

*The University of Mississippi*

**Graduate Program in Experimental Psychology**

**Policies and Procedures Manual**

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**1**

**Overview of the Graduate Program in Experimental Psychology**

The Graduate Program in Experimental Psychology provides the rigorous and supportive scientific training that prepares graduates for careers in a broad spectrum of established and emerging fields, from corporate careers in health sciences, research/medical administration, or drug development to academic careers in teaching and research. Specific programs of study leading to the doctoral degree include behavioral neuroscience, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology and social psychology.

Admission to the program is limited to approximately four to six new students each year to ensure every student a close apprentice relationship with a major professor for mentorship in research, teaching, and career development. The core curriculum of study is coupled with an individualized plan of elective courses, research experiences, which include the thesis and dissertation projects, and teaching assignments that the student and major professor select as appropriate to the student's objectives. Faculty mentors involve students in research activity early in their training and guide their development in the classroom both as students and as instructors. Thus, breadth of knowledge within

the discipline, broad-based methodological, statistical, and technical expertise, and pedagogical training and mentorship in classroom and laboratory settings are the fundamental elements of the training program in experimental psychology.

## 2

### Experimental Program Curriculum

The general requirements and a suggested timeframe for completion of the experimental program are outlined in Table 1. Some requirements of the University and the Graduate School may not be listed, so students should also consult the *Graduate School Catalog* and the *Graduate Student Handbook*. These documents are available in the Graduate School and on its web site. For further information regarding any of these requirements, students should contact their major professor, the Director of Experimental Training, the Department Chair, or the Dean of the Graduate School.

#### 2.1

##### Coursework

##### **Core Courses (21 hours).**

[PSY 703, 704, and 748 plus four courses selected from PSY 505, 707, 712, 715, 718, 751.](#)

The core courses are intended to reflect the discipline of experimental psychology and provide breadth of training to strengthen students' research capabilities (e.g., by providing alternative ways to approach or understand a problem) and to enhance their teaching abilities (e.g., by broadening students' knowledge base and thus potentially increasing their effectiveness in teaching introductory psychology and/or survey courses outside of their major area of study). Students are required to take Quantitative Methods in Psychology I and II (703 and 704), Research Design (748) and four courses from the following: Conditioning and Learning (505); Cognitive Psychology (707); [Social Psychology \(712\)](#); [Physiological Psychology \(715\)](#); [Advanced Developmental Psychology \(718\)](#); and [History and Systems in Psychology \(751\)](#).

##### **PSY 717: Individual Experimental Research (3 to 6 hours).**

Students are required to complete a PSY 717 research project within their first year in the program. Additional credits of PSY 717 are permitted only after a student has met all of the requirements for his or her first research project. The PSY 717 research project is designed to engage the student in some aspect of the research paradigm(s) utilized in his or her major program area of study. This project typically involves the student in some or all stages of the research process, which include design of the experiment, collection and analysis of data, and written communication of the findings. The nature of the research project is decided between the student and his or her major professor. The student and major professor should develop a clear understanding of the goals and objectives for satisfactory completion of the project.

##### **Program and Department Colloquia (1 hour each semester).**

During each semester, students are required to enroll in PSY 755 (Psychology Colloquium) and to attend all scheduled presentations. In the event of a serious scheduling conflict, a waiver of PSY 755 may be obtained if the student adheres to program policy (see *Section 3.1*) and if he or she develops an alternative professional development activity in consultation with his or her major professor. In addition to PSY 755 meetings, students are expected to attend Department of Psychology colloquia.

##### **Electives (6 hours).**

The elective courses should reflect the major program areas of study and provide depth of training in each area. Two electives (6 hours minimum) must be taken in the department and selected from [the courses listed below](#). Psychology Colloquium (755), Individual Experimental Research (717), Problems in Psychology (747), Thesis (697), and Dissertation (797) [will not count towards the elective requirement](#). [Additional elective courses, including courses outside of the department, may be taken as appropriate for an individual's course of study.](#)

Seminar (701 or 721)

Neural Basis of Learning and Memory (511)

Group Dynamics (519)

Single Subject and Small Group Research Design (530)

Sensation and Perception (531)

Attention and Consciousness (532)  
Theories of Learning (553)  
Cross-Cultural Training (561)  
Seminar in Psychology (621)  
Advanced Statistics (705)  
Cognitive Tests (710)  
Personality Assessment (711)  
Psychopharmacology (716)  
Tests and Measurements (719)  
Theories of Personality (727) Advanced Abnormal Psychology (729)  
Seminar in College Teaching (735)

[Thesis \(697; minimum of 6 hours\) and Dissertation \(797; minimum of 18 hours\).](#) Starting in the second year in the program, students should be enrolled in thesis and dissertation hours as discussed below.

## 2.2

### *Comprehensive Examinations*

Comprehensive examinations are designed to test a student's knowledge of the discipline in which he or she is pursuing their doctoral degree (e.g., Cognitive Psychology, Social Psychology, or Behavioral Neuroscience).

Comprehensive examinations are to be taken after all requirements for the master's degree have been completed, a majority of the program-required coursework has been completed, and a student has received notification of admission in full standing to the doctoral program (see Section 3.4).

Students are required to complete the application materials as specified by both the

1. Graduate School
2. Psychology Department

The grading system for the examinations is below:

- 1 Extreme deficiency in the relevant content domain.
- 2 Clear deficiency in the relevant content domain
- 3 Borderline deficiency in the relevant content domain
- 4 Minimal acceptable mastery of the relevant content domain
- 5 Clearly acceptable mastery of the relevant content domain
- 6 High mastery of the relevant content domain
- 7 Extremely high mastery of the relevant content domain

A grade of 3.5 or higher on the comprehensive examinations is necessary for satisfactory completion of the requirements. Each student must pass all portions of the comprehensive examinations within two administrations. Failure of one or more portions on the first administration will require the student to retake only the failed portion(s) on a subsequent administration. Failure of a portion on a second administration will result in the student's termination from the program. However, the student may formally petition the experimental faculty to be allowed a third sitting. This petition must be filed by the end of the semester during which the student took the comprehensive exam.

There are three parts to the comprehensive exams.

1. The Statistics Component of Comprehensive Exams can be satisfied by one of the following two methods:
  - a. Serve as a tutor for Psy 202 **OR** serve as a teaching assistant for Psy 202, Psy 703, Psy 704 or for an undergraduate class on research methods **OR** complete additional coursework in statistics beyond Psy 704 as approved by the director of the experimental program and in consultation with one's faculty advisor.

- b. Complete the Statistics Exam: There are 3 parts to the statistics exam. Parts 1 and 2 are a sit down examination on the material covered in the two required statistics courses (Psy 703 and Psy 704). The examination goes from 8am to noon one day early in each semester. Part 3 is a take home data set. The student must analyze the data and write an APA style result section. The take home part is handed out with the first two parts, and is due the following day at noon.
2. Broad Review Paper – this portion of the exam tests the student’s ability to understand and synthesize the broad theories and issues in the field.
- a. The student may propose at any time during the year and must set an appropriate completion date at that time.
  - b. The student can complete this portion of the examination by completing the broad review paper as outlined below
    - i. Broad, review paper
      - 1. This paper should be written in the general style of a *Psychological Review* or *Psychological Bulletin* article, although publication is not required. Papers should adhere to APA format.
      - 2. Papers will be evaluated by a committee of at least two faculty members from the student’s area (e.g., social, behavioral neuroscience, or cognitive) or with knowledge of the area.
      - 3. Prior to the proposal date, the student compiles a preliminary reading/reference list with consultation of the major professor. At least seven days prior to the proposal date, the student submits a detailed purpose and rationale. At the proposal, the student should be prepared to discuss his or her intentions and reading/reference list and receive questions from his/her committee members.
        - a. If the committee requests minor revisions to the paper topic, a revised proposal must be received within seven days of the proposal date.
        - b. For major revisions, a second proposal meeting will be scheduled.
      - 4. Prior to the final evaluation, the committee may request an oral defense.
      - 5. If the student does not satisfactorily complete requirements for the paper, he or she must submit a revision by the next test date. If the student chooses to select a new topic, he or she may schedule a proposal date within fourteen days of receiving the evaluation for the next scheduled exam date.
3. Examination of Topic Mastery – this portion of the exam tests the student’s ability to focus on a particular, specific area in one’s field.
- a. The student may propose at any time during the year and must set an appropriate completion date at that time.
  - b. The student can complete this portion of the examination by choosing one of the following options
    - i. Publication
      - 1. This paper should be an empirical paper written with the purpose of publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The student should do a majority of the writing but it is not necessary that s/he be first author. At the time of submission, the student should include a cover letter (as would be submitted along with a manuscript).
      - 2. The data can be from the lab in which the student is working, collected by his/her advisor, or collected independently. It is highly advisable that the student consult with their faculty advisor about the suitability of the data the student plans to use for this paper.
      - 3. Papers will be evaluated by a committee of at least two faculty members from the student’s area (e.g., social, behavioral neuroscience, or cognitive) or with knowledge of the area. These committee members will act as peers for the purpose of peer-review and will provide comments/criticisms of the paper and will grade it.
        - a. If the paper is deemed acceptable, the student is expected to make requested revisions and resubmit the paper, along with a “letter to the editor” addressing how s/he has addressed the changes requested. Upon resubmission of the paper to the committee and approval of the changes by the committee, this component of the comprehensive examination will be considered completed.

- i. It is hoped that the student will then work with his/her co-authors and formally submit the paper for publication.
  - b. If the paper is deemed unacceptable, the student is expected to re-write it and resubmit it to the committee within a date specified by the committee (not to exceed one month).
- ii. Grant Application
  - 1. A student may elect to author and submit a formal external grant application. Agency and foundation grants are two likely venues for those interested in this project, as are National Research Service Award (NRSA) fellowships and training grants (e.g., F31, T32).
    - a. The grant does not have to be funded, but it must be substantive in terms of study design, detailed budget, etc.
    - b. At the time of submission for review, the student must also write any supporting documents required for grant submission (e.g., conflict of interest, cover letters).
  - 2. Grants will be evaluated by a committee of at least two members of the student's area (e.g., social, behavioral neuroscience, or cognitive) or with knowledge of the topic. These committee members will act as peers for the purpose of peer-review and will provide comments/criticisms of the grant and will grade it.
    - a. If the grant is deemed acceptable, the student is expected to make requested revisions. Upon resubmission of the paper to the committee and approval of the changes by the committee, this component of the comprehensive examination will be considered completed.
      - i. It is hoped that the student will then, with the consultation of his/her advisor, formally submit the grant for funding.
    - b. If the grant is deemed unacceptable, the student is expected to re-write it and re-submit it to the committee within a date specified by the committee (not to exceed one month).
    - c. Any questions about the appropriateness of a given project to satisfy this requirement will be addressed by the program director and, if necessary, will be discussed by the faculty in a program meeting.

## 2.3

### *Thesis and Dissertation*

In writing the thesis or dissertation, the student should demonstrate his or her best communicative and intellectual skills. The review of the literature should be thoughtful and complete. Because of the nature of a thesis or dissertation, the method section should contain more detail regarding procedure than would typically appear in a journal article. The discussion section should clearly relate the obtained results to the literature. The thesis is commonly a single-experiment design, whereas the dissertation should be a programmatic series of experiments designed to thoroughly address the research hypothesis. The dissertation, as the culmination of a student's doctoral training, should reflect technical mastery of a specific area of study. Insofar as possible, the dissertation should make a substantive contribution to the literature.

The intention of this section of the manual is to provide policy guidelines for thesis and dissertation work. It does not treat the detailed requirements of the Graduate School and the University deadlines, or stylistic conventions. These matters are described in the Graduate School's *Manual of Theses and Dissertations*. A template based on the *Manual* is available at the Graduate School web site.

**Registration.** A thesis is required of all candidates for the degree of Master of Arts. A minimum of 6 semester hours of PSY 697 credit is required. The thesis committee must consist of at least three department faculty members, each being a member of the graduate faculty.

A dissertation is required of all candidates for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy. A minimum of 18 semester hours of PSY 797 credit is required. The dissertation committee must consist of at least three department faculty members and one member external to the department, all of whom must be members of the graduate faculty. The chair of the committee must be an Associate or Full Professor.

The major professor will chair the student's thesis and dissertation committee. At least one experimental faculty member must serve on each experimental student's thesis and dissertation committee. Some faculty whom a student may want to serve as committee members require that students solicit their help before initiating the writing of the proposal.

**Change in Committee Members.** In the event that a student wants to modify the composition of the thesis or dissertation committee, the student should obtain a signed release from the person leaving the committee, the person joining the committee, and the major professor (i.e., 3 signatures). The signed form will then be placed in the student's file.

**Proposal.** Despite the differences in scope, the thesis and dissertation will have evolved from previous research accomplished by the student and major professor. Therefore, it will usually be true that some pilot work or other relevant experience will have preceded or will accompany preparation of the proposal. Students should be advised that, although they may collect data at any time, the major professor and committee are under no obligation to accept data collected and procedures used prior to approval by the committee.

The proposal will consist of a complete and thoughtful literature review and a detailed description of the methodology to be employed in gathering and analyzing data. The student will then prepare a comprehensive abstract to distribute to department faculty. Distribution of the proposal and the abstract must precede the presentation by at least seven days. The policy statement is as follows:

*Setting the time and date for the thesis or dissertation proposal will be the responsibility of the student, in coordination with the student's committee members. The student will inform the department of the time, date, and title of the proposal at least seven days in advance by dating and posting information in the appropriate location and providing a copy to the department manager. All faculty and graduate students are invited to attend. While presentations may be scheduled at any time, consideration should be given to days and times that will allow more students and faculty to attend, such as hours reserved for colloquia that have no scheduled speaker.*

The required PSY 717 research project must be completed before the thesis proposal is scheduled.

For the dissertation, the student must also complete and meet the requirements of the *Dissertation Prospectus Procedure*, available at the Graduate School website.

During the thesis proposal or dissertation prospectus meeting, the student will be responsible for responding to inquiries, and the major professor will refrain from responding to questions originally directed to the student. If full approval of the proposal or prospectus is not obtained from all committee members, then a consensus may be sought by altering the proposal or prospectus to the satisfaction of the committee members. The final committee must be constituted of members who have given their written approval to the proposed research.

**Research Activity.** The thesis or dissertation proposal should not be viewed as the final contract between the student and the committee. Frequently the results from the first experiment in a series of several planned experiments will dictate changes in procedures for the subsequent experiments. Thus, in some cases, the student may have to add to or rearrange the proposal. However, the student and major professor should agree on the scope of the research project being undertaken. Of course, all research projects do not result in data consistent with prior hypotheses, and procedures often do not work as anticipated. Consequently, the student should not be expected to continue the research indefinitely. Disagreements that may arise between the student and the major professor on these issues can generally be resolved by conferring with the entire thesis or dissertation committee.

Thesis and dissertation research is generally done on campus. However, occasionally such research can be performed elsewhere, that is, other departments on campus or off campus, if there is convincing evidence that proper advice and supervision will be available. Program faculty will make judgments concerning the possibility of doing thesis or dissertation research elsewhere.

**Final Oral Defense.** The student must successfully complete a final oral examination (thesis or dissertation defense) administered by his or her committee and scheduled by the Graduate School. To schedule an oral defense,

the student must confer with all committee members to decide on a time which is acceptable to everyone and then submit a completed *Authorization of Final Oral/Written Exam Form* (see the Graduate School website) to the department office for signature and forwarding to the Graduate School. For the thesis, the student's application to schedule a defense date must be filed in the Graduate School no later than 14 days prior to the anticipated date of the examination. For the dissertation, the application must reach the Graduate School no later than 10 days prior to the anticipated date of defense. Furthermore, there must be one intervening semester between the defense of the dissertation prospectus and the defense of the dissertation. The entire summer session (both summer terms) constitutes one intervening semester. The final oral defense may not be scheduled until after the thesis or dissertation document is in its final form (i.e., ready for submission to the Graduate School). After filing the necessary application form, the student should, with assistance of the department manager, arrange for a room to hold the defense, distribute a notice to the faculty announcing the oral defense date, time, and location, and notify the Graduate School as to the location and time of the defense.

The Graduate School requires that all defense meetings be scheduled during regularly scheduled class sessions and that final copies of the thesis or dissertation—including final revisions as requested by committee members—be received by the first day of exams for the semester in which the student plans to receive the degree. The student should not assume that his or her major professor or committee members will be available during the summer to receive thesis and dissertation proposals or to conduct oral examinations. The decision to accept a proposal or a defense date in the summer will be at the discretion of all members of the student's thesis or dissertation committee.

### **3 Program Policies and Procedures**

The following sections provide a summary of program policies and procedures. Students are encouraged to discuss any questions concerning these issues with their major professor, the Director of Experimental Training, or the Department Chair.

#### **3.1 Curricular Policies and Procedures**

**Grades in Required Courses.** Students must receive a grade of B - or better in each required experimental program course or retake the course. Students failing to achieve a grade of B - or better on the second attempt will be dismissed from the program.

**Waiver or Alteration of the Experimental Program Curriculum.** Curriculum waivers or alterations in coursework may be granted upon a majority vote of the program faculty. Alterations in the usual curriculum and sequence of events are discouraged. However, a student may request a waiver of policy by submitting a detailed written request to the Director of Experimental Training. The request must include all relevant information concerning why the waiver should be granted and any relevant pros and cons for the student, other students, and faculty. Waivers will be necessary for any variation in standard policy. These include but are not limited to requests to conduct thesis and dissertation research off campus.

**Transfer of Theses and Coursework.** Theses and coursework completed at another institution which offers graduate degrees in psychology may or may not be deemed to satisfy similar requirements at The University of Mississippi. A student may initiate a request for acceptance of a thesis or course by submitting relevant documentation to the Director of Experimental Training. All transfer credits must meet University of Mississippi criteria.

#### ***Students entering the program without the M.A. / M.S. degree***

A request for waiver of a required course will be considered 1) if the student received a B in the course and 2) if our faculty teaching the course certifies that the student's previous course meets program requirements. A faculty member can request that a student who wishes to waive a required course must pass a final exam for that course with at least a B average.

A request for waiver of a graduate course(s) taken elsewhere to satisfy degree requirements exclusive of core-coursework will be considered for up to two courses.

All requests for transfer of coursework credit must be accompanied by a completed *Request for the Transfer of Graduate Credit from Another Institution*, an official transcript documenting a grade of B or better, an official description of the course, and a course syllabus (detailing the schedule, assignments, readings, and examinations). The Director of Experimental Training will present these documents to the experimental faculty for their consideration.

### ***Students entering the program with the M.A. / M.S. degree***

A request for acceptance of a thesis should be accompanied by a copy of the thesis and documentation of its acceptance by a psychology department in an accredited University. If three faculty agree that the thesis is equivalent to theses completed here, the student will not be required to complete another master's thesis to satisfy program requirements. The student then must file the *Request for Transfer of Thesis* in the department office.

Students who enter the program holding the M.A. or M.S. degree must develop an individualized program of study (a listing of courses and seminars to be taken to fulfill the requirements of the Ph.D.) with their major professor and the director of experimental training.

### **3.2**

#### ***Ethical Behavior***

All students are expected to be knowledgeable of and abide by the ethical principles set forth in the publication manual of the American Psychology Association.

In oral and written communications, graduate students should clearly indicate their status in such a way that the person with whom they are communicating will not assume that the graduate student is a member of the University faculty or staff. The terms *graduate student* or *doctoral student in psychology* may be used, but not the terms *psychologist* or *professor*.

### **3.3**

#### ***Student Advisement and Evaluation***

Upon admission to the experimental program, each student is matched with a faculty member with similar research interests. This faculty member will serve as the student's major professor throughout his or her graduate training. A student is not permitted to enter or continue in the experimental program without a major professor. The Director of Experimental Training must approve any change in major professor assignment.

Students' progress in the program is evaluated via three methods: a) course grades, b) graduate student activity reports, and c) proposals and defense of thesis and dissertation. Based on this information, students will be advised by their major professor. The Director of Experimental Training, the Department Chair, and/or other department faculty may provide additional performance feedback.

***Grades.*** Students must earn a grade of 'B -' or higher in program coursework and a grade of 'B -' or higher in all required courses.

***Graduate Student Activity Reports.*** At the end of each academic year, students are required to complete an activity report that highlights their accomplishments during that year. This report should describe coursework completed (including thesis, comprehensive examinations, dissertation), publications (papers submitted, under review, or accepted), teaching (instructor of record, teaching assistant, guest lecturer), attendance and/or presentations at professional meetings, research projects completed or in progress, service (university and departmental committees, community service organizations, etc.), and other relevant activity not specified elsewhere in the report. In addition, students should provide a narrative describing plans for the upcoming year. Copies of these reports should be submitted to the major professor and the Director of Experimental Training no later than the Wednesday of the last week of scheduled classes. Permanent copies will be maintained in the department office.

***Annual Evaluations.*** Experimental faculty conduct a formal evaluation of students in the program at the end of the academic year. At that time, each student should schedule an appointment with the major professor to obtain feedback regarding the student's professional development over the previous year and to discuss plans for the coming academic year. All faculty have the opportunity to provide evaluative information to the Director of



Experimental Training concerning any student. This information typically concerns the student's research progress, course performance, initiative and independence, interpersonal skills, emotional stability, ethical behavior, or other issues. A student who is at risk for not completing the program receives a letter from the major professor informing him or her of the perceived problems and areas needing remediation, along with a time period in which satisfactory performance must be demonstrated.

**Research Evaluation.** Students' research competence is assessed by faculty following PSY 755, proposal presentations, and thesis and dissertation oral defenses.

**Nonacademic Advising.** A student's success in the program is determined by both academic and nonacademic factors. Therefore, a student may be advised and assisted in some nonacademic areas. Financial hardship is a serious stress for many graduate students. Counseling is available regarding financial assistance and work options. A student with personal or emotional problems will be referred outside the department for professional services.

### 3.4

#### ***Plan of Study and Milestone documents.***

A plan of study form (included at the end of this manual) including specified core courses, additional core courses, electives, and research courses will be stored in each student's file in the psychology department main office. This form should be completed and filed in a student's first semester in the program and should be updated each August. After each update, the form should be signed by the student, the primary research advisor, and the director of the experimental program.

In addition, students entering the program should familiarize themselves with the Milestone document (included at the end of this manual). This document should be signed by both the student and their primary research adviser and should be filed in the psychology department main office in a student's first semester in the program.

### 3.5

#### ***Timelines and Continuation Policies.***

Departmental funding is guaranteed for five years. Beyond this, funding is not guaranteed but might be possible based on factors such as adequate progress through the program and departmental needs. **However, any student who has not finished the M.A. by the end of the third year generally will not be endorsed for continuation beyond the M.A. degree.** Please note the additional time limits imposed by the Graduate School:

**Masters Degree.** Time Limit - all work applying to a masters degree must be completed within a six-year time period. All students whose work has been interrupted by involuntary service in the armed forces are allowed six years in addition to the time spent in the armed services. This exception does not apply to career military personnel. Grades received for courses taken for masters degrees that do not fall within the time limit for completion of all degree requirements will not be used in determining the overall grade-point average.

**Doctoral Degree.** Time Limit - all required formal course work and the comprehensive exam should be completed within four calendar years of initial enrollment into degree seeking (conditional or full standing) status, whether a student begins the doctoral program following completion of a bachelors or a masters degree. After passing the comprehensive exam, a student becomes a candidate for the doctoral degree and must complete all remaining requirements, including the written dissertation and its defense, within five calendar years. If a candidate does not complete all requirements within this time, then the Graduate School will change the student's status to non-degree seeking.

The Graduate School may grant a one-year extension to this time limit for serious, non-academic hardships (e.g., military duty, pregnancy, illness, or problems within the students immediate family). Additionally, a student may petition his or her academic program for a limited extension for a reason unrelated to personal hardship. If an academic program grants an extension, it may also impose additional requirements, which may include passing another comprehensive examination, more course work, and/or other appropriate remedies. Any extension plan accepted by the candidate and the academic program must be approved by the Graduate School.

### 3.6

#### ***Acceptance into the Doctoral Program***

**Acceptance into the doctoral program following completion of the master's degree is not automatic. Upon completion of the thesis, the student should immediately inform the Director of Experimental Training, in writing, that he or she would like to be evaluated for acceptance into the doctoral program.** This formal application letter should include a research statement and explain the student's qualifications for admission to the doctoral program.

At the next experimental faculty meeting, the Director of Experimental Training will initiate discussion of the student's request for support for continuation. Program faculty may vote for or against continuation, or they may abstain. If there are three more votes for continuation than there are votes against, with abstentions ignored and no challenges from any faculty, the student is admitted to the doctoral program. If this endorsement does not occur, the student will be informed. The student does have an opportunity to discuss this matter with the experimental faculty in an attempt to develop support for continuation. If requested by the student, a second vote will be taken within one year of the first vote.

Each experimental student is expected to have completed all requirements for the M.A. by the end of the spring semester of his or her second year in the program. Any student who has not finished the M.A. by the end of the third year generally will not be endorsed for continuation beyond the M.A. degree.

#### **4 Department Assistantships**

The Psychology Department provides support for graduate students in the form of research assistantships (RAs) and teaching assistantships (TAs). Research assistants commonly support faculty members in the laboratory (e.g., through data collection and analysis). Teaching assistants may assist faculty members in the classroom (e.g., by preparing classroom materials or grading), and more advanced graduate students may be awarded a TA in which they are responsible for individual courses (e.g., PSY 201: General Psychology). These teaching assignments are awarded on the basis of the student's general suitability for teaching and on the basis of the compatibility of his or her credentials with a particular course. After prerequisite credentials have been established, other selection criteria may be applied. These can include cumulative GPA, rate of progress through the program, and professional accomplishments. Availability of RA and TA positions for the upcoming academic year is announced during the spring semester.

#### **5 Research**

Conducting research involving humans or animals requires strict adherence to federal regulations, as well as University and departmental policies and procedures.

##### **5.1 *General Information for Conducting Human Research***

Federal regulations require that all research (including pilot work) with human subjects be approved by the University of Mississippi Office of Research Institutional Review Board (IRB). The application form and information on application procedures are located at the Office of Research web site. Researchers should allow at least two weeks for IRB approval. No research procedures, including participant recruitment, may occur until IRB approval is granted.

In conducting research with humans, one must adhere to guidelines specified by the APA publication *Ethical Principles in the Conduct of Research with Human Participants* and the Psychology Department's *Policy on the Research Requirement for Undergraduate Students Enrolled in PSY 201: General Psychology*. A student's major professor will help with the completion of IRB forms. Questions concerning the IRB application and review process may be directed to the IRB Coordinator or the IRB Chair.

##### **5.2 *General Information for Conducting Animal Research***

Any research with animals must be supervised by a member of the University faculty and be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). The IACUC application form and the instructions for its

completion are located at the Office of Research web site. IACUC committee members typically review protocols within two weeks of receipt by the Office of Research. IACUC may request additional information regarding a proposal before granting approval. Following IACUC approval, a proposal will receive a protocol number and letter of approval from the Office of Research; this information must accompany all animal purchase requisitions.

In conducting research with animals, one must adhere to the principles in the APA publication *Ethical Principles in the Conduct of Research with Animals*. A student's major professor will help with completion of the IACUC forms. Questions concerning the IACUC application and review process may be directed to the IACUC Chair.

## **6 Graduation Requirements for the M.A. and Ph.D. Degrees**

The Graduate School web site provides detailed information for graduate degree candidates. The following summary outlines the steps students should take to meet graduation requirements:

1. Satisfactorily complete all experimental program requirements.
2. Obtain an *Application for Graduate Degree* from the Graduate School.
3. Submit the completed application to the Department Chair for review and signature.
4. Deliver the signed form to the Graduate School approximately three months before the expected graduation date.
5. After the Graduate School approves the degree application, an application for the diploma will be mailed or given to the student.
6. Pay the diploma fee at the Bursar's Office.
7. Deliver the application for diploma and the fee receipt to the Registrar's Office.
8. After a successful oral defense, submit two copies of the thesis or dissertation, including all final revisions, to the Graduate School along with the receipt received from the Bursar's Office.
9. Doctoral candidates must also obtain and complete the *Survey of Earned Doctorates* forms from the Office of the Dean of the Graduate School. Submit these forms to the Graduate School at the time the copies of the dissertation are delivered.
10. The diploma will then be mailed to the student.
11. Contact the Graduate School for commencement information.

## **7 Grievance and Appeal Procedures**

No student's standing in the program shall be jeopardized for bringing up problems. Students are encouraged to openly voice their opinions and to work with the psychology faculty, Graduate School personnel, and University administrators, as appropriate, to prevent and resolve problems.

### **7.1 Grievance Procedures**

A graduate student with a complaint is encouraged to follow these steps for resolution of the problem:

1. If the problem is with an individual student or faculty member, the student should first attempt, if at all possible, to resolve the complaint directly with that person.
2. If for some reason the student cannot approach that person with the issue or the problem cannot be resolved in this manner, he or she should contact the major professor and/or the Director of Experimental Training. If the student requests, confidentiality regarding the issue will be guaranteed. This means that, within legal and ethical limits, no information will be released to anyone regarding the problem without the student's expressed permission.
3. If the above steps are not satisfactory in resolving the problem, the issue can be taken to the Department Chair. If requested, confidentiality will be maintained, within legal and ethical limits.
4. If the above steps do not resolve the problem, the issue can be taken to the Dean of the Graduate

School.

Special officers on campus deal with complaints related to grades, sexual harassment, or affirmative action, if they cannot be resolved at the department level. The current edition of The University of Mississippi *M Book* contains additional information about the University's grievance procedures for students.

## 7.2

### *Appeal Procedures*

**University Policies.** Any request for alteration or waiver of a University policy should be directed to the Dean of the Graduate School in writing from the student's major professor. Some decisions may take several weeks because certain waivers require input from the Graduate Council.

**Grades.** The appeal procedure for graduate students follows the guidelines outlined in the *M Book*.

**Comprehensive Examinations.** The comprehensive examinations, required of every graduate student, are an important means in determining a student's qualifications for an advanced degree. It is within the authority of every department offering graduate programs to establish a policy limiting the number of times a student may sit for comprehensive exams and to establish the time that must elapse before the examinations may be retaken. If a graduate student believes that the results of his or her comprehensive examinations were based on prejudice, discrimination, arbitrary or capricious action, or other reasons not related to academic and professional evaluation, the following appeal procedure may be pursued:

**STEP 1.** Within five class days of receiving notification of the results of the comprehensive examination, the student may appeal, in writing, to the Chair of the Department. The Department Chair will attempt to resolve the appeal in consultation with the comprehensive examination coordinator within 10 class days dating from the receipt of the written appeal and shall inform the student, in writing, of the results of the appeal. (If there is no Department Chair or he or she was the coordinator or a member of the examining committee, the Dean of the school or college in which the examination was offered shall act in the place of the Chair in Step 1 and in all subsequent steps.)

**STEP 2.** If the student is not satisfied with the results of Step 1, appeal may be made, in writing and within five class days, to the Dean of the Graduate School. The Dean may use any resources available to resolve the student's appeal within 10 class days. If it is found from clear and convincing evidence that any of the conditions noted above—prejudice, discrimination, arbitrary or capricious action, or other reasons not related to professional or academic evaluation—contributed to the evaluation of the student's comprehensive examination, the Dean shall accept the examination in satisfaction of the requirements for the degree or direct the administration of another examination with a newly constituted examination committee. The Dean's decision will be communicated, in writing, to the student, the Department Chair, and the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs. (If the Dean was the coordinator or a member of the examining committee, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs shall act in the place of the Dean in Step 2 and in all subsequent steps.)

**STEP 3.** The student, the Department Chair, or a majority of the examining committee, in writing to the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs within 5 class days, may appeal the decision made in

Step 2. In the event of such an appeal, the decision made in Step 2 shall be stayed pending the completion of the procedure in Step 3. The Vice Chancellor may use all resources available to make a final determination of the appeal, and will communicate his decision, in writing and within ten class days, to the student, the Department Chair, and the Graduate Dean.

In all cases, the student will have the burden of proof with respect to all allegations in the complaint and in a request for a hearing. If the student fails to pursue any step in the procedure within its allotted time, the disposition of the case made in the last previous step shall be final. All correspondence and records will be retained in the student's file maintained in the Graduate School. The act of making an appeal will not jeopardize the student's status in the academic department or in the Graduate School.

**Table 1. Program Requirements and Typical Timeline – Students should enroll in 9 SCH each semester, exclusive of PSY 755. Students are to enroll in PSY 755 each semester.**

Year		<i>Fall</i>	<i>Spring</i>	<i>Summer</i>
<b>1</b>	Lecture Courses	PSY 703 Core Course 1	PSY 704 Core Course 2 Elective (optional)	PSY 697 <sup>a</sup>
	Research Courses	PSY 717	PSY 717 (0 to 3 hours)	
	Milestones:	Select thesis topic.	Defend thesis proposal. Select option for Statistics portion of comprehensive exam.	
<b>2</b>	Lecture Courses	PSY 748 Elective	Core Course 3 Elective	PSY 797 <sup>a</sup>
	Research Courses	PSY 697	PSY 697	
	Milestones:	Thesis data collection.	Thesis defense. Complete requirements for M.A.*	
<b>3</b>	Lecture Courses	Core Course 4 Elective (optional)	PSY 735 Elective (optional)	PSY 797 <sup>a</sup>
	Research Courses	PSY 797 (6 to 9 hours)	PSY 797 (3 to 9 hours)	
	Milestones:	Complete statistics portion of the comprehensive examination if not already satisfied.  Propose topic for broad review paper by September 15.	Complete broad review paper by April 15.  Complete Topic Mastery portion of comprehensive exam.	
<b>4</b>	Lecture Courses	Elective (optional)	Elective (optional)	PSY 797 <sup>a</sup>
	Research Courses	PSY 797 (6 to 9 hours)	PSY 797 (6 to 9 hours)	
	Milestones:	Defend Dissertation Prospectus		
<b>5</b>	Research Courses	PSY 797 (9 hours)	PSY 797 (9 hours)	
	Milestones:	Dissertation data collection complete.	Defend dissertation. Complete requirements for the Ph.D.**	

<sup>a</sup> For students receiving certain stipends in summer, enrollment in thesis or dissertation hours required. Tuition waived.  
\* The Graduate School requires a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit for the M.A.—24 hours of coursework (including 18 hours of formal classroom lecture courses and 12 hours of 600+/-level courses) and 6 hours of thesis. The Experimental Program requires successful completion of PSY 703, PSY 704, PSY 717, three core courses, and Research Design (PSY 748), as well as enrollment in PSY 755 each semester.  
\*\* The Graduate School requires 54 hours of study beyond the bachelor’s degree (including a minimum enrollment of 18 hours of dissertation credit). The experimental program requires successful completion of M.A. coursework, Core Course 4, two elective courses, as specified in Section 2.1 of this manual, and successful completion of comprehensive exams, as well as enrollment in PSY 755 each semester.

**Table 2. Program Requirements and Typical Timeline for students enrolling with a MA/MS – Students should enroll in 9 SCH each semester, exclusive of PSY 755. Students are to enroll in PSY 755 each semester. Plan will vary depending upon course transfers.**

<b>Year</b>		<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>	<b>Summer</b>
<b>1</b>	Lecture Courses	PSY 703 Core Course or Elective	PSY 704 PSY 735	PSY 797 <sup>a</sup> (3 SCH)
	Research Courses	PSY 717 (3 hours)	PSY 717 (3 hours)	
	Milestones:	Request approval of thesis and transfer of credits.	Make significant progress on Topic Mastery portion of comprehensive exam.	Complete Topic Mastery. Select option for Statistics portion of comprehensive
<b>2</b>	Lecture Courses	PSY 748 Core Course or Elective	Core Course or Elective	PSY 797 <sup>a</sup>
	Research Courses	PSY 797 (3 to 6 hours)	PSY 797 (3 to 9 hours)	
	Milestones:	Propose topic for broad review paper by September/October 15	Complete statistics portion of the comprehensive examination if not already satisfied. Complete broad review paper by April 15.	Apply for admission to the doctoral program.
<b>3</b>	Lecture Courses	Elective (optional)	Elective (optional)	PSY 797 <sup>a</sup>
	Research Courses	PSY 797 (6 to 9 hours)	PSY 797 (6 to 9 hours)	
	Milestones:	Defend Dissertation Prospectus		
<b>4</b>	Research Courses	PSY 797 (9 hours)	PSY 797 (9 hours)	
	Milestones:	Dissertation data collection complete.	Defend dissertation. Complete requirements for the Ph.D. **	

<sup>a</sup> For students receiving certain stipends in summer, enrollment in thesis or dissertation hours required. Tuition waived.  
 \* The Graduate School requires a minimum of 30 semester hours of graduate credit for the M.A.—24 hours of coursework (including 18 hours of formal classroom lecture courses and 12 hours of 600+-level courses) and 6 hours of thesis. The Experimental Program requires successful completion of PSY 703, PSY 704, PSY 717, three core courses, and Research Design (PSY 748), as well as enrollment in PSY 755 each semester.  
 \*\* The Graduate School requires 54 hours of study beyond the bachelor’s degree (including a minimum enrollment of 18 hours of dissertation credit). The experimental program requires successful completion of M.A. coursework, Core Course 4, two elective courses, as specified in Section 2.1 of this manual, and successful completion of comprehensive exams, as well as enrollment in PSY 755 each semester.

INTERIM PLAN OF STUDY – UPDATE each AUGUST

Student Name:

Student ID:

Year Started Program:

Advisor:

Course	Credit Hours	Grade (if completed)	Year taken or planned to be completed.
<b>SPECIFIED CORE COURSES (9 hours)</b>			
703 Quantitative Methods in Psychology I	3		
704 Quantitative Methods in Psychology II	3		
748 Research Design	3		
<b>ADDITIONAL CORE COURSES (16 hours)</b>			
505 Conditioning and Learning	3		
707 Cognitive Psychology	3		
712 Social Psychology	3		
715 Physiological Psychology	3		
718 Advanced Developmental Psychology	3		
751 History and Systems	3		
Transfer CORE equivalents (indicate course number and name)			
	3		
	3		
	3		
	3		
<b>ELECTIVES (6 hours)</b>			
	3		
	3		
<b>RESEARCH (27 hours required)</b>			
PSY 717 required	3		
PSY 717 optional	3		
PSY 697 required	3		
PSY 697 required	3		
PSY 697 additional			
PSY 797 required	3		
PSY 797 required	3		
PSY 797 required	3		
PSY 797 required	3		
PSY 797 required	3		
PSY 797 required	3		
PSY 797 required	3		
PSY 797 additional			
<b>ADDITIONAL COURSES (additional electives, certificate course work, or course repeated when C earned on first attempt)</b>			

Signatures (with dates)

Student:

Advisor:

Director of Experimental Program:



**Requirements for full time students entering the Psychology Doctoral Program without a M.A. / M.S. degree**

<b>Milestone for Fall 2018 Cohort.</b>	<b>Expected Time of Achievement</b>
Submit Interim Program of Study form to PhD GAR	October 2018
Student submits annual activity report by Wednesday of last week of classes.	Every spring.
Review of student’s progress with Psychology Department faculty	Annually
Enroll and present in PSY 755	Enroll every semester, present annually.
Complete Thesis Proposal	August 2019
Defend Thesis and complete requirements for MA	May 2020
Completion of PSY 703, 704, 748	December 2019
Completion of Core Courses	December 2020
Completion of all components of comprehensive exam	May 2021
Dissertation Committee appointed and approved by Graduate School	August 2021
Dissertation prospectus defended	Fall 2021
Student admitted to doctoral candidacy	
Research protocols and/or IRB approval (as applicable)	Fall 2021
Dissertation completed, successfully defended, and approved by Committee	Before the deadline for dissertation defense 2023
Student completes and files all paperwork required for graduation	Before the deadline 2023
Dissertation accepted by Graduate School	Before deadline in 2023

Degree Completion Checklist for Students

- Maintain active student status by registering for courses every fall and spring semester.
- Complete *Milestones Agreement Form* with your advisor before the end of your first semester.
- Complete all required organized coursework.
- Schedule and successfully complete required comprehensive exams.
- Form your thesis and dissertation committees in consultation with your advisor.
- Have your committees approved by program and Graduate School.
- Prepare and successfully present your thesis and dissertation proposals.
- Apply for Advancement to Candidacy.
- Enroll in required thesis and dissertation hours and complete your thesis and dissertation.
- Successfully complete your defense of your thesis and dissertation.
- Submit required documentation to the Graduate School for completion and graduation.

I have read this form and have had the opportunity to discuss the information contained in it with my advisor. I understand the academic milestones that I am expected to reach in order to successfully complete the Psychology program, as well as the expected timeline for completing these milestones.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor’s Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Requirements for full time students entering the Psychology Doctoral Program with a M.A. / M.S. degree**

<b>Milestone for Fall 2018 Cohort.</b>	<b>Expected Time of Achievement</b>
Submit Interim Program of Study form to PhD GAR	October 2018
Student submits annual activity report by Wednesday of last week of classes.	Every spring.
Review of student's progress with Psychology Department faculty	Annually
Enroll and present in PSY 755	Enroll every semester, present annually.
Completion of PSY 703, 704, 748	TBD
Completion of Core Courses	TBD
Completion of all components of comprehensive exam	May 2020
Dissertation Committee appointed and approved by Graduate School	August 2020
Dissertation prospectus defended	Fall 2020
Student admitted to doctoral candidacy	
Research protocols and/or IRB approval (as applicable)	Fall 2020
Dissertation completed, successfully defended, and approved by Committee	Before the deadline for dissertation defense 2022
Student completes and files all paperwork required for graduation	Before the deadline 2022
Dissertation accepted by Graduate School	Before deadline in 2022

Degree Completion Checklist for Students

- Maintain active student status by registering for courses every fall and spring semester.
- Complete *Milestones Agreement Form* with your advisor before the end of your first semester.
- Complete all required organized coursework.
- Schedule and successfully complete required comprehensive exams.
- Form your thesis and dissertation committees in consultation with your advisor.
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\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date