, may be from another department in the University, or from outside the University. In the latter case, a written request to have the external Associate Advisor appointed to the committee must be submitted by the Major Advisor to the Associate Head for Graduate Studies and the Graduate School. The request must be accompanied by the CV of the external Advisor.

The Graduate School needs to be notified of any changes in the student's Advisory Committee. To change *Major Advisor*, a [Change of Major Advisor.pdf](#) form should be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar as well as the Psychology Graduate Coordinator. Requests for changes in Associate Advisor must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar on the [Request for Changes in Plan of Study.pdf](#) form.

### B. Program Requirements

The Graduate School offers two types of master's programs: Plan A (Thesis) and Plan B (Non-Thesis). PhD students in the Psychological Sciences Department are typically expected to

---

<sup>4</sup> Students starting the graduate program before Fall 2017 are required a minimum of 24 credits only

complete a Plan A (Thesis) master's as part of the PhD program. In some situations, a program may decide to allow a student to complete a Plan B master's instead of a Plan A master's. This decision is up to the discretion of the Major Advisor and Program Head. A description and requirements of each Plan are indicated below.

### 1. Plan A (Thesis)

This plan emphasizes research activities and requires the following:

- a. **Coursework** - a minimum of 30 course credits which must include:
  - i. PSYC 5104 [minimum grade of B- required for students completing the PhD]
  - ii. GRAD 5950 or 5960 - Master's Thesis Research (minimum of 9 credits)
- b. **Thesis** - information on the [preparation](#) and [submission](#) of the Master's thesis can be found on the [Office of the Registrar website](#). The finalized and formatted thesis should be submitted in [Submittable](#).
- c. **Final Exam** - Near the close of the candidate's period of study – not later than one year after the completion of coursework or the thesis – the student must pass a final examination under the jurisdiction of the advisory committee. This will be an oral examination (defense) based on the candidate's thesis and issues relevant to the thesis. It is recommended that all 3 members attend the defense in person, however one of the examiners (not the Major Advisor) may attend remotely (e.g. via Skype). The Department requires an email announcement of the defense be sent to all faculty and graduate students and a working copy of the thesis be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator approximately two weeks prior to the defense. Procedures for the oral defense are outlined on the Department website or from the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator.

After the examination has been completed the results must be communicated to the Office of the Registrar using the [Thesis Approval Page](#), a webform that now accounts for both the final exam and overall approval of the thesis. The webform routes to your committee for approvals. Once the final committee member has approved the page it will be routed to the Degree Audit office. You do not need to submit an additional signed approval page document.

### 2. Plan B (non-Thesis)

This plan emphasizes comprehensive understanding of a more general character than the thesis plan and requires the following:

- a. **Coursework** - a minimum 30 credits of advanced coursework which must include:
  - i. PSYC 5104 [minimum grade of B- required for students completing the PhD]
  - ii. PSYC 5800 - Research in Psychology (minimum 3 credits). The research project must be approved by the student's Advisory Committee. A formal written report of the project is required.
- b. **Final Exam** - Near the close of the candidate's period of study – not later than one year after the completion of coursework – the student must pass a final examination under the jurisdiction of the Advisory Committee. The examination is arranged by the Major Advisor with the assistance of the Associate Advisors. It should serve to test the

adequacy of the student's mastery of the areas of study. Several types of examination may be given. The following are possible alternatives:

- i. A written examination.
- ii. The candidate may be given a suitable journal article and allowed a day in which to prepare:
  - a) Summary
  - b) Critical appraisal
  - c) Outline of a research study suggested by the article
- iii. An oral examination similar to that of Plan A.

After the examination has been completed the results must be communicated to the Office of the Registrar using the [Report on the Final Examination for the Master's Degree.pdf](#) form, a copy should also be submitted to the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator.

## IX. THE PH.D. PROGRAM

Note: Information on the PhD program is also accessible online in the [academic sequence guide](#)

### A. The Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee shall comprise at least three members. The advisors shall include:

1. The Major Advisor
2. One Associate Advisor who, with the Major Advisor, is a faculty member in the graduate student's area of Concentration.
3. An Associate Advisor, not in the student's area of concentration. This person may be a faculty member from within the Department or, with proper qualifications, may be from another department in the University, or from outside the University. In the latter case, a written request to have the external Associate Advisor appointed to the committee must be submitted by the Major Advisor to the Associate Head for Graduate Studies and the Graduate School. The request must be accompanied by the CV of the external Advisor.

The Major Advisor must be a member of the Graduate School Faculty and must be approved to direct dissertations in the student's Field of Study and area of Concentration. However, it sometimes happens that someone not meeting these criteria actually functions as Major Advisor and the programs wish to recognize this fact. This can be done by listing the *de facto* advisor as an Associate Advisor and including the phrase "Dissertation Director" preceding his or her signature.

The Advisory Committee is officially established by filing the [PhD Plan of Study](#) form with the Office of the Registrar (see B. below). The committee should be established and the Plan of Study filed with the Office of the Registrar before 18 credits of degree program coursework have been completed. Submit a copy to the Psych Grad Programs Office.

Once a PhD Advisory Committee has been established, any changes in the membership of the committee must be approved by the Graduate School. To change *Major Advisor*, a [Change of Major Advisor.pdf](#) form should be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar and the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator. Requests for changes in *Associate Advisor* must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar on the [Request for Changes in Plan of Study](#) form.

## B. Ph.D. Plan of Study

The Graduate School requires that a [Plan of Study for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.pdf](#) form, signed by all members of the PhD Advisory Committee, be submitted to the Office of the Registrar and the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator for approval no later than when 18 credits of coursework have been completed. **The Psychological Sciences Department requires that the Ph.D. Plan of Study and [accompanied breadth of studies form](#) (<https://grad.psych.uconn.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/702/2018/03/Department-of-Psychological-Sciences-Breadth-Form11.7.17.pdf>) also be signed and approved by the Associate Head for Graduate Studies before it is submitted to the Office of the Registrar.** Please see the [Graduate Catalog](#) for complete details of Graduate School requirements.

The department requires 15 credits of Doctoral Dissertation Research (GRAD 6950 or GRAD 6960), plus 15 credits of PhD content coursework including 9 credits of breadth courses and varying Program course requirements. In addition to those requirements, students must complete two statistical courses PSYC 5104 and PSYC 5105. One or both statistical courses may be waived under [certain conditions](#).

The PhD Plan of Study should include the following to satisfy Psychological Sciences Department requirements:

1. **Predissertation Research:** At least one completed research project. This requirement can be met by a Master's thesis or by a minimum of six credits of PSYC 5800 when appropriate.
2. **Breadth of Training:**

In order to expand the student's knowledge beyond their specific area of study, a minimum of nine credits (typically three courses) of graduate work outside the student's Program is required. Usually any graduate class outside the student's Program or the department will count as breadth, assuming it meets the following guidelines:

  - a. No more than one breadth course may be taken with any one instructor, aside from classes listed in (c and d) below.
  - b. PSYC 5104 and PSYC 5105 may not be used for breadth.
  - c. No more than two quantitative courses, defined as courses that count for the Graduate Certificate Program in Quantitative Research Methods, may be used for breadth (e.g. EPSY 6637 Item Response Theory; EPSY 6611 Logistic and Hierarchical Linear Models; EPSY 6615 Structural Equation Modeling; MGMT 6206 Applied Research in Management (Seminar in Multi-Level Theories, Methods, and Analyses in Management-Mathieu; PSYC 5131 Meta-Analysis: Theory & Practice; PSYC 5332 Research Design & Test Construction; PSYC 5470 Longitudinal Data Analysis; PSYC 5701 Experimental Social Psychology; PSYC 5702 Field Research Methods; PSYC 5554 Advanced Nonlinear Dynamics; PSYC 5670 Current Topics (Measurement Theory & Practice); PSYC 5670 Current Topics (Multivariate Approaches to Survey Data); PSYC 6130 Measurement and Scaling; PUBH 5434 Topics in Intermediate Biostatistics; PUBH 5435 Statistical Methods in Epidemiology; SOCI 5203 Quantitative Research I; STAT 3375Q Introduction to Mathematical Statistics; STAT 5825 Applied Time Series)



- d. The following classes will count as breadth for students in all Programs, regardless of the instructor:
- PSYC 5xxx Grant Writing
  - PSYC 5100 History of Psychology
  - PSYC 5140 Foundations in Neuropsychology
  - COGS 5001 Cog. Sciences Proseminar
  - PSYC 5285 Neurobiology of Aging: Changes in Cognitive Processes
- e. Three credit hours of PSYC 5801, taken with a faculty member outside the student's Program, will meet Department breadth requirements as one course. However, the Head of that faculty member's Program must consent to this.
- f. Students in the Perception, Action, Cognition Program who are in the Language and Cognition Concentration may use courses given by the Ecological Psychology faculty as breadth courses. Students in the Ecological Psychology program may, likewise, take courses offered by the Language and Cognition faculty to fulfill the breadth requirement.
- g. Upper level undergraduate classes in other departments and other courses may be considered for breadth on a case by case basis. Requests should be submitted to the Associate Department Head/Coordinator of Graduate Studies for consideration.
- h. Courses in other departments that are cross-listed as PSYC courses will not count as breadth if the PSYC version of the course is in the student's Program, even if the student registers for the course under the external department course number. (ex: BME 6086, cross-listed as PSYC 5270 will not count for BNS students.)
- i. Students entering the program who have not completed at least 5 Psychology courses prior to admission will be required to complete all their breadth courses within the Psychology Department.
- j. Students entering the program with a master's from a **different (Psychology or non-Psychology) department or Program may have up to 6 breadth credits waived (up to two classes)**. Requests should be submitted via email to the Associate Head for Graduate Studies for consideration.
- k. A grade of at least C+ must be earned in all courses elected for the purpose of meeting the Departmental breadth requirement.
- l. If, in undertaking to meet the breadth requirement, a student fails to earn a grade of at least C+ in any one course, but earns an overall average grade greater than C+, that student may submit a request to the Associate Department Head/Coordinator of Graduate Studies for a review of his or her case. This must be done at least one month in advance of the General Examination.
- m. The breadth requirement should ordinarily be completed in or before the semester in which the student takes the General Examination.
3. **Quantitative Methods [Related Area Requirement]:** PSYC 5104 and PSYC 5105 are required to be taken by all graduate students. (Students completing a Master's as part of the PhD program will take PSYC 5104 as part of the Master's program.) A grade of at least B- must be earned in both courses to meet Department requirements for the PhD. If a student has had no

previous experience or if a student feels they need to review undergraduate statistics, STAT 1100Q should be taken on an audit basis before taking PSYC 5104.

PSYC 5104 covers foundational statistical methods needed for behavioral research including analysis of variance. PSYC 5105 builds on the methods taught in PSYC 5104 providing students with an introduction to multiple regression, factor analysis, SEM, and related techniques.

The six required credits of Quantitative Methods should be listed on the Ph.D. Plan of Study in the “Related Area” section and do not count towards the breadth requirement or minimum number of required PhD credits and should not be listed in the PhD Plan of Study “Coursework” section (page 2).

Students who have taken statistics coursework prior to their enrollment in the PhD program, may be eligible for a waiver of one or both of the Quantitative Methods courses. A “[Course Waiver Request Form](#)” may be obtained from and returned to the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator and must be approved by Associate Head for Graduate Studies. Please note that students requesting a waiver are required to attend the course until a waiver is approved. Waivers must be requested within the first week of classes so they can be approved prior to the add/drop deadline (usually 10th day of classes). If the waiver is approved, the student must drop the course by the deadline or they will receive a “W” grade.

#### **4. Licensure Requirement:**

Students interested in licensure should contact their program for details on APA recommendations and relevant courses offered by the department.

Once a [PhD Plan of Study](#) form has been filed with the Office of the Registrar, any changes to the plan must be reported to the Office of the Registrar using the [Request for Changes in Plan of Study](#) form.

### **C. General Examination**

The General Examination may not be taken before the Ph.D. Plan of Study has been approved.

The General Exam is scheduled by each program for its own students. Please inform yourself about the time when it is given in your program.

The General Examination is under the jurisdiction and control of the student’s Advisory Committee, which in practice follows program rules. The General Examination will be over a designated field of knowledge rather than a review of previously taken courses.

Once the student has successfully completed the General Exam, a [Report on the General Examination for the Doctoral Degree.pdf](#) form, including the names of the (at least five) participating faculty members<sup>5</sup>, must be completed and signed by the **Ph.D. Advisory Committee**, then submitted to the Office of the Registrar and a copy of the form should also be submitted to the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator.

---

<sup>5</sup> UCONN faculty members may be substituted with experts from outside the University. These can be appointed as reviewers and/or examiners. A written request for the appointment must be submitted by the Major Advisor to the Associate Head for Graduate Studies and the Graduate School. The request must be accompanied by the expert’s CV.

Should the student fail the examination, under normal circumstances he or she will be allowed to retake the examination when it is given next. A student who has failed the examination twice will be permitted to take it a third time only under unusual circumstances with the agreement of both the Advisory Committee and the Program Head.

## D. Dissertation Proposal

Before dissertation research is undertaken, a proposal of original, scientific research must be approved and submitted to the Graduate School on the required forms. The Proposal should include the scope and content of the research to be conducted.

1. Students must adhere to all Graduate School regulations pertaining to ethical treatment of human participants and animal subjects. If human or animal subjects will be involved in the dissertation research, the student must receive approval from the Institutional Review Board and/or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (<http://compliance.uconn.edu/>) before any research is conducted.
2. The graduate student should submit a detailed written Proposal to the members of the Advisory Committee, **meet with the committee as a group** to discuss the Proposal, and secure the written approval of the Proposal by the advisors.
3. The proposing student's Program Head (or Advisory Committee with approval of the Program Head) then selects two Reviewers, who are experts in the field **and are not members of the Advisory Committee**, to conduct a critical evaluation of the Proposal. **The Department requires at least one Reviewer be a member of the UConn Graduate Faculty; the Graduate School encourages the use of at least one Reviewer from outside the University.** [Note: Individual programs may have policies in addition to those listed here; please check with your Advisor/Program Head for details of the Proposal procedures in your program.]
4. There are two forms which must be completed as part of the Proposal approval process (one [Psychological Sciences Department form](#) and one [Graduate School form](#)):
  - a. "[Report of Meeting to Approve a Proposed Dissertation](#)" – This is a Psychological Sciences Department form and should be obtained from the [Department website](#) or Graduate Program Coordinator ([psychgrad@uconn.edu](mailto:psychgrad@uconn.edu)). The Program Head will sign this form to indicate approval of the Reviewers and the Reviewers will sign this form to indicate their approval of the Proposal.
  - b. "[Dissertation Proposal for the Doctoral Degree](#)" – This is a Graduate School form and should be obtained from the [Graduate School website](#). (Instructions for preparing the Proposal document are provided with the Graduate School form.)

Once the Proposal meeting has been held, the Proposal has been reviewed and approved by the Reviewers, and signatures of the Advisory Committee, Program Head, and two Reviewers have been obtained as required on the two forms, **both forms plus a copy of the Proposal document and IRB approval, must be submitted to the Associate Head for Graduate Studies for final Departmental approval and signature.**

Once all approvals have been obtained, the Proposal packet (containing the Graduate School Proposal coversheet, IRB/IACUC approval letter (if applicable) and Proposal text) must be submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The *original* of the Department Proposal Form plus a

copy of the Graduate School form should be submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator.

The Dissertation Proposal should be written, reviewed, and fully approved before preparation of the dissertation is well underway. The Proposal should be submitted to the Graduate School for final review at least six months before the expected date of degree completion and by the time the student has completed the ninth (9th) credit of GRAD 6950 or 6960. Receipt by the Graduate School of the approved Dissertation Proposal and any required IRB, IACUC, or SCRO approval is a basic requirement for eligibility to schedule the Oral Defense of the dissertation and for conferral of the doctoral degree.

Upon approval of the Plan of Study, passing of the General Examination (including submission of the General Exam form to the Office of the Registrar), and approval of the Dissertation Proposal by the Graduate School, the student becomes a Candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

## E. Dissertation

1. Before concluding the research phase of the dissertation, the graduate student should obtain the formal approval of all the Advisors of the adequacy of the data and the treatments applied in analyzing the results.
2. Before preparing the final copy of the Dissertation, the graduate student should have a final draft formally approved by all the advisors

## F. Final Ph.D. Oral Defense

The student or Major Advisor should obtain the Departmental “[Dissertation Defense Form](#)” from the Department [website](#) and should [follow the procedures](#) outlined.

### 1. Before the Defense

- a. Agreement to attend the Oral Defense should be obtained (a) from all members of the Advisory Committee and (b) from two other faculty members (Examiners). **The Major Advisor will assist the student in obtaining the signatures on the Dissertation Defense form of faculty members agreeing to attend the examination.** Should he or she encounter difficulty in enlisting faculty members to serve, then the aid of the Associate Head for Graduate Studies should be sought. (Please note: The two additional Examiners are not the same as the Reviewers of the Proposal. The Proposal Reviewers can act as defense Examiners but are not required to do so.)
- b. The completed “[Dissertation Defense Form](#)” should be submitted to the Psychology Graduate Program Coordinator at least 7 days before the examination. **The Major Advisor will assist the student in posting an announcement of the defense on the UConn Events Calendar and cross listing the event on the Psychological Sciences Department Calendar at least two weeks prior to the defense.** (Instructions for calendar submission are found at: <https://registrar.uconn.edu/doctoral-degree-programs/dissertation-information/>.) The student or Major Advisor should notify the Graduate Program Coordinator of the defense two weeks in advance. The Graduate Program Coordinator will send an email announcement of the defense to the faculty and graduate listservs.

- c. The Dissertation Tentative Approval Page and working copy of the dissertation are no longer required to be submitted to the Office of the Registrar. If your Advisory Committee requires a copy of the dissertation before your defense, please email it to them directly.

## 2. During the Examination

It is recommended that all 5 examiners attend the defense in person, however one of the examiners (not the Major Advisor) may attend remotely (e.g. via Skype).

The Department of Psychological Sciences makes the following recommendations regarding the procedures to be followed during the final Ph.D. oral examination.

- a. Invited guests like family members are allowed to attend a dissertation defense, but only during the formal presentation. Attendance at the questioning period should be limited to faculty members, other experts and students in the program.
- b. The Major Advisor should control proceedings, such as establishing the rules to be followed and recognizing questioners, limiting the amount of talking by a single person, and restricting the total time of the examination to a reasonable limit. The candidate should not conduct his or her own final oral examination.
- c. Faculty members should be allowed to ask questions first. Since the Advisory Committee will have had many opportunities to interact with the candidate during the course of the preparation of the dissertation, the Committee may wish to grant other members of the faculty at least equal priority in questioning at the time of the examination. If graduate students are permitted to question the candidate, that should occur when **all** faculty members are finished.
- d. Comportment should be in keeping with the serious matter of granting the highest degree a university can confer. One implication of this is that cheers or other expressions of approval or disapproval should not be permitted.
- e. The Advisory Committee will decide whether the student has passed or failed. In reaching this decision, the Committee will take the opinions of the Examining Committee into account.

## 3. After the Examination Has Been Passed

- a. **Submit to the Office of the Registrar:** The [Dissertation Approval Page](#) is a webform that accounts for both the final exam and overall approval of the dissertation. The webform routes to your committee for approvals. Once the final committee member has approved the page it will be routed to the Degree Audit office. You do not need to submit an additional approval page document.
- b. **Submit ONE electronic copy of your dissertation** to [Submittable](#). Follow the instructions found in the [Submittable help file.pdf](#). Effective May 9, 2016, a printed copy of the dissertation is no longer required to be submitted.
- c. **Submit:** [Survey of Earned Doctorates Completion Certificate](#). Please see <https://registrar.uconn.edu/graduation/doctoral-degrees/#dissertation-information> for specific dissertation submission procedures.

- d. Be sure to submit the required paperwork below by the published deadline on the [Academic Calendar](#).
- e. Information regarding forms required by the Office of the Registrar can be found at <https://registrar.uconn.edu/graduation/doctoral-degrees/> or by contacting the Registrar's Office at [degreeaudit@uconn.edu](mailto:degreeaudit@uconn.edu) or 860-486-3331.

## **X. GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS**

The Graduate School now offers multiple graduate certificate programs. These are coherent courses of study offered by one or more departments. Students must apply for the Certificate programs through the Graduate School online application system (<https://grad.uconn.edu/admissions/apply-to-uconn/>) and be formally admitted to the Certificate program. A certificate is awarded to the student who has been admitted to the program, completed the required coursework, and submitted an approved [Plan of Study for the Certificate Program.pdf](#) form and completion paperwork to the Office of the Registrar and apply for the degree in Student Admin. There are three graduate certificate programs currently offered by the Psychological Sciences Department. They are the following:

1. Health Psychology
2. Occupational Health Psychology
3. Quantitative Research Methods

Requirements for admission and completion of the Psychological Sciences Department Certificate programs can be found on the individual program webpages on the Psychological Sciences Department website: <http://grad.psych.uconn.edu/prospective/certificate/> (Note: Students currently enrolled in a graduate program may request a waiver of the application fee by contacting the Graduate School (860-486-3617)).