



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

Department of Psychological Sciences™

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

2026-2027

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Introduction

General Introduction

This handbook has been prepared as a reference guide for all graduate students in the Department of Psychological Sciences. Students are obliged to follow the requirements of the Graduate School, the department, and the program of which they are a part. Every attempt has been made to assure that department-wide requirements are consistently presented here.

Your handbook is our current statement and interpretation of Graduate School and department requirements, and you should consider that you are bound to follow it. From time to time, however, requirements may change. If requirements change, we will let you know either through the email or public postings. Any changes in department or program requirements must be consistent with Graduate School policy. Also, your particular program (clinical, counseling, or experimental) may have a stricter interpretation of a department requirement than another program. That is permitted, and you are obliged to follow that stricter requirement.

Because this is a human endeavor, there may be an occasional error in the handbook. We will let you know about errors when they are discovered, but in no case will the department or any of its programs be bound to follow an erroneous statement or policy, and students are required to bring their program of studies in line with correct requirements as quickly as possible. Should any question arise, students should ask their program director for clarification. Should any exceptions, decisions, or clarifications about your particular requirements be made (either at the department or program level), make sure that you have a written, signed and dated memorandum on the matter, with copies on file in your department student file.

Finally, any student who, because of a disabling condition requires special arrangements to meet course requirements or to participate in any other activities required by the program should contact the course instructor or the program director so that accommodations can be made. Such students should present appropriate verification from the Student Disability Services division of the Assistant Vice Provost for Student Affairs (742-2405).

Revisions to the Department of Psychological Sciences' *Graduate Student Handbook* typically begin with discussion at the level of the Executive Committee of the Department. Draft revisions are evaluated by the Executive Committee, the Department Chair, and/or the full Department Faculty, depending on the circumstances of the revision.

Commitment to Access and Participation

The Department of Psychological Sciences recognizes that our university, our community, and our society exist within multicultural communities that contain people of different racial, ethnic, and class backgrounds; national origins; religious, spiritual, and political beliefs; physical abilities; ages; sexes; gender identities, sexual orientations, and physical appearance. The department seeks to broaden the participation of all underrepresented groups in psychology.

Advisors

Our graduate programs employ a mentorship model. Each student has a faculty member who serves as the student's mentor, hereafter referred to as their advisor. Each semester, students should confer with their academic advisors to plan the next semester's schedule. Students should also keep their advisors up to date on all academic activities. Copies of all significant records pertaining to each student's program are kept in the student's file in the main office. Students, their advisors, and their program directors are responsible for keeping the file current.

Note. The department and Graduate School define the term *advisor* differently. From the Graduate School's perspective, the program director serves as the advisor for all students in that program, so all Graduate School forms that require the advisor's signature require the program director's signature. Department forms that require the advisor's signature require the student's faculty mentor's signature.

For information about advisors, please also see your program's section of the Graduate Student Handbook.

Registration and Enrollment

The maximum number of doctoral credit hours is 129. These hours start to accrue after the first 30 hours of graduate enrollment, but begin to accrue immediately if the student enters with a master's degree. Also, these hours accrue for any course in which the student has been enrolled through the 12th class day, so at times (e.g., because of dropping a class later in the semester, or for having received a CR in a course) the actual accrued hours may not be reflected on one's transcript. The major consequence for a student exceeding 129 doctoral credit hours is that that student will pay tuition at out-of-state rates regardless of their actual state of residency.

If a student's program requires more than 129 doctoral hours to complete the doctoral degree, the program director will complete a *Satisfactory Academic Progress Appeal Request (SAP)* form and send it to the Office of Financial Aid. The program director will also send documentation to the Graduate School and registrar. More information is available at the Graduate School website. A similar situation may occur when a student reduces doctoral credit hours to less than 9 hours but is still considered full-time by the student's program (e.g., when on internship). In these cases, the program director will send documentation to the registrar that the student is considered full time so the student's subsidized financial aid can be released.

Minimum Enrollment Requirements

General requirement for minimum enrollment for all graduate students

Students are required to be enrolled for a minimum of 9 hours during each long semester, and for a minimum total of 6 hours during the summer, accrued during either the first or the second summer session, or both.

Dissertation credits

Upon the formation of an active dissertation committee, students ordinarily enroll for 3 hours of PSY 8000 with the committee chairperson during each long semester. Students are also required to enroll for a minimum of 2 hours (total) of PSY 8000 with each non-chair committee member during the course of the dissertation, typically 1 hour each in the semesters of the proposal and the defense. Students must enroll for a minimum of 3 credits in PSY 8000 each summer. The distribution of these credits across summer sessions and committee members should be agreed upon by the chairperson (and possibly other committee members). Once students have enrolled in PSY 8000, the Graduate School requires continuous enrollment in one hour of PSY 8000 per long semester and one hour of PSY 8000 per summer. This applies even to students who are on internship.

Exceptions to minimum enrollment requirements

Required minimum enrollments may not be sufficient for purposes of university employment, or for some financial assistance and student loan programs. Students who are employed by the department or the university (including the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center) or who receive a scholarship must take at least 9 credit hours in a long semester. The department will try to help students with statements supporting exceptions when warranted, but students need to be thoroughly aware of the requirements of their financial assistance programs.

Students participating in a program-approved, full-time internship experience are allowed to enroll for reduced credits to recognize their involvement in this full-time training experience. Students involved in such internship experiences are required to enroll for at least one (1) internship credit (PSY 5003 or PSY 5004) each long semester and each summer session. For students on internship who have not successfully defended their dissertation, the minimum enrollment required by the department is three (3) credits of either PSY 6000/7000 (for students who are not yet PhD candidates) or PSY 8000 (for students who have been formally admitted to PhD candidacy) in addition to the one (1) internship credit (PSY 5003 or PSY 5004) each long semester, or three (3) credits of either PSY 6000/7000 or PSY 8000 in either one summer session or over the course of two summer sessions in addition to required ongoing enrollment of 1 internship credit each summer session. For students on internship who have successfully defended their dissertation, the minimum enrollment required by the department is one (1) internship credit (i.e., PSY 5003 or PSY 5004) with the exception that during the semester that they graduate they will enroll for an additional 2 dissertation (PSY 8000) credits. (Successfully defending a dissertation is defined as: (1) All dissertation committee members have passed the candidate on the oral defense; (2) The dissertation committee members have approved the dissertation document, with any revisions required by dissertation committee members having been completed by the student and approved by the dissertation committee chair, and if necessary, other dissertation committee members; and (3) The dissertation document has been submitted to the TTU Graduate School for final review.)

For Experimental Psychology students on internship, all of the above policies apply (i.e., Experimental students can reduce their enrollment to 4 credit hours—at least 1 credit of PSY

5003 with their advisor and the rest of the credits in PSY 6000/7000/8000 with their advisor—for internships that occur during Fall or Spring Semesters). For internships that occur during Summer, Experimental students may be able to reduce their enrollment to 1 credit hour, depending on their circumstances. Please see the Experimental Program Handbook and OP 64.02, [Texas Tech University Operating Policy 64.02](#), for details. The Experimental Program Handbook contains additional policies for experimental students completing an internship, including expectations for students on internship and the definition of an internship.

In some circumstances, a student may need or want to petition for a reduction to less than full-time enrollment. In these cases, the student must write a letter to their program director. The program director will forward the letter to the Executive Committee for discussion and review. The Executive Committee will vote on the request and will notify the student of the outcome of that vote.

Minimum performance requirements

University grades are on a 4.0 grade point average scale. The student will earn the same number of credits whether he or she earns a B+, a B, or a B-, for instance. A student must earn a 3.0 or higher grade point average to successfully complete the graduate degree. A graduate student must earn a B- or better in every required course.

Financial Assistance

Note: All material in this section is subject to changes as our administration implements recent legislation and directives from the State of Texas. Check and double-check before acting on any information about financial assistance.

Office of Student Financial Aid

Students interested in applying for financial aid should get a copy of the current Student Financial Aid Handbook and should obtain appropriate forms from the Office of Financial Aid (310 West Hall, 742-3681). Often such materials must be filed by April 15th of the year proceeding the period for which financial aid is being sought. Usually this includes completing TTU's institutional application form. An American College Testing Family Financial Statement may be required from your parents or guardian to establish eligibility for the broadest possible range of scholarship, grant, and loan programs. Work study eligibility is established in a similar manner. Consequently, such prospects should be pursued at the earliest possible time. The same office also maintains current listing of employment opportunities (usually related to psychological services) to which you may be referred.

Department scholarships and fellowships

Several scholarships are awarded every year; others arrive on a more intermittent basis. The department has established an application procedure for them, and you should be vigilant for relevant announcements. Most scholarships are awarded each year in the spring by the

department's Executive Committee on a competitive basis and are ordinarily reserved for students who have not yet completed their fifth year of graduate study in the department. Most scholarships are open to all psychology students.

Department assistantships

A number of students are employed each year in teaching assistant (TA), research assistant (RA), and work study program roles. Teaching assistants are usually appointed for 50% time, although some 25% appointments are made. Students who qualify for work study have a higher probability of being appointed to half-time positions because the department is required to pay only a portion of the total salary for the TA position. (International students may not be eligible for summer assistantships because they are ineligible for work-study funding.) Meritorious service as a TA makes one eligible to apply for reappointment the next year. Applications are filed with the department office and the deadline is usually early in the spring semester of the year preceding the appointment. Depending on the number of successful grant applications by faculty, there are usually RA positions on both a 25% and 50% time basis. Activities vary with the nature of the projects. The individuals who secure RA positions have typically been involved in collaborative work with the faculty member or the areas related to the grant so that open solicitation of applicants may not occur. The best access to these employment opportunities is active involvement in research.

Graduate School

The Graduate School offers competitions for a variety of financial awards (e.g., dissertation research awards), and you should be vigilant for relevant announcements.

Part-Time Employment

It is the department's policy that a full-time graduate student should have no more than a total of one-half time employment (defined as 20 hours per week) within or outside the department. Employment disclosure is required from students working for, or applying to work for, the department. Disclosure is ongoing throughout the year. This is given significant weight in deciding the distribution of department financial assistance resources. Except with written permission in advance, psychology graduate students who are employed by the university may not exceed half-time employment (20 hours per week total within and outside the university). Requests to exceed this limit are reviewed by the student's advisor and the program director. If endorsed favorably by this group, the department's executive committee will review and vote to approve or decline. Minor exceptions to the policy may be approved, including employment that temporarily or slightly exceeds the 20 hour limit. The student may appeal a petition that has been declined, first to the department chair and then to the graduate dean.

Please see your program's section of the Graduate Student Handbook for comments specific to each program.

The Master's Degree (M.A.)

Terminal M. A. Requirements: Policies and procedures

Policies elsewhere in this handbook that are not specifically limited to doctoral students also apply to master's students. Enrollment and registration requirements (see Enrollment and Registration section of this handbook) apply to master's students. Students must follow all Graduate School policies and deadlines.

By the end of their first year, students must file the Graduate School's *Program for the Master's Degree* form. The degree program can be modified during the student's final semester before receiving the master's degree, but the initial version must contain any approved transfer courses (see Course Transfers and Substitutions sections of this handbook).

Completion of both the written and oral parts of the Second-Year Project/Master's Thesis (see handbook section on the "Prequalifying Examination Research Requirements" for doctoral students) constitutes completion of the comprehensive examination for the master's degree. This project must be completed at Texas Tech; it cannot be a project that was completed at another institution's graduate program.

When these requirements are fulfilled, the student should file the Graduate School's *Program for the Master's Degree* form. The degree plan should indicate the 36 credit hours to be used towards the master's degree. In addition, the student should request (via email) that the program director notify the Graduate School of the student's intent to receive the master's degree using the sending a memo to the Graduate School. The student must also submit the *Statement of Intention to Graduate: Master's Students / Non-Thesis Option* form, which must be filled out online on the Graduate School Web site at the beginning of the semester of graduation.

A copy of all forms should be printed and scanned for the program director along with other forms that are required for filing for the Master's degree. Students MUST turn in paperwork to obtain their MA degree to program directors by the following dates: March 1 for graduation the following May, July 1 for graduation the following August or October 1 for graduation the following December.

Non-Terminal M.A. Degrees

Doctoral students can obtain a non-terminal M.A. degree while continuing their doctoral studies. Students planning to obtain a non-terminal master's degree should meet with their program director at the beginning of the semester in which they plan to graduate.

State funding for M.A. students is lower than state funding for Ph.D. students, but the reduction in state funding is smaller during the summer than during the long semesters. That being the case, we strongly encourage students to seek non-terminal master's degrees in the summer. Alternatively, students can choose to get these degrees in the spring or fall. Course and research requirements are the same as those for the terminal master's degree (see above).

Students planning to obtain a non-terminal master's degree must complete and submit relevant program evaluation forms to the respective program director along with the student's *Degree Program for the Master's Degree and Admission to Candidacy* form, no later than March 1 for graduation the following May, July 1 for graduation the following August or October 1 for graduation the following December. The program director will submit relevant forms to the Graduate School and ensure the forms are added to the student's department file.

Students who have conducted independent research elsewhere at the graduate level, or who have completed a master's thesis in psychology may wish to submit these for approval in order to meet the requirement. Those who obtain approval for previous research will have this written requirement waived. An oral presentation of the project is still required.

The Doctoral Degree (Ph.D.)

Applicants to the doctoral programs in the Department of Psychological Sciences are usually expected to have successfully completed at least 18 credits of undergraduate courses in psychology and a statistics course to be eligible to apply to our graduate programs. However, all graduate applications are evaluated in a holistic, case-by-case manner, and potential graduate applicants who do not meet this prerequisite for completed coursework are encouraged to contact the relevant graduate program director to discuss their circumstances and rationale for applying to our doctoral programs in Psychological Sciences.

Course Transfers and Substitutions

Course transfers

Students who have completed graduate courses before enrolling in our department may petition to have those courses fulfill degree requirements. A student may transfer up to 30 credits of graduate work based on work done at another institution. Consistent with Graduate School policy, transfer credit will not ordinarily be given for courses completed more than seven years prior to admission to a TTU psychology graduate program. Approval by the department and Graduate School is required in addition to the usual course transfer petition procedure.

Students wishing to transfer course credits must complete the *Petition to Transfer Course Credit* Form in the documents section of your program's website. The student should submit an original and one copy of this form and additional documentation (syllabus, papers, etc.) to their program director. Transfer courses require the equivalent Texas Tech University course number. If there is no equivalent, the course will be listed as PSY 5000. The student must submit paperwork for all course transfers to be considered submitted during the fall semester of the student's first year in the program. The appropriate program director will forward the petition to be reviewed by one or more faculty who teach the course for which the transfer is requested. Upon receipt of the review(s) by the appropriate faculty, the program director will notify the student of the decision and place a copy of the decision in the student's department file.

Course substitutions

A student who wants to substitute a course from another department or university for one of our courses must make a petition to that effect to the department's executive committee. The petition should be made using the *Course Substitution Petition* form, from your program's document section. Submit this form with appropriate attachments from both the student and relevant faculty. Faculty endorsements include the course-appropriate faculty member, the student's advisor, and program director. The "course appropriate faculty member" is the full-time faculty member(s) primarily responsible for teaching that course, or, if unavailable, other faculty who teach that or a related course; the program director will identify that faculty member. Course substitutions must be approved *in advance* of the student enrolling in the proposed substitute course. In no case will course substitutions be considered after a student has begun or completed the substitute course in question.

Course Requirements

All doctoral students should consult their program handbooks (i.e., clinical, counseling, experimental) for requirements regarding coursework.

Students are required to complete Psychology 5101, Colloquium in the Teaching of Psychology (1 credit is required but more may be completed).

Students who have concerns about their level of statistics preparation should carefully consider whether to take an intermediate or leveling statistics course (PSY 4380) prior to taking the three graduate level statistics courses to satisfy the core requirement. The basic statistics courses must be completed within 24 months of the official enrollment in a doctoral program in psychology at TTU. However, if an intermediate or leveling statistics course is taken first, this deadline may be extended to the end of the fall semester of the third year.

Courses which are taken to fulfill department or program area requirements, except for PSY 5002, PSY 5004, and PSY 7000, cannot be taken on a Pass/Fail basis.

Graduate Certificate in Psychological Methods and Analysis

The Department of Psychological Sciences offers a Psychological Methods and Analysis Graduate Certificate. To obtain this certificate, students need to successfully pass (with a grade of B or better) a minimum of five courses. The courses are listed below:

Required Prerequisite Courses:

PSY 5480: Experimental Design

PSY 5447: Advanced Correlational Methods and Factor Analysis

Elective (choose 3 courses, at least at least one of the courses marked with an asterisk):

PSY 5448: Advanced Multivariate Statistics for Psychologists*

PSY 5460: Structural Equation Modeling for Psychologists*
PSY 5465: Categorical Data Analysis
PSY 5467: Analysis of Repeated Measures and Intensive Longitudinal Designs*
PSY 5485: Psychometric and Item Response Theory
PSY 5490: Computer Modeling: Applied Analysis and Simulation
PSY 5495: Hierarchical Linear Modeling
PSY 5496: Qualitative Research Methods and Analysis

PSY 6000, 7000 and 8000 Registration Limits

Students are allowed to register for PSY 6000 and PSY 7000 research credits up to 25 times and for PSY 8000 up to 35 times. To be clear, each registration with a specific faculty member, regardless of the number of credit hours, counts as 1 registration (e.g., enrolling in 3 credits of PSY 7000 with your advisor in one semester would count as 1 registration; enrolling in 1 credit of PSY 8000 with Dr. X and 1 credit of PSY 8000 with Dr. Y in the same semester would count as 2 registrations). These limits should not affect many students; it would take up to 6 years of year-round enrollment in PSY 6000, PSY 7000 or PSY 8000 to exceed those registration limits. Nevertheless, it is recommended that students who have not registered for PSY 6000 or PSY 7000 25 times remain enrolled in PSY 6000/7000 until the semester in which they propose their dissertations, as opposed to enrolling in PSY 8000 upon completion of the Second Year Project. Please note that one's degree audit will only include 15 hours of PSY 6000 or PSY 7000, and 12 hours of PSY 8000.

Minors

The Department of Psychological Sciences does not currently offer any graduate minors.

Graduate students in the Department of Psychological Sciences can elect to complete a minor area of study. As per Graduate School policy, the offering academic unit must create the minor and the university must approve the minor (i.e., students/advisors do not specify what constitutes a minor). Further, if a student elects to complete a minor, then it must be covered on their qualifying examination and their dissertation committee must include someone who represents that minor area. Please consult the Graduate Catalog for further details.

Outside of Program Courses

For students who wish to customize their training via enrollment in courses in other programs (e.g., Experimental students wishing to take certain courses offered by the Clinical or Counseling programs), it is the student's responsibility, in collaboration with their research advisor/mentor, to develop the case in writing regarding the value of the desired course work. Such a case would then be presented to the appropriate program director who would chair a dialogue among the relevant program director, the instructor of the course, and the student's advisor to determine the reasonableness and feasibility of the request. If the request is approved, the relevant program director will create written documentation, which will be placed in the student's file. A copy will also be filed with the student's program director.

While a student may make such a request at any time, it is the program director's prerogative to deny a formal hearing if a clearly inadequate case is being presented or if present requests are not informed by the decisions from past deliberations in the same student's plan of course work. The student may appeal the result of the deliberation to the full faculty. However, it should be noted that since the deliberators have represented the full faculty, the full faculty, in its deliberations, would impose a major burden of argument on the student and advisor before granting the appeal.

Please note the following when considering requests:

- a. Clinical practicum courses (PSY 5318 and those sections of PSY 5002 taught by clinical faculty) are reserved for clinical students.
- b. Clinical and counseling graduate students have first priority in other courses with a practicum component (PSY 5304, 5309, 5310, 5314, 5315). These courses are taught as seminars, so faculty may limit the enrollment of students other than clinical and counseling students. Please ask the permission of the faculty member before enrolling in a course taught by a clinical faculty member.

Completing the Doctoral Program Degree Plan

Students must file a *Program for the Doctoral Degree* form with the Graduate School during the first year of study to allow the university to document you as a doctoral student. The form is available online. This form may be revised from time-to-time, but the initial version must contain any approved transfer courses. Consult with the director of your program for details. Once completed, the form must be reviewed and signed by the student's program director who will forward the form to the Graduate School.

Working with your advisor, identify specialty courses and electives and complete the *Program for the Doctoral Degree* form. The first version of your degree plan may be highly tentative and subject to modifications that reflect the actual courses taken, but the initial version must contain any approved transfer courses. Submit the completed degree plan form to your program director so that he or she can forward the form to the Graduate School.

The CIP code for the Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology is 420201.

The CIP code for the Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology is 42010100.

The CIP code for the Ph.D. in Experimental Psychology is 42080100.

The enrollment pattern is: 9 units in each long semester and 6 units in the summer.

Prequalifying Examination Research Requirement (Second-Year Project or Master's Thesis)

Note: Whether students complete a Second-Year Project or Master's Thesis is dependent upon the student's program. Check with your advisor to be certain of your requirement.

Written Requirement

Before taking the qualifying examination, each student will be required to complete at least three units of PSY 6000 or PSY 7000, and to complete an empirical study that is deemed appropriate for either a Second-Year Project or a Master's Thesis. The appropriateness of the former is determined by a two-person faculty committee including the student's faculty advisor and one other member of the department's graduate faculty. The appropriateness of the latter is determined by a three-person faculty committee including the student's faculty advisor and two other members of the department's graduate faculty.

Students who have conducted independent research during graduate studies elsewhere, or who have completed a Master's Thesis in psychology elsewhere, may wish to submit these for approval to meet the requirement. Those who obtain approval for previous research will have the written requirement waived.

Oral Requirement

Each student also is required to make a brief, ungraded, oral presentation of the research used to satisfy the above written requirement. The oral presentation should be made only after the full results of the study are available and should include as much of these results, and their interpretation, as is feasible given time constraints during the presentation.

Students who complete a Second-Year Project will present to the department. Students who complete a Master's Thesis will present to their committee.

Timeline

The student making most timely progress will have completed their research in time to present during the spring semester of their second year. If not, the oral presentation must be completed no later than the end of May of their third year. For students who complete the Second-Year Project, the schedule for oral presentations will be developed early in the spring semester. Students should refer to their program handbooks for more specific information about completion of the prequalifying examination.

Documentation

Students who complete a Second-Year Project must submit the *Completion of Written Prequalifying Examination* form to their Program Director who will submit it to the Graduate School. Students who complete a Master's Thesis must submit the *Oral Defense and Thesis-Dissertation Approval Form* to their Program Director who will submit it to the Graduate School. If the student's advisor is not available to sign (e.g., on leave), then the program director

will sign on the advisor's behalf. Students must also turn in electronic copies of their completed Second-Year Project paper or Master's Thesis paper to their advisor and program director. The faculty recognizes that research problems differ and that the document submitted to satisfy the written requirement may differ from the final report, e.g., the document submitted for publication.

Qualifying Examination

Department requirements

To be eligible to take the qualifying examination, students must have completed the second-year project or a master's thesis. They should also have completed all coursework in the specialization and all but a handful of other courses listed on the degree plan.

Format of the exam

The format of the qualifying exam differs for each program. Refer to your program handbook for details.

The doctoral qualifying examination will typically be constructed and graded by at least two faculty members selected by the faculty of the student's program. The examination requires a synthesis and application of knowledge acquired during the course of study for the doctoral degree; consequently, satisfactory performance in course work does not necessarily guarantee successful performance on the qualifying examination. Qualifying examinations are ordinarily given in early fall and spring. The qualifying examination will evaluate the student's knowledge in a specialty area, but will not be tailored for each individual student.

Admission to Candidacy

Students are admitted to candidacy by the Graduate School after both major (psychology) and if any, minor qualifying examinations have been completed. Upon successful completion of the qualifying examination the program director will send an *Admission to Candidacy: Graduate School Notification* form to the Graduate School. The student's advisor or the program director should also submit the *Qualifying Exam Report Form* to the Graduate School. Students should consult the Graduate School website to see if there are further steps to be completed to ensure admission to candidacy. Other requirements for admission to candidacy are given in the Graduate Catalog. You should familiarize yourself with all of the Graduate School requirements, especially those that limit the time to complete your degree.

Dissertation Procedures and Guidelines

Doctoral students in psychology are required to complete a dissertation in compliance with the guidelines established by the Graduate School. Consult the graduate catalog for details.

In fulfilling its responsibility regarding those requirements, the psychology faculty is particularly

concerned that students have gained thorough understanding and mastery of matters of design and statistics.

The structure of the dissertation committee will be as follows:

1. The dissertation committee must consist of at least four faculty members.
2. The dissertation chairperson should be selected by mutual agreement between the student and the director.
3. At least three additional committee members should be selected by mutual agreement among the student, the dissertation chairperson, and those asked.
4. If there is a doctoral minor, at least one committee member must represent the minor area.

All members of the dissertation committee must be members of the graduate faculty unless special permission is obtained from the graduate dean. The dissertation chairperson must be a full-time member of the department and a member of the graduate faculty. In the rare event that a student has co-chairs, one co-chair must be a full-time member of the department and a member of the graduate faculty. Department faculty members serving as deans or associate deans are considered to be full-time. The dissertation committee must contain at least three full-time members of the psychology faculty.

The dissertation committee is considered formally constituted when the dissertation proposal (including any revisions required by the committee during the proposal meeting) is approved and the proposal has been signed by the entire committee. The student should furnish the program director with the following:

- a copy of the proposal cover sheet signed by all members of the committee
- a copy of a completed *Change of Degree Plan* form
- A copy of the *Form for Reporting Changes of Dissertation Title or Committee* (if applicable)

Barring exceptional circumstances (not just for scheduling convenience), the committee membership will not be changed following the filing of an approved proposal. If such exceptional circumstances occur, the program director should be consulted.

The selection of members of the dissertation committee is one of the most important decisions that a doctoral student will make. Therefore, it is crucial that students choose their dissertation chairperson first, and discuss other potential committee members with the chairperson before contacting those potential committee members.

Dissertation proposal

The dissertation proposal should consist of a cover page, Abstract, Introduction, Method, and References. The abstract should be headed by listing the names of the student and the committee members, the title, the place, the date, and the time of the proposal meeting. The proposal may also contain an Expanded Literature Review if a program or advisor requires one.

Three weeks before the event, students must announce the proposal meeting with a flyer distributed to all department faculty members and posted in the department. It should be titled “Announcement of Dissertation Proposal” and contain the student’s name, the title of the dissertation, the members of the committee, and an abstract.

A complete copy of the proposal will be distributed to the entire committee a minimum of 2 weeks before the proposal date. This 2-week interval must occur while classes are in session, rather than during intersessions or University holiday periods. To save paper, ask committee members whether they would prefer electronic copies or single- or double-sided paper copies of the proposal.

The committee will critically evaluate the proposed research at a proposal meeting scheduled for at least two hours, which all faculty and graduate students will be invited to attend. Any changes required by the committee must be incorporated into the proposal.

Students will only be allowed to proceed after the committee has signed the proposal’s cover sheet. The committee chairperson will place a copy of the signed cover sheet in the student’s department file.

Any subsequent changes in the proposed research must be approved by the committee. The approved amendment must be placed in the student’s department file.

Anticipated time frame for project

Students should anticipate that completion of the dissertation study will involve working closely with the committee chairperson and perhaps other committee members actively involved in the conduct of the study, analysis of results, and preparation of the written document. Also, students should anticipate that completing the written dissertation will involve preparation and revision of multiple drafts. It is advisable for the student and chair to discuss and agree upon issues such as the length of time needed by the chair to read and return drafts of sections or the entire document. The final document should be approved by the committee chairperson prior to distribution to the full committee.

Required format for the written dissertation

The Graduate School has specific thesis-dissertation formatting guidelines that must be followed. Documentation can be found on the Graduate School Web site.

The department has adopted a dissertation format (within the bounds of Graduate School requirements) that will make it easier to develop journal versions of the dissertation research. All dissertations will have the following form and section requirements:

1. INTRODUCTION: The introduction to the dissertation will be of such scope and length as would normally be appropriate for the submission of that research to a professional journal. The department recognizes that the nature of the research and

the journal targeted for submission may affect the length of an introductory section. What would be appropriate in each case will be decided by the student and the committee members.

2. **METHOD AND RESULTS SECTIONS:** Students should consider the appropriateness of shortening the traditionally long method and results sections to make them more appropriate for journal submission. The dissertation document should, however, contain all pertinent information, and, as indicated below, there may be appendices for less than essential details of methods and results.
3. **OPTIONAL APPENDICES:** Appendices should be presented in the following order:
 - a. Expanded Literature
 - b. Expanded Methods and Results
 - c. Supplemental Findings and results
 - d. Other appendices as needed. These may include the traditional appendices for copies of tests, scales that were administered, task instructions, etc.

Note: Students should consider using these appendices when there are, for example, details of method and supplemental, tangential, or marginal analyses or results that would not normally be appropriate for a journal manuscript, but which are essential in demonstrating a scholarly treatment of the problem.

4. Each student should consult with the committee about what would be appropriate for the text and appendices. The department recognizes that there may be instances where a particular dissertation may not be suited to this scheme (e.g., a historical or philosophical treatise). In such instances, the student may submit a petition, endorsed by the dissertation chairperson, to the program director for approval to change the format.

The Graduate School will send a PDF copy of students' completed dissertations to them. Students must send a copy of that PDF to their advisor and the program director.

Dissertation defense

All doctoral candidates will defend their dissertations in a public oral examination. It may be scheduled at any suitable time after the dissertation has been approved by the candidate's dissertation chair or co-chairs. At least three weeks before the defense, the student must file a *Doctoral Exam/Defense Notification Form* with the Graduate School. The Chair of the student's dissertation committee will recruit a graduate faculty member from another department to act as the Dean's representative at the defense. The Graduate Dean's Representative must be a member of the TTU Graduate Faculty, and a member of another department (besides Psychological Sciences) on campus.

A complete copy of the dissertation document will be distributed to the dissertation committee a minimum of 2 weeks before the defense date. This 2-week interval must occur while classes are in session, rather than during intersessions or University holiday periods. Also, at least ten working days before the event, the student must announce the defense with a flyer electronically distributed to all faculty members in the department and posted in the department. Except that it should be titled, “Announcement of Dissertation Defense,” it should follow the same format as the proposal announcement.

The defense will proceed as follows. First, the committee chairperson will introduce the candidate. Then the candidate will deliver a 20-30 minute summary of the research sufficient for all those present to appreciate the problem, and to understand the major points of the method, the results and the implications of the research. The candidate will address questions from the committee. The candidate will address questions from the general audience. The audience will be asked to leave the room and the candidate will address any additional questions from the committee. The candidate will be asked to leave the room and the committee will consider the candidate’s performance and vote to determine the outcome. The dean’s observer does not vote, but may voice comments during the deliberations. Finally, the candidate is then recalled to hear the results of the deliberation.

Upon completion of the oral defense, the committee will complete an *Oral Defense and Thesis-Dissertation Approval Form*. This form can be downloaded from the Graduate School. The committee chair will forward the form to the Graduate School and will place a copy of the form in the student’s departmental file. The dissertation chair should also forward a copy of the form to the appropriate program director.

Memo of understanding (MOU)

When changes or revisions to the proposal or dissertation are warranted the following procedure should be followed:

Type A changes

Members of the committee can sign off on the proposal or dissertation, but changes will be made. The chair of the dissertation committee will review the needed changes with the committee and the student before the meeting is adjourned. After all members approve, appropriate paperwork (differs by program) is signed and filed by each member of the committee. All completed paperwork (evaluation forms, title page) must be forwarded to the student’s program director. Copies of the evaluations should be printed and placed in the student’s file by the student’s committee chair. Depending on the program, the committee chair or student will prepare a *Memo of Understanding: Type A* form that outlines, in writing, all necessary and agreed upon changes to be made in the document. The memo is sent to the student and all committee members within one week of the proposal meeting and is approved via email by all committee members. The final document will reflect changes noted in the memo.

Type B changes

Members of the committee will *not* sign off on the document until needed changes are made. The chair of the dissertation committee will review needed changes with the committee and the student prior to adjournment of the meeting. The committee chair will prepare a *Memo of Understanding: Type B* that outlines, in writing, all necessary and agreed upon changes to be made in the document. The memo is sent to the student and all committee members within one week of the proposal meeting and is approved via email by all committee members. The student will make the necessary changes which will then be reviewed by the chair and/or committee members. After all members approve, appropriate paperwork, which differs by program, will be signed, filed, and forwarded to the student's program director.

Proposal or defense fail

Should the student's dissertation committee fail to approve any portion of the proposal or defense dissertation defense, the student's committee will discuss steps to take regarding the student's need to rewrite the dissertation or complete a new dissertation research project.

Filing the Statement of Intent to Graduate

The Graduate School requires students to complete a *Statement of Intent to Graduate*, which can be found on the Graduate School's Web site. Students need to do this early in the semester of graduation (see Graduate School for specific deadlines each semester). Students need to re-submit this form to the Graduate School in succeeding semesters if they do not graduate. Copies of these forms should be given to the program director.

Department Life

Annual Review

At least once each year, usually towards the end of the spring semester, each student's progress towards completion of the degree will be evaluated. The goal of these evaluations is to provide students with feedback about their progress in meeting Graduate School, department, and program requirements.

Note. For students in their fourth and later years, a copy of this evaluation is forwarded to the Graduate School as part of their mandated review of progress of advanced students.

Near the end of the semester, the program faculty will meet and discuss each student's progress. In these evaluations the faculty stresses the importance of going beyond merely meeting degree requirements or doing well in the classroom, and tries to consider each student's overall development as a professional. The standard used is a level of accomplishment that the faculty believes will enable one to compete successfully in the tight job market.

One outcome of this review is a form/letter with a gross evaluation—"satisfactory", "marginally satisfactory," or "unsatisfactory" progress. The form/letter is sent to the student and a copy is

placed in the student's department file. Regardless of whether the student is deemed to be making satisfactory or unsatisfactory progress, a meeting with the advisor is in order for a more detailed assessment of standing in the program.

Awards for Teaching and Research

Graduate Student Teaching Awards

Three awards will be given each year if appropriate recipients are identified. The awards are to recognize superior instruction by graduate students. One of the awards will be given to instructors of introductory psychology (PSY 1300). One of the awards will be given to TAs who have substantial, direct instruction responsibilities, such as students who are instructing laboratories or serving as TAs for graduate courses. One award will be given to instructors of their own course. No student can receive the award twice in the same category. Candidates for each award will be nominated. The undergraduate program committee (UPC) will evaluate evidence supporting the nomination including, but not limited to, a) the nominating letter, b) course syllabus, c) an exam, and d) student evaluations. The UPC will select semifinalists and those candidates will undergo a UPC review of a lecture. If, in the rare case, a semifinalist is not teaching, a lecture opportunity will be created. Performance on all previous instructional experiences appropriate for the particular award will be considered. The goal is to fund each of these awards at \$100 and to give the awardees a plaque from the faculty.

Graduate Student Research Awards

Each year, the Department of Psychological Sciences honors up to three graduate students with an award for excellence in research and related scholarly activity. Faculty members will nominate students for the awards. The awards consist of a cash award of \$100 plus a plaque awarded from the faculty. Criteria for the award include the following:

- Exceptional quality of the second-year project, thesis, and/or dissertation study (or proposal);
- Continuous and sustained involvement in additional research.
- Authorship or co-authorship on journal articles, book chapters, presentations at professional conferences, or submitted grant proposals.

Note: This award is *not* meant to be the “best” dissertation/second-year project/thesis, or the highest GPA. Rather, the award will be made to those students who have maintained active, continuous and exceptional involvement in research and scholarship over the course of their graduate career and who demonstrate exceptional promise to make a contribution to the science of psychology.

Graduate Student Diversity Research Award

The Diversity Award is given to a student in good standing who has completed a research or study project with a diversity-related focus (e.g., second-year project, thesis, dissertation, or

poster). The student must be the first author on the work. Application materials should include either, 1) a brief letter (or email) from student's academic advisor verifying that graduate student is in good academic standing and that relevant research has been completed and/or presented. A copy of the poster, symposium paper, or publication is also required; or 2) submission of a five page summary if the research is from a 6000/7000/8000 project and data has not been presented at a conference. The summary should be in APA format and include an Introduction, Research Questions and Hypotheses, Methods, Results, and Discussion.

Student Councils

All students in each program are eligible to become members of the Student Council of their program. The Council conducts regular meetings to discuss academic and professional topics relevant to students in a particular program. In addition, the Council serves as an important channel of communication between students and faculty on department and program matters such as new faculty selection, curriculum, new student selection and orientation, and teaching evaluation. Student involvement in the councils is strongly encouraged since the views of the councils bear more weight in influencing departmental policy than do the views of individual students. Students should consult with a representative or officer of the Student Council of their program for further information concerning membership, dues, and voting privileges.

Special Situations

Almost any element of program policy allows for adjustment to individual circumstances by means of petition, but exceptional circumstances are needed for such petitions to be successful. Any appeal begins with the individuals immediately involved; with the instructor of an individual course, with the program director if a program policy is involved, with the department chairperson if a department policy is involved, etc. Where satisfactory resolution has not been achieved at one level, the appeal is taken to the next level of administrative authority. Thus, certain matters may proceed from individual faculty to the program director, to the department chairperson, to the graduate dean, etc. At any of these levels there is a specified and explicit procedure. There are established procedures for matters dealing with access to personal records, sex discrimination, sexual harassment, students with disabilities, and grade appeals. Note that the Graduate School has established procedures for those wishing to appeal the results of a comprehensive examination, alleged excessive requirements by an advisor or committee, and other matters relating strictly to graduate education.

Appeals for Exceptions to Program and Department Requirements

Program requirements

If the requirement at issue is a program matter, the student should present a written request to the program director who may consult with the program faculty. If the matter is not resolved, the student may ask that the request be presented to the program faculty. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she should arrange through the department chairperson to take the matter to the dean

of the Graduate School since the department faculty have decided not to judge a program's decisions regarding its own requirements.

Departmental requirements

If the requirement at issue is a department-wide requirement, the written request for exception should be presented to the program director, who will convene a committee of three disinterested department graduate faculty members to study the request and receive the recommendation of the student's advisor and dissertation committee if one has been formed. The appointed committee will make its recommendation to the department faculty who will vote on it. The graduate dean, through the department chairperson, is the next level of appeal. To allow sufficient time for processing and evaluation, students' petitions concerning department policies, requirements or regulations must originate with the petition(s) being presented to the program director *at least two weeks* before a regularly scheduled meeting of the full faculty. Students should be aware that regular meetings do not take place in the summer.

Extension of candidacy

The Graduate Catalog stipulates the maximum amount of time allowed for completing the doctoral degree. Any exceptions or extensions must be approved in advance by the graduate dean. Prior to seeking approval from the graduate dean, however, the student must follow the departmental procedures regarding an appeal for an extension of candidacy. Appeals for extension of candidacy should use the following procedure: The appeal should be sent to the program's director *at least two months* prior to the expiration of doctoral candidacy. The program's director will send a copy of the appeal to all department faculty members to solicit written comments or feedback for consideration at the next regularly-scheduled executive committee meeting. The student's advisor will also be asked to attend the meeting to provide further information. The executive committee has the authority to recommend that the request for extension be granted or denied. Students should be aware that regular meetings of the executive committee do not take place in the summer.

Grievances

From time to time a student may experience difficulties with others. When a student experiences difficulties with another student, a faculty member, a staff member, or a supervisor, the student should first discuss the problem with the person involved when this is possible. If talking with the person involved is not possible or does not resolve the situation, the student should consult their program handbook and/or program director for guidance about next steps.

Resources exist outside our department too. The Student Resolution Center serves as a safe place to talk about concerns of students, staff, or faculty. The staff members are confidential, objective and informal. They accept walk-in appointments or you can call 742-SAFE.

A student or faculty member can file a formal complaint about misconduct with the Office of Student Conduct. Staff members are available to explain the judicial process (806-742-1714). In

addition, Texas Tech University has formal grievance procedures in place to help address concerns quickly. Information about grievances is private.

Leaves of Absence

By accepting admission into one of our doctoral degree programs, the student acknowledges and understands that the department expects a full-time effort, and steady, expeditious completion of all degree requirements. Only in rare instances will a leave of absence be considered by the program faculty and, consistent with Graduate School policy, leaves may not exceed one calendar year. Note that the time allowed to complete the degree continues to run during the leave.

In the event that a student decides to petition the program faculty for a leave of absence, the reason for the petition (e.g., serious personal or family medical situation, severe financial difficulties, etc.) should be included along with sufficient detail about the situation to let the program faculty make an informed decision about the petition. If the details are highly personal, with the permission of the program director the student may limit more in-depth discussion of the situation to the advisor and/or program director. Such a discussion should include how much or what information is to be shared with other program faculty. The advisor, program's director, or faculty may request supporting documentation (e.g., letter from physician) to assist in the evaluation process. Upon consideration of the petition for leave of absence, the program faculty members make a recommendation to the Graduate School.

Transfer Across Programs

Occasionally, a student may want to attempt a transfer to another doctoral program within the department. Such transfers are by no means automatic. Each student is accepted into a specific doctoral program. However, if a student can successfully meet the admission requirements of another program, then the foundation for the transfer is in place, but at some point early in the application process, the student should consult with the director of the program being left and secure a release statement should admission to the new program be offered.

Use of Social Media

Your decision to create profiles in – and engage with – various social media platforms is a personal choice. It is important to note that unprofessional, unethical, or illegal behavior on these platforms may result in negative consequences. Challenges related to social media use and the use of other electronic communications (e.g., email, voicemail messages) have been discussed by members of the Council of Graduate Departments of Psychology and the Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology, who have shared a number of important considerations for trainees. A common theme emerging from these discussions is that the information you share via social media and other electronic communications may be reviewed by potential employers, colleagues, clients, etc., and you have little control over how this information is shared or interpreted.

As a graduate student in the department, please consider how you portray yourself on social media, including both professional and private social media accounts—private social media communication can inadvertently become accessible to other audiences. If you report engaging in, or are depicted engaging in, any unethical (e.g. sharing client information; faking data) or illegal behavior, this information may be used by the program and/or department to recommend disciplinary action.

To give students the best chance at success in the program and after graduating, the department advises students to carefully consider the personally identifiable information they share via online blogs, websites, social media platforms, and other forms of electronic communication.