

**Graduate Programs Policies and Procedures Manual**

**Ph.D. in Psychology**

**NDSU Department of Psychology**

**August 2019**

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## **I. Overview**

### ***A. Purpose of the Handbook***

This document contains the official policies and procedures of the Department of Psychology relevant to graduate students in the Ph.D. in Psychology program. (If you are in the Psychological Clinical Science Ph.D. program, you should refer to the graduate student manual specific to your program.) You are responsible for knowing this material and should read this handbook at your earliest convenience. It will give you a brief overview of your major academic activities and progression through the program. We have attempted to address many of the questions and concerns that come up among students, so please consult your handbook first if a question comes up. If you cannot find a solution or answer in this handbook, consult your advisor and/or the department chairperson. However, please feel free to visit with the chairperson or any other faculty at any time -- we are here to help.

### ***B. Mission Statement of the Department***

As a science department in a land-grant institution, the Psychology Department emphasizes both general and professional education. We see scholarly inquiry, particularly basic and applied research, as essential to the Department's and University's instructional and public service function. Through an emphasis on research, we serve the people of North Dakota by providing quality education for our students, advancing knowledge, attracting resources, and advancing the status of the Department and University.

## **II. Practical Matters**

### ***A. Orientation***

If you are new to the program, the NDSU Graduate School and the Department of Psychology host separate orientation sessions. The graduate school session typically takes place one or two days before instruction begins in the Fall, and covers such topics as registration, online and campus resources, assistantships, parking, and student ID cards. The departmental session is an opportunity to meet the faculty and fellow graduate students, learn about departmental policies and expectations, and meet with your advisor. The department also hosts a picnic or other social gathering at the beginning of the academic year to welcome new and returning students.

### ***B. Your Advisor***

Our graduate programs operate on a mentorship model. Your advisor is likely to be your primary supervisor and resource for most things. Students are often admitted based on interests that are compatible with a faculty member. That faculty member is assigned as your advisor prior to your arrival on campus. Your advisor will assist you in academic matters, including course selection and registration. All students are expected to be involved in research every semester and your advisor will likely be the supervisor for this activity. Some students are supported by teaching assistantships. In this case your advisor may or may not be the primary

supervisor. When it comes time to form a supervisory committee for your thesis and dissertation, your advisor will likely serve as the chair of the committee.

You should routinely talk with your advisor about your research and career interests and seek his/her input and suggestions. It is possible to change advisors if you find your interests are better aligned with a different faculty member. If you do plan to change advisors, make sure to visit with the potential new faculty advisor about the possibility of changing advisors and ensure that this person is willing and able to take you on as a student.

### **C. Financial Support**

The department normally provides financial support for graduate students in the form of teaching assistantships and research assistantships. Assistantships are currently offered for nine or twelve months. Students who receive teaching assistantships are assigned to help with classes during the regular academic year as well as during the summer sessions. Other duties may be assigned during the summer with the work schedule to be negotiated with the student's primary advisor. Research assistantships are under the control of the principal investigator on the grant or project and are individually negotiated.

Teaching and research assistantships automatically include a full tuition waiver that applies to graduate coursework. *Tuition will not be waived for any undergraduate courses (i.e., 400 level and lower).* There are typically fees that are charged over and above tuition. These fees cover the costs of a variety of services that are available to you including admission to fine arts and athletic events, student publications, technology and health and wellness services. You are personally responsible for paying these fees.

You will be paid on the 15th and last day of each month beginning in September. There is a two week delay between work effort and the subsequent pay. Students who graduate following the Spring semester will end their appointment on May 15.

Summers are somewhat different from the academic year, in that there are no graduate lecture courses offered and faculty members are supported by research grants, summer teaching, or not at all. We are normally able to provide support for continuing students through summer RA or TA positions. Regardless of support, you are expected to continue to make significant progress during the summer. Such progress may take the form of completing a master's or doctoral thesis proposal, writing an area paper, collecting and analyzing data, writing up research for publication, and planning thesis committees, research, and courses for the upcoming year. In these cases you should enroll for research or thesis credits during the summer to account for the time that you engage in these activities.

We try to find stipend support for all our graduate students. This is not a guarantee of support. For students entering with a B.A. or B.S., it is possible to complete your graduate training in four or five years. Under some circumstances, a student may need to spend a sixth year to complete all the requirements. Stipend support for a sixth year will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and will depend on adequate progress in the program. Except under highly limited circumstances, the department does not provide stipend support via a graduate assistantship beyond a sixth year; you will need to find alternative sources of funding if you are in the

program longer than six years. The timeline of support is adjusted appropriately for students entering with a M.A. or M.S. degree.

In the rare case of a student being admitted without support, you will be eligible for other forms of financial assistance. In particular, you may apply to the Dean of the Graduate School for a Board of Higher Education Scholarship, which covers the cost of tuition. There are also a number of other scholarships or fellowships available. Please see the Graduate School website, [www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/), and look for funding opportunities. Be sure to work with your advisor if you would like to apply for one of these "external" types of support because the department is usually required to provide information on your ability, status, and need. Most of these forms of support will replace and not necessarily supplement the student's level of support.

Limited funds are available to support graduate student research and professional travel. These policies are described in *Appendices A and B*.

#### ***D. Assistantship (TA and RA) Responsibilities***

Accepting an RA or TA assignment means that you have agreed to perform certain services for the department in exchange for a stipend and a tuition waiver. You are expected to continue in the position you have accepted until the end of your "contract period" (usually the academic year), as long as you are in good standing in the program. TA and RA responsibilities continue through finals week and may include periods during break. *It is your responsibility to check with your TA or RA supervisor before planning to be absent (e.g., before you make airplane reservations).*

The duties may vary considerably across instructors and courses in the case of TAs and across principal investigators and research projects in the case of RAs. A 50% appointment (most graduate assistantships) requires on average 20 hours/week of effort; a 25% appointment requires an average of 10 hours/week. TAs will usually be assigned to several different courses and instructors throughout the year, and we try to even out the load across assignments. Although responsibilities vary, TAs should expect to attend class, post and keep office hours, and assist instructors in preparing and grading examinations, preparing and grading assignments, grading papers, and running laboratories in a lab course. *TAs are responsible for clarifying the exact nature of their responsibilities with the instructor before the beginning of the term.*

The expectations for graduate student teaching and TAing during the two academic terms will be:

First and Second Year Students: TA for 20 hours/week

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Year Students: Teach a minimum of one course per year as the Instructor of Record. If there are semesters the student is not teaching as Instructor of Record, the student will TA for 20 hours/week. Students will have an opportunity to indicate their preferences that will be considered (but not guaranteed) during assistantship assignment.

Sixth Year and Beyond: Sixth year students will not be eligible for department-funded assistantships. Exceptions will be considered on a case-by-case basis and must be approved by faculty vote. The expectations of effort may differ for students funded in their sixth year or above.

Additional:

- 1) Students who enter the program with a master's degree will take the appropriate "College Teaching" course by the end of their second year. Students who enter the program with a bachelor's degree will take the College Teaching class no later than the Fall of their third year. Students must complete the College Teaching course before they are eligible to serve as Instructor of Record.
- 2) Graduate student instructors are not guaranteed additional TA support for their courses. TA support will be distributed among faculty and student instructors based on course requirements, enrollment, and availability.
- 3) A graduate student's first time teaching a class will be deemed a practicum. The student will be assigned a faculty mentor to help with planning and delivery of the course. The student will register for 5 credits of teaching practicum with their mentor for that term.
- 4) All graduate student instructors will complete mid-term evaluations by the end of the 7th week, and submit the complete result to the Graduate committee for review.
- 5) Teaching performance will be part of the annual graduate student continuation discussion. Student instructors with indicators of poor teaching performance (e.g., SROIs, student complaints, mentor observations, etc.) will work with a teaching mentor to develop a plan for improving their instruction. Student instructors who fail to make adequate progress on their teaching improvement plans may not be assigned further courses as Instructor of Record and, thus, may not be eligible for full financial support in all subsequent semesters.
- 6) Exceptions to these expectations may be requested. Approval may be granted by a vote of the faculty.

RA duties usually involve data collection and analysis and often involve designing studies and writing papers. RA responsibilities need to be discussed with the supervising faculty member. The time commitment for RA responsibilities is in addition to the time commitment for research credits. Thesis activities (writing the proposal and thesis, collecting and analyzing thesis data) are not normally included in RA hours (but instead are covered by thesis credits).

In carrying out your assistantship duties, be professional. Communicate regularly with your supervisor, ask questions when unclear on an assignment, meet deadlines, and interact in a mature and friendly manner. Be prompt and fully engaged in meetings, office hours, lectures, and lab hours.

### ***E. Secretarial Services and Office Supplies***

The administrative assistants of the department are responsible for performing secretarial services (typing, bookkeeping, photocopying, scheduling, organizing events and services, etc.) related to departmental administration, teaching, advising, research, and grants management. It is legitimate to ask them for help with course-related work if that course is one for which you are a TA or instructor. It is legitimate to ask for assistance with work and materials for faculty-supervised research projects on which you are an RA. It is *not* part of their job to perform these services for graduate student projects, including theses.

Likewise, office supplies are available for classes in which you are the TA or for research projects for which you are an RA. Otherwise, office supplies are for departmental use only. *Note: if the research is grant supported, purchase office supplies at the Varsity Mart or an outside vendor (with prior approval) and charge to the grant.* You are expected to buy your own materials and supplies for coursework, personal use, and for your own thesis and dissertation research (see *Appendix A* about applying for thesis and dissertation related funding). If you are unclear about whether something is appropriate, check with your faculty supervisor or an administrative assistant.

Some department facilities and equipment are available for graduate student use *after proper instruction*. These include computers, printers, projectors, the photocopier, and the fax machine. Faculty and staff have priority access to equipment for departmental activities.

*Copier Usage* - You will be issued an access code for the department copier. Your code **MUST** be kept confidential as you are responsible for any copies made on your access code. You will be billed for those copies monthly. If you are making copies as part of your TA or RA responsibilities, obtain the access code from the supervising faculty member.

### ***F. Space***

All graduate students will be provided with office space and a computer to use. You should use your office as your primary work area. It will also be the place where you hold office hours as a TA or work as an RA (when not in the lab).

Research space is allocated in a systematic manner. If you need research space for your thesis or dissertation, you should first consult with your advisor. If your proposed research is in one of your advisor's current areas of research, your advisor may have space available for your research activities. If not, your advisor can bring your thesis research space request to the attention of the department's committee which handles space. The general order of space priority is faculty research, thesis research, and non-thesis graduate student research. However, it is expected that faculty and graduate students will be flexible so that everyone's research space needs are met.

## **G. Keys**

You will be assigned keys to the building, your office, and the lab. Each distributed key is recorded and inscribed with your ID number. You will need your ID card for card access to certain areas of the building and to the main office after business hours.

You are responsible for your keys and for keeping spaces secure. If doors are left unlocked and equipment or files are lost, access (and keys) may be revoked.

## **III. Time Commitment, Student Responsibilities, and Professional Behavior**

### **A. Time Commitment**

You should consider graduate school a full-time, year-round, professional commitment. The faculty expect to see you in the department (in your classes, in your office, and in the lab). Assistantships are 50% commitments (20 hrs/week, on average). The rest of your academic time is spent conducting research, writing papers, taking classes, studying, and developing your professional skills. Although we encourage you to strive for a balanced life (with time for family, friends, and entertainment), please take your academic commitments seriously and manage your time appropriately. The harder you work now, the more professional opportunities there will be available to you later.

### **B. Extra-Curricular Professional Activities and Outside Employment**

There may be opportunities for you to become involved in research projects not associated with the department. To protect both you and NDSU, such activities should be cleared with the department before you agree to participate. Also note that your involvement with any research project must be approved by the University Institutional Review Board (IRB). We *encourage* you to take advantage of research opportunities, but keep in mind that you are representing our department.

Regarding outside employment, keep in mind that virtually all students are admitted as *full-time* students and provided with departmental support. Although we understand the desire for additional income, we strongly discourage you from taking on outside employment. It is almost certain to detract from your education and responsibilities in our program and may hinder your continued progress.

### **C. Departmental Events**

*Colloquium.* Our department holds a colloquium every Friday afternoon that students attend as PSYC 790, Graduate Seminar (1 credit). Although local researchers present their work in the colloquium series, we also bring in a number of distinguished guests each semester. These visitors usually have special expertise relevant to one or more ongoing projects in the department. Another reason for bringing in these individuals is to broaden the exposure and training of graduate students. In addition to the presentation, an outside speaker's visit includes meeting with students, going out for meals with faculty and students, and a reception. We strongly encourage you to attend all of these events, including the informal meetings and receptions. Many students have received valuable help with research, publications, post-docs,

and jobs as a result of interacting with our guests. A written itinerary and a representative reprint from the outside speaker will usually be posted on the 790 course website shortly before such visits.

***You are expected to attend and participate in all colloquia.*** Please let the colloquium organizers know if you would like to present, have suggestions for outside speakers, etc. *Also let them know if for some reason you will miss a session.* See *Appendix C* for typical course requirements for PSYC 790. Specific requirements for each semester will be determined by the faculty organizers of the colloquium series.

You will have the opportunity to present your thesis research at colloquium. Presentation length is typically 15-20 minutes for your master's thesis and 45 minutes for your dissertation research.

*Social events.* The department has a number of purely social events, such as parties, picnics, or post-colloquium get-togethers. These are never mandatory, but are great for getting to know one another and getting involved in the social life of the department. *Don't be shy!*

#### **D. Academic Dishonesty**

Academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism) is not tolerated in the department. The department may discontinue your enrollment in the program and recommend expulsion to the Dean. NDSU Policy 335 establishes the Code of Conduct and provides a definition of plagiarism (<http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/335.pdf>). It is your responsibility to read and understand this policy. There are multiple resources available to students for education and prevention of academic dishonesty (<http://www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty/>). In addition, the Graduate School has a separate policy regarding Academic Dishonesty (see *Appendix K*).

#### **E. Professional Behavior and Code of Conduct**

We are a collegial department. You should strive to be an active member of the department. Attend classes and colloquia. Ask questions. Spend time in the department. Discuss topics with fellow students, faculty, and guest speakers. Be a student representative on committees. As a professional in training, take advantage of the departmental environment to practice your professional skills. Be reliable and prompt. Be respectful and courteous with faculty, staff, and students. Work hard and strive for excellence in your teaching and research.

As a teaching assistant or a research assistant, you are an employee of the University. As such you are bound by the same Code of Conduct as all employees (<http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/151.pdf>). You must also adhere to the policies of conduct developed for NDSU students (<https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/601.pdf>). The policies cover topics such as alcohol and drug use, theft and fraud, respect for community, harassment, and academic misconduct. Please review these policies carefully. Infractions can lead to disciplinary action. Depending on the severity of the misconduct, a possible consequence could involve removal from the program.

## ***F. Sexual Harassment and Consensual Relationships***

The University has policies covering both sexual harassment and consensual relationships. The definitions and policies are presented in the NDSU Policy Manual (<https://www.ndsu.edu/policy/>) under Chapter 1: General Employment, sections 162 – Sexual Harassment Policy, and 162.1 – Consensual Relationships. See also section 163 – Anti-Harassment Policy.

As a graduate student, you could be either the victim or perpetrator of sexual harassment. All employees of NDSU are required to complete annual training on recognizing and preventing harassment. If you feel that you have been harassed, please discuss the situation with the department chair. It is understandable to be hesitant, but report incidents for the sake of your own and others' comfort and safety. You can also talk to your advisor or another faculty member with whom you are comfortable. Please be assured that any discussion of harassment will be completely confidential, up to the point at which formal charges are made against the perpetrator. Outside the department, you can report concerns about violations of the sexual harassment policy to the university's vice president for equity, diversity and global outreach, the university's general counsel, the Counseling Center, or the Disability Services Office. When administrators or supervisors become aware of occurrences of sexual harassment in their areas, they are responsible for stopping the behavior or for reporting it to the executive director and chief diversity officer. For resources and reporting options, see the website of the Vice President for Equity, Diversity, and Global Outreach ([https://www.ndsu.edu/equity/filing\\_a\\_complaint\\_at\\_ndsu/](https://www.ndsu.edu/equity/filing_a_complaint_at_ndsu/)).

As an instructor, teaching assistant, research assistant, or student, the consensual relationships policy applies to you. You are expected to refrain from having relationships with students in the classes that you instruct or for which you TA. A similar situation could occur on a research project in which undergraduates are involved. Such relationships should be avoided, since they have the potential for serious consequences. If a relationship does develop, you must inform the faculty member who is responsible for the course or research project, so potential conflicts of interest can be resolved.

## ***G. Leave of Absence***

Leave of Absence. The Department of Psychology allows graduate students to take a leave of absence based on policy set forth by the Graduate School. There are two separate Graduate School policies addressing the terms for a leave of absence. Students may apply for a Leave of Absence. This leave may be granted upon approval of the adviser and the Dean of the College of Graduate School and Interdisciplinary Studies. Students should be aware that Graduate School policy requires continuous enrollment for degree-seeking graduate students, unless a Leave of Absence has been formally requested and approved. The form to request a leave of absence is available from the Graduate School.

Students who require accommodations, including a possible Leave of Absence, due to family or medical concerns may also be supported by the Graduate School's Family and Medical Accommodation Policy for Graduate Students. This policy allows for an extension of time

deadlines for completing preliminary and final examinations and submissions of a thesis or dissertation. It also has provisions for modified duties related to an assistantship. The complete policy can be found on the Graduate School website.

In addition to the provisions included in Graduate School policy, students may apply for an extension to department completion policies. Students can have the Psychology Department timeline extended by requesting an extension in writing at the same time as they apply for a leave or extension to the Graduate School. This written request should be submitted for approval to the student's adviser, the Graduate Programs Committee, and the chair. Extensions are approved by the adviser, the Graduate Programs Committee, and the chair.

#### **IV. Evaluation of Student Progress**

Students admitted to a graduate program are expected to meet a high standard of performance and to complete the program in a timely manner. To achieve this goal, the graduate program has an established timeline for the completion of major milestones and regularly evaluates and provides feedback to students. A formal evaluation of student progress is conducted annually, and more frequent meetings regarding student progress toward the degree should occur between the student, the adviser, and the Graduate Programs Committee.

##### ***A. Expected Timeline of Student Progress***

In general, graduate students are expected to complete the program (both Master's and Ph.D.) in 5 years. This expectation is based on the following timeline, unless changes to the expected timeline have been requested in writing and approved by the adviser, the Graduate Programs Committee, and the department chair.

- Master's thesis proposal defended before the start of the student's second year
- Master's thesis completed, defended, and accepted by the Graduate School before the start of the student's third year
- Major area paper completed and defended during the student's fourth year
- Dissertation proposal completed and defended before the start of the student's fifth year
- Dissertation completed and defended by the Spring of the student's fifth year

All students are expected to meet these milestones according to this timeline. Students who anticipate a significant deviation from this timeline may request a change to the amount of time allocated for a given requirement or to extend the timeline to include a sixth year. Such changes may be requested to accommodate methodological or sampling difficulties, or unexpected personal or professional circumstances. The student and their adviser may request an adjusted timeline by submitting a written request to the Graduate Programs Committee that provides justification for the need to alter the timeline and the revised proposed dates for all requirements not already completed at the time of request. Modification of the timeframe for completing one requirement does *not* justify the extension of all subsequent requirements (e.g., defending an area paper six months late does not automatically justify proposing a dissertation 6 months late without further rationale). Students who require a timeline modification should make reasonable efforts to return to the expected timeline. Students who take an approved Leave of Absence or who qualify for Family and Medical Leave through the Graduate School policies will have their timelines adjusted accordingly.

Graduate students may appeal a timeline modification decision made by the Graduate Programs Committee and request a full faculty vote on the timeline adjustment request. In such cases, the student's primary adviser will notify the Graduate Programs Committee of their intention to appeal and will present the request to the full faculty who will vote via ballot during a faculty meeting. A 2/3 majority can overturn the decision of the Graduate Programs Committee and approve the student's request for an adjusted timeline.

### ***B. Annual Evaluations***

Formal evaluations of student progress in the program will take place annually during the Spring semester. All faculty of the graduate program will evaluate each student's progress in a meeting devoted to this purpose. Input will be solicited from all department faculty who have taught or worked with the graduate students in the program.

To provide faculty members with a summary of graduate student activities, graduate students will submit an annual progress report which is a brief statement of student accomplishments, progress toward program requirements, and future plans (see Appendix D). This report will be distributed to all faculty. The Graduate Programs Committee will retain a copy of this report to facilitate tracking and internal reporting of student progress.

The evaluation will take into account the feedback from department faculty, the student's progress report, feedback from the adviser and supervisory committee, and the student's progress on the program's timeline to complete an evaluation of the student. The Graduate Programs Committee will summarize the results of the evaluation on an annual evaluation form which will be provided to the student and their adviser. This form will summarize the student's strengths and weaknesses to date in the view of the faculty, in addition to plans for the coming year in terms of performance expectations and recommendations relevant to the student's career goals. Any concerns about performance or concerns about adequate progress toward degree completion will be noted and a remediation plan will be specified. Advisers should schedule a meeting with the student to discuss this feedback. Students will have the opportunity to submit a response to the evaluation. This response should be submitted to the student's adviser and to the department's Graduate Program Committee. Informal updates on student progress will be provided by each student's adviser during a faculty meeting in the Fall of each academic year.

### ***C. Addressing Problems with Student Progress***

Student questions or problems regarding their progress in the program, departmental policies, etc., should be addressed to either the student's adviser, or to the instructor of a specific course. If this does not resolve the situation, students should then discuss the issue with the department chair or with the graduate program coordinator. This same chain of command should be followed for grievances or disputes regarding academic matters. In the unlikely case that the issue cannot be resolved at one of these levels, a copy of the University's Procedures for Graduate Student Appeals can be found in the NDSU Graduate Bulletin (see web link in Appendix D).

If, during the annual evaluation, the faculty agree that there is a concern with a student's progress, the feedback from the Graduate Programs Committee will outline a plan for remediation. Students should work with their advisers to establish specific steps to improve performance and adhere with the departmental timeline for graduate degree completion. In cases of recurrent failure to meet the established timeline or other significant problems with student progress, students will be given written notice that specifies goals must be met within a certain time period to maintain an assistantship or to remain in the program. Failure to remediate problems with progress, including completion of the degree requirements on the established timeline, may result in dismissal from the program. Immediate termination from the program is possible if a serious issue comes to light, according to university policies.

Graduate students have the right to appeal decisions regarding their progress. Appeals should be addressed to the department's Graduate Program Committee, and will be evaluated by that committee and by the department chair.

## **V. Program Requirements and Plan of Study**

### **A. Master's Degree Program**

*Program Requirements and Courses.* Students in our graduate programs complete an M.S. degree en route to the Ph.D. The general requirements for the M.S. degree in psychology are listed in Appendices E-G. Go over your transcript with your advisor. After considering your academic background and interests, decide upon the best sequence of graduate courses.

*Plan of Study.* You should complete a *M.S. Plan of Study* before the end of your **second semester** in graduate school. A Plan of Study form is available online at [http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/forms/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/). Complete the form in consultation with your advisor. The form lists the courses that you plan to take to complete your degree, and it is used to appoint your thesis supervisory committee. (See *Section VI. C* for advice on selecting a thesis committee.) The M.S. Plan of Study must include a minimum of 30 total credits, including 16-18 credits of didactic coursework and 6-10 thesis credits (see Appendices E-G for more detailed curriculum)

### **B. Doctoral Degree Program**

*Program Requirements and Courses.* The general requirements for the Ph.D. in psychology are listed in, Appendices E-G. You should consult with your advisor and advisory committee when deciding how to fulfill these requirements (e.g., timeline, course selection). In addition, you will find that your fellow graduate students, especially those who are at a more advanced stage within the program, are a valuable source of advice regarding requirements and means of fulfilling them.

*Plan of Study.* Doctoral students need to complete a **Plan of Study**. If you completed a master's degree in psychology at NDSU, you should complete a new Plan of Study the semester after you receive the M.S. Students entering the doctoral program with a master's degree from another school or another department should complete a **Plan of Study** before the end of the **second semester** in the program at NDSU. Again, in all instances, you should consult with your advisor

when completing the form. The Ph.D. Plan of Study should include a total of 90 credits, including all of the credits listed in the M.S. Plan of Study. A minimum of 15 of the 700- or 800-level didactic credits listed in the Ph.D. Plan of Study must be unique to the Ph.D. Plan of Study (i.e., not listed in the M.S. Plan of Study), regardless of when the coursework was actually completed. For example, a student may take PSYC 763 during their first year in the M.S. program, but may use this course to count toward the Ph.D. requirements as long as it was not listed on the M.S. Plan of Study to fulfill M.S. requirements.

*Teaching Requirement.* One component of the Ph.D. program is a teaching requirement. Preparation for an academic career (to which many students aspire) requires teaching experience. Consequently, we have established a teaching requirement for all students once they have completed their master's thesis. This requirement is described in greater detail in *Section VIII*.

You may be interested in the College Teaching Certificate program offered through the Center for Science and Mathematics Education at NDSU ([https://www.ndsu.edu/otl/programs/college\\_teaching\\_certificate/](https://www.ndsu.edu/otl/programs/college_teaching_certificate/)). This program is not run by the department nor is it a requirement. Therefore, you should consult with your advisor if you are interested in pursuing this program.

### ***C. Successful Course Performance***

You are expected to pass all required courses with a grade of A or B. A "C" does not indicate satisfactory performance in a graduate course. You will automatically receive one opportunity to remediate a deficit in your record. The format of the remediation is to be negotiated with the faculty member in charge of that particular course, who will then obtain the approval for the remediation plan from the faculty in your program. You must not receive a grade of C or less in more than two of your courses.

Although there are several possible remediation strategies varying by the nature of the deficit, the most common solution has been to retake a course or to successfully complete a related course. (It should be noted that failure to satisfactorily complete an isolated course or exam is not the "kiss of death." We have had several students who have had to remediate a course and have later gone on to graduate and have successful careers in psychology.) Failure to complete a requirement upon the remediation attempt will need to be resolved by the faculty on a case-by-case basis, but can result in termination from the program--as can a pattern of failure to satisfactorily complete requirements on the first attempt.

For course work, there is an expectation that students put forth effort outside of class. One rule-of-thumb for undergraduate students is that they should expect to put in three hours a week outside of class for each credit they are enrolled. Graduate students should see this expectation as a minimum. The expectation is also useful for considering the effort that might be expected for PSYC 794 credits (Independent Study/Research). You should expect to put in three to four hours per week for each research credit. Some of this time should be dedicated to writing. We recommend you find at least five hours a week for writing. Because published articles are important for advancing your career, you should aim to be working on a manuscript for publication at all times.

## **VI. Master's Thesis and Doctoral Thesis**

If you enter the doctoral program with a bachelor's degree, you will complete two theses, a master's thesis and a doctoral thesis (the dissertation). The master's thesis is the last step in earning the master's degree. You will complete the doctoral dissertation after writing an area paper and passing the preliminary examination (see *Section VII*) - it is the last step in earning the doctoral degree. Depending on the requirements of your program (see *Appendices E-J*), if you enter the program with a master's degree, you may not need to complete a master's thesis.

When planning and conducting a thesis project, follow the guidelines and requirements of the Graduate School ([https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/graduation](https://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/graduation)). Complete and submit Graduate School forms in a timely manner. Failure to submit forms at the proper time can delay thesis progress.

*It is never too early to start thinking about and planning your thesis.* This does not mean it is something to worry about, but it typically takes students longer than they anticipate to complete a thesis.

The process for completing a thesis (master's or doctoral) involves the following steps:

### **A. Develop an Idea**

The best guideline when selecting a research idea is to select a content area in which you are sincerely interested and in which you would like to do additional work later in your career. A variety of options are acceptable for thesis projects. Talk over your ideas with your advisor and other faculty members -- normally the people with the greatest expertise in your area of interest. Your thesis does not have to be a totally independent, novel idea unrelated to any other work in the department -- in fact, it is best if you can take advantage of the faculty's existing expertise. On the other hand, you should demonstrate your own creative thinking and conceptual/design abilities. Keep in mind that the dissertation is larger in scope than the master's thesis and represents greater independence in thinking. Your idea should be theoretically-driven and based on knowledge of the current literature.

### **B. Select your Thesis Advisor**

In most cases, your academic advisor will be your thesis advisor, but whom you ask to chair your thesis is your choice. The thesis advisor must be a faculty member of the Department of Psychology and a full or associate member of the graduate faculty. Select someone who will be able to guide you in the research project you have chosen. This should be someone with whom you are comfortable, since you will spend many hours exchanging ideas. Keep in mind that supervising a thesis is time consuming, and existing commitments such as teaching loads and supervision of other theses influence a faculty member's decision to take on a thesis supervisee.

It is possible to have a co-chair (co-advisor) of a supervisory committee. However, the co-chair must be marked as such on all paperwork submitted to the Graduate School.

### **C. Select a Thesis Committee**

Select a committee in consultation with your advisor. Your committee should consist of at least four members.\*\*

1. The committee chair (major advisor) must be a full-time member of the Department of Psychology faculty and a full or associate member of the graduate faculty. The remaining members of the committee must be agreed upon by the student, the committee chair, and the Dean of the Graduate School.
2. The second member must be a full-time member of the Department of Psychology.
3. The third member could be either a faculty member or a qualified off-campus expert in the field. If this committee member is not a full or associate member of the graduate faculty, the approval of the Dean of the Graduate School is required. Approval by the dean requires a recommendation from the chair accompanied by a rationale and a curriculum vitae. We generally recommend that the third member be a department faculty member from your program.
4. The Graduate School appointee must be a full member of the NDSU graduate faculty from outside the psychology department. The role of the Graduate School appointee is to ensure that the student's Plan of Study follows Graduate School guidelines and that other Graduate School policies are observed. The Graduate School appointee also ensures that the expectations for the student's performance are reasonable and that interactions with the supervisory committee are conducted on a professional basis. We encourage you to seek someone who has expertise in an area related to your thesis topic.

You may add as many additional committee members (including individuals who might not meet the above criteria; e.g., Professors of Practice) as you and your advisor deem desirable. Your overall goal is to assemble a group of individuals with complementary areas of expertise, who will best be able to advise and assess you.

Set up a brief meeting with each faculty member to share your research interests and ideas and to give them an approximate timeline for committee activities. Once faculty members have informally agreed to serve on your committee, the Graduate School will formally appoint the committee after you submit the Plan of Study.

You may decide to have the same committee members for your master's and doctoral thesis, or you may decide to have different members. Regardless, for each thesis you must repeat the process of inviting faculty to be on your committee and filing the Plan of Study paperwork with the Graduate School. The same process occurs for the Preliminary Examination.

It is worth mentioning here some of the politics involved in the thesis process. There are both formal and informal requirements for you to follow and things run much more smoothly for everyone concerned if you adhere to such guidelines. For example, on a formal level, your committee must be approved by the Graduate School before you hold your proposal meeting

(see below). Make sure this is done; otherwise, painful headaches erupt. Informally, get to know your committee members; initiate casual conversations or more structured meetings so that they are aware of your research interests. You should make an active effort to get acquainted with your outside committee member. Outside members are judging you, your advisor, and the department; make sure the judgment is a positive one.

\*\*Please note that the Graduate School requires only three members for master's thesis committees, but our department policy requires four members. Consult the Graduate School Policies for more details (<https://bulletin.ndsu.edu/graduate/policies/>).

#### ***D. Submit your Plan of Study***

It is important to submit your Plan of Study to the Graduate School after deciding on your thesis committee. Complete the Supervisory Committee section of the Plan of Study and collect the needed signatures. If you make changes to your Plan of Study, submit the revised version before scheduling the thesis defense.

#### ***E. Register for Thesis (PSYC 798/799) Credits***

For the master's degree, you must register for a minimum of six PSYC 798 thesis credits (which can be spread across semesters). For the doctoral degree, you must register for a minimum of six PSYC 799 thesis credits. Important: you must be signed up for at least one thesis credit in the semester in which you officially receive your degree. You must also be continuously signed up for thesis credits from the time of the defense until you submit the final version of the thesis and have it approved by the Graduate School.

#### ***F. Develop a Written Proposal***

This typically involves going through several outlines and drafts with your advisor to develop an acceptable proposal. Your advisor will help you propose a study that can be feasibly completed in a timely manner. The proposal includes a literature review and a research plan. *It is highly advisable to keep the other members of your committee informed as you are planning the project. Otherwise, you could be in the position of proposing a project that is not acceptable to one or more members of your committee.* After your advisor has approved your proposal, you can schedule a proposal meeting with your committee.

Consult your advisor concerning the most appropriate format of the proposal. Most thesis proposals are written in APA style and are a hybrid between a small grant proposal and an extended journal article (e.g., introduction section - including a review of the relevant literature; method section - the most detailed part of the proposal; results section - describing the analyses you intend to perform; discussion - a brief consideration of several possible outcomes of your study and how you would interpret each, and appendix materials appropriate to your study). Importantly, your proposal should clearly describe the research question of interest, the theoretical underpinnings of the research, and the manner in which the proposed studies will address the research question. The paper should also specify how the proposed study will advance knowledge on the topic.

A doctoral dissertation often includes multiple studies or experiments. There should be cohesiveness among the proposed studies. For example, the studies may represent alternative ways to address a particular research question, or they may address separate research questions derived from the same or competing theories. If the later studies hinge on the findings of the studies described earlier in the proposal, explicitly describe in the proposal the alternative studies that are proposed relative to the potential findings of the initial studies.

### ***G. Schedule the Proposal Meeting***

You are responsible for scheduling the time and place of the proposal meeting as well as the oral defense later on. Be aware that one of the more difficult and frustrating thesis tasks is arranging a workable meeting time for four or more busy schedules. Start scheduling your meeting well in advance -- particularly if you plan to have the meeting during a break week or busy time at the beginning or end of a semester. Be aware that not all faculty members are available to meet during the summer. Proposal meetings are typically 1½ - 2 hours; you should ask faculty members to reserve two hours. The proposal meeting does **not** need to be scheduled with the Graduate School.

### ***H. Distribute the Written Proposal to Committee Members***

You should give your proposal to committee members a *minimum of one week before the meeting*. Ask committee members whether they prefer an electronic or paper copy of the proposal.

### ***I. Proposal Meeting with your Thesis Committee***

The purpose of the proposal meeting is to develop something similar to an informal contract with your committee so that, if you conduct your study in an agreed upon manner and appropriately analyze and interpret the data, your research will be acceptable as a thesis project. The proposal meeting operates as a protection for the student -- it should ensure that if committee members have serious problems with your design or methodology, these concerns are aired at this time -- not after you've already collected the data. The proposal meeting is also an opportunity to take advantage of the expertise of the committee members and ask for their input on ways to strengthen the study. *To avoid surprises at the proposal meeting, it is wise to keep your committee members informed and invite their input during the early stages of planning the research.*

The format of the proposal meeting varies, but generally begins with you briefly describing the rationale for the study and outlining the procedures. This is followed by questions and discussion with the committee members. Be sure to ask questions of the committee if you are unsure or unclear about how to best conduct certain aspects of the study. The ultimate goal is to design the best possible investigation given the necessary limitations on the scope and expense of the project. Try to view the proposal meeting as a way to get expert advice on your research project, and expect to end up making changes. Remember that the committee members are interested in seeing you succeed, and they want to provide helpful advice that will improve the quality of your research. Approaching the meeting with the idea that you have the final design all worked out and have to defend it against criticism could result in an

unpleasant and frustrating experience for all involved. If committee members have made written comments regarding the proposal, ask permission to see them – the notes could be helpful when drafting changes.

*Note:* The Graduate School does **not** require a formal signed report from the proposal meeting.

***WARNING!*** *The research plan for your thesis is not final until it has been approved by your committee. Do not submit your thesis project for review by the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) until it has received final approval from your committee. Do not begin data collection before your thesis has received final approval from your committee*

#### ***J. Obtain Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval***

Research involving human participants must have PRIOR review and approval from the NDSU IRB. Although you should not obtain approval before the proposal meeting, you should begin working on the IRB materials and submit them as soon as possible after the thesis committee approves your proposed project. When considering a timeline, keep in mind that it can take a month or more to obtain IRB approval. It is possible that your research is covered under your advisor's IRB protocol; consult with your advisor (and IRB staff), and submit a change of protocol form to the IRB if necessary.

#### ***K. Collect and Analyze your Data***

***Do not begin data collection before your thesis has received final approval from your committee.*** If you have already collected data for your thesis prior to the proposal meeting, it undermines the committee's authority to suggest changes. Although it may be useful to have collected relevant pilot data before the meeting, you should not collect data with the idea that it will be included in the ultimate project. There may be some cases in which using existing data is appropriate for your thesis (e.g., if an available dataset has some qualities that would make it difficult for you to collect on your own and if it contains data needed to test your hypotheses). You should explain the rationale for using existing data clearly to your committee and seek approval from them at the very beginning stages of your project.

Following the proposal meeting (occasionally a second meeting is necessary to clarify the procedures to be employed), you will be approved to start data collection. This is usually straightforward, although time consuming. If the procedures, number of participants, or other aspects of your study will vary from those approved in the proposal meeting, be sure to inform your advisor immediately. Together, you will determine if the deviation is significant enough that other committee members will need to be notified or that the committee should be reconvened.

#### ***L. Write your Thesis***

After conducting the data analysis, the next step is to prepare the written report of the study. Most students go through several drafts of their thesis in consultation with the advisor and sometimes other committee members. Be sure to obtain a copy of the style requirements from

the Graduate School *before beginning the final write-up* ([http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating\\_students/dtp/format/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/format/)).

### **M. Schedule the Thesis Defense and Distribute the Written Thesis**

Ideally, you should finish your thesis and schedule the oral defense meeting before May. Faculty members are not paid from University funds in the summer and are not obligated to be here. The Graduate School will need to be notified of the time and date of your oral defense meeting (which you again are responsible for scheduling with committee members) *at least two weeks before* the meeting to prepare the necessary forms and notices (see the “Request to Schedule Examination” form at the Graduate School website, [http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/forms/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/)). We suggest that you start this process at least three weeks before the exam date. You should have the thesis in committee members' hands a *minimum* of a week before the meeting. You must have an approved Plan of Study on file with the Graduate School before you can schedule the defense.

### **N. Defend your Thesis**

The oral defense follows a format similar to that of the proposal meeting. Its basic purpose is to demonstrate that you understand what you did, why you did it in that manner, what the results were, and the implications of the results. You will present your project and answer questions from the committee. At the conclusion of the meeting, you will be asked to leave the room and the committee will decide if the project (including the design and conduct of the experiment, the written report, and the oral defense) meet acceptable standards. It is possible to fail your defense; this rarely happens but writing up your thesis in consultation with your advisor will improve your confidence of success. Usually the project is approved, but there are almost always changes to be made in the written report. These are to be made in conjunction with and approved by your advisor (and in some cases, other committee members as well).

### **O. Submit Forms to the Graduate School**

There are three forms that need to be submitted to the Graduate School before you submit the thesis:

1. **Report of Final Examination.** Bring this form to the defense meeting for the faculty to sign. This form must be filed with the Graduate School within a week of the oral examination. Each member of the committee will sign the report and approve or disapprove of the recommendation to award the master's or doctoral degree. More than one negative vote by committee members will signify failure of the examination.
2. **IRB Compliance Notification.** This form, signed by you and your advisor, specifies that you conducted research involving human participants. You must provide a copy of the IRB approval letter. This form and approval letter must be filed within a week of the oral defense meeting.
3. **Disquisition Approval Page.** Submit this form to the Graduate School before filing your thesis. Bring this form to the oral defense meeting. Your committee may decide to sign

the form at the meeting or wait until you have made the requested revisions to the thesis.

#### **P. File your Thesis with the Graduate School**

After incorporating the committee's changes into your thesis, the paper must receive final editing and format checking by the Graduate School (see the Graduate School website for "Guidelines for Dissertations, Theses, and Papers"). Before submitting your thesis, review it to ensure that it conforms to the formatting guidelines ([http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating\\_students/dtp/format/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/format/)).

Students submitting a disquisition are charged a fee that covers the costs of the format check, consultation services with the Graduate Writing Coordinator, uploading services to the ProQuest database, and degree posting services.

All theses are submitted to the Graduate School **electronically**. Follow the steps provided at the Graduate School website ([http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating\\_students/dtp/submit/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/dtp/submit/)) to make the initial submission. Next, incorporate the writing coordinator's changes into your thesis and submit it for a second reading. Additional revisions may be needed.

The deadline for initial submissions of theses to the Graduate School is approximately one month prior to the end of the semester. The review process must be completed and final revisions submitted by the last day of the semester for your degree to post that term. Note that you must deposit your thesis with the Graduate School within one year of your oral defense meeting (and continue to register for thesis credits during that time). *Failure to do so will result in your having to conduct another oral defense.*

A final note concerning the thesis is that you must be registered for thesis credit during the semester in which the oral defense meeting is held. The policy of the graduate school is that if you are a paid RA/TA during the school year, you are eligible for a tuition waiver for the following summer. *Students who do not complete their final oral defense by the summer must pay for 1 thesis credit for each semester during which they are not in residence at NDSU.* Contact the Graduate School to find out the range of acceptable dates for oral defense meetings in a given semester.

#### **Q. Create a Video (Required for the Dissertation Only)**

When you have completed the dissertation, create and submit to the Graduate School a 2-3 minute video that summarizes your dissertation research for a general non-academic audience. This is a new requirement of the Graduate School with an anticipated implementation date of Fall 2014. At that time, procedures for submitting the video will be provided on the Graduate School website.

### **VII. Area Paper and Preliminary Examination**

After you finish the requirements of the M.S. degree, you should turn your attention to the major area paper. The area paper is a comprehensive and critical review of the literature on a topic within your chosen specialization. The area paper will constitute the written component

of the preliminary examination for Ph.D. candidacy. Defense of the area paper in a two-hour meeting with your supervisory committee will constitute the oral component of the exam. The purpose of the preliminary examination is to determine whether you have gained the competence and knowledge required in your selected field of study.

### **A. Major Area Paper**

The area paper should represent a sophisticated, critical analysis of the literature in a particular area of psychology. The paper should integrate information from within the subject area, incorporate material from other relevant areas, and establish implications for the field. The paper should reflect a synthesis – not merely a list or description of studies, but a perspective that is greater, more meaningful, and more parsimonious than the sum of its parts. The paper must fill a gap in the literature. Both the paper and oral presentation should demonstrate your expertise, an advanced awareness of the pertinent theoretical and methodological issues. We recommend that you closely examine high quality review journals such as *Psychological Bulletin* and *Psychological Review* for examples of successful papers. The paper should propose important theoretical and empirical questions yet to be answered and suggest studies that could address those questions. Ideally, the paper serves to inspire research ideas for your dissertation and beyond.

The length of the area paper is variable, but a rough guideline is 20-25 pages (not including references). Your paper should demonstrate that you have identified and digested the important studies in the field. Talk with your advisor or a research librarian if you need assistance identifying relevant and reliable sources.

Early in the writing process, decide with your advisor who you would like to have on your preliminary exam committee. Consider selecting individuals who could also serve on your dissertation committee. You can choose to select the same members that served on your master's thesis committee, or you can make changes. Committee membership rules are identical to those for thesis committees. Once faculty members have agreed to serve on the committee, complete the **Doctoral Plan of Study** – this must be filed with the Graduate School before you can schedule the preliminary examination.

Once you have formed a committee, consult with the members regarding the topic and direction of your paper. You may want to create and share with the committee a written outline of the paper with a partial list of references.

Set aside sufficient time in your schedule (ideally, daily) to work on the paper; reading the relevant literature, taking notes, and writing the paper is time consuming. Your advisor should be closely consulted as you write the paper. Together you should discuss outlines and references, the scope of the paper, and theoretical emphases. Plan to write multiple drafts of the paper, and get feedback from your advisor on each draft. Speak to fellow graduate students for their advice on writing the paper; perhaps even ask for their feedback on drafts. It might be helpful to review the area papers of students who have recently completed the Preliminary Examination so that you can see what a successful paper looks like.

## **B. Preliminary Examination**

When you and your advisor are confident with the timeline for the paper's completion, contact your committee members to schedule the Preliminary Examination. Remember to file the appropriate scheduling paperwork (**Request to Schedule Examination** form) with the Graduate School ([http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating\\_students/forms/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/forms/)) at least **two weeks** before the meeting. An approved Plan of Study must be on file at the Graduate School before you can schedule the meeting.

Provide the members of the committee a copy of the area paper at least a week prior to the meeting. At the meeting, the committee may ask you to present a brief overview of the paper. After the overview, the committee will ask you questions to determine whether you have acquired expertise in your selected field of study. The committee can ask questions about the paper or any relevant scholarly topic on which they feel you should have specialized knowledge. Answer each question to the best of your ability, and cite relevant evidence to support your response. If you are uncertain of an answer, acknowledge your uncertainty, speculate on the correct answer, and explain what steps you will take and sources you will consult to obtain the answer.

At the end of the meeting, the committee will privately discuss their assessment of the paper and the oral examination. Each member of the committee will sign the **Report of Preliminary Examination** (which you have provided) and approve or disapprove of the recommendation to admit you into candidacy for the doctoral degree. You may be asked to make changes to the paper as a condition for passing the exam. More than one negative vote by committee members will signify failure of the examination. Return the Report of Preliminary Examination to the Graduate School within one week of the exam.

## **VIII. Teaching Requirement: Ph.D. Program in Psychology**

The purpose of this requirement is straightforward: to prepare you for teaching in a college/university setting. We believe that applicants for academic positions are stronger when they have teaching experience; moreover, you will more easily make the transition from student to professor if you have teaching experience. The requirement should also enhance communication skills more generally, a valuable set of skills to acquire regardless of whether you eventually end up in an academic setting.

The teaching requirement, which we recommend that you fulfill after completing the M.S. degree, includes two elements:

### **A. Graduate Course in Teaching Strategies**

Take a course on the pedagogy of college teaching. The course should expose you to different teaching methods and philosophies of education. A number of courses are currently offered (see below). Additional teaching courses may be developed in the future. Discuss the course options with your advisor and select the course that best meets your teaching goals. When developing your Plan of Study, keep in mind that these courses are not offered every semester

(and are more frequently offered in the Spring than in the Fall), so you may need to take the teaching course a year or more before the semester in which you plan to teach.

STEM 810 Teaching College Science

COMM 702 Introduction to College Teaching in the Humanities and Social Sciences

We recommend that incoming students with a bachelor's degree take the course during their second or third year. Students with a master's degree should take the course as soon as possible after beginning our program.

In addition to taking this course, students interested in a teaching career should consider completing the "College Teaching Certificate" program ([https://www.ndsu.edu/otl/programs/college\\_teaching\\_certificate/](https://www.ndsu.edu/otl/programs/college_teaching_certificate/)).

### ***B. Teach a Course in Psychology (Teaching Practicum)***

You will teach a semester-long course in the Department of Psychology. Choice of this course will be up to you in consultation with your advisor, program faculty, and the department chair. Generally, we believe that a 200-level or 300-level course is best (e.g., Social Interaction; Cultural Psychology, Developmental Psychology, Abnormal Psychology, Health Psychology, Research Methods I, Research Methods II, Introduction to Neuroscience, Clinical Psychology), but a 400-level course might also be appropriate (e.g., Personality; Sensation and Perception, Memory and Knowledge, Advanced Psychopathology). Except under special circumstances, graduate students cannot teach graduate courses (600- and 700-level courses).

You will be responsible for the entire course: text selection, syllabus preparation, development of lectures and assignments, exam preparation, use of technology, and grading. If you choose to use Blackboard for online course management; Information Technology Services can provide valuable support: [https://www.ndsu.edu/its/bb\\_login/](https://www.ndsu.edu/its/bb_login/). Talk to faculty and graduate students who have taught the course; they will be a valuable resource for advice and ideas/materials.

*Mentoring.* The teaching assignment is a mentored experience. Once you decide on a course, select a faculty member to serve as a mentor. Most often that will be a faculty member who has taught the course. Meet with the mentor well before the semester begins to decide on the nature of the mentoring relationship. Discuss with your mentor how often you will meet and what you will cover during those meetings.

The following are possible topics to cover with your mentor:

- Structure of the course and syllabus development
- Textbook selection
- Student engagement and use of active learning strategies
- Effective grading
- Lecture preparation
- Use of publisher-provided materials
- Course evaluations
- Classroom management

- Cheating

In addition to regular meetings (e.g., once a week or every other week), you should videotape one class period, and the mentor *and one other faculty member* should visit your class at least once each semester (preferably early in the semester so that suggested changes can be made). You should consult with the mentor about mid-course and end-of-semester evaluations, and go over the results together. At the end of the semester, your mentor should provide you with a written evaluation of your teaching efforts that will be added to your student file.

*Credit.* During the teaching semester, enroll for 5 credits of Psychology 794 (Teaching Practicum). Each faculty member has their own section of 794; be sure to enroll in your mentor's section of the course. Your mentor will grade you based on your materials and his/her observations throughout the semester of your efforts and successes in the class.

*Time Management.* You should begin planning for your teaching semester *early*. It takes time to get courses onto the class schedule and to plan courses that fit with department needs. We recommend that you plan your teaching assignment by talking with your advisor and the department chair *during the semester that you are taking the teaching seminar*. Instructors will need to provide the NDSU Bookstore with their text selection the semester before they teach.

Teaching a course for the first time is time-consuming. For example, prepping a lecture from scratch can take 3-6 hours! Do not overcommit during the semester in which you are teaching. Meet your research obligations, but do not take a heavy course load. Although you will be busy, do not forget to keep in regular contact with your teaching mentor. The more often you meet, the more he/she can provide feedback on your efforts (and later, provide an informed letter of recommendation).

## **IX. Grant Writing Requirement: Ph.D. in Psychology program**

The purpose of this requirement is to provide students with skills that will be beneficial to careers in academia, service, or industry, including written communication, proposal design, and critical thinking. The grant writing requirement, which can be completed at any point during your graduate program, includes 2 elements:

### **A. Graduate Course in Grant Writing**

All students in the Ph.D. in Psychology program will complete PSYC 763 (Grant Writing for Psychological Scientists). This 3 credit, didactic course will introduce students to the process of identifying appropriate funding mechanisms, preparing specific aims and other grant sections, and the grant review process. Students will gain hands on experience with grant writing and evaluation.

### **B. Submit a Grant or Fellowship Application**

Each graduate student in the Ph.D. in Psychology program will prepare and submit an application for a grant or fellowship appropriate to their stage of professional development and training. Students will work closely with their faculty advisor to identify an appropriate funding

mechanism and prepare and submit their proposal. Students can choose to submit proposals to any funding program that meets the following requirements

- The student must be the principal investigator for the proposal
- Students may select any sponsor (federal agencies, non-profits, foundations, etc.) who offers an appropriate funding mechanism
- There is no minimum or maximum on funds requested to meet this requirement
- Funds must be requested to cover the student's stipend/tuition and/or research expenses (e.g., participant payments, equipment, software, etc.)
- The proposal's budget may include funds for conference travel or professional workshops (as appropriate for the mechanism), but these cannot be the only expenses requested in the proposal's budget.
- Personal awards or cash prizes would not qualify as grants/fellowships to satisfy this requirement, unless funds were also provided to cover stipends or research expenditures as described above

Students may choose to prepare and submit their proposal at any point in the program. Specific funding agencies and programs operate on different timelines, so students should discuss their options with advisors early on in their graduate program. For example, NSF fellowships are often submitted during the first year of the M.S. program, while NIH predoctoral fellowships cannot be submitted until students are formally admitted to the doctoral program. Resources are available through the NDSU Office of Research and Creative Activities to assist with locating and applying to funding agencies. Please note that the requirements and timeline will vary significantly depending on the agency and type of proposal. Be sure to discuss your options with your advisor and thoroughly evaluate all requirements for specific funding mechanisms at least 6 months in advance of your target submission date.

In order to receive credit for fulfilling this requirement, students must enroll in 1-3 credits of PSYC 893 (Grant Writing Experience) during the semester in which the proposal is submitted. If the student is unable to submit their proposal during the semester in which they are enrolled in PSYC 893 the faculty advisor should assign a grade of Incomplete until the proposal has been submitted to the funding agency. A copy of the proposal and notification of successful submission should be provided to the graduate program coordinator and placed in the student's file. Proposals must be submitted but need not be funded to satisfy this requirement.

**A note for international students:** Please be aware that many common funding opportunities for predoctoral fellowships are awarded by agencies that restrict awards to U.S. citizens only (e.g., NIH, NSF). However, many organizations and foundations do allow individuals without U.S. citizenship to apply for funding. The Office of Research and Creative Activities can assist you with searching for opportunities without citizenship restrictions. Please be mindful of this issue and allow adequate time to identify an appropriate funding opportunity and prepare your submission.

## **X. Graduation and Post-Graduate Employment**

### **A. Forms**

Students who are finishing the program should complete the Application to Graduate form and the exit survey ([http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating\\_students/forms/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/graduating_students/forms/)).

### **B. Commencement**

If you would like to participate in the commencement ceremony, complete the Commencement Participation Form ([http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current\\_students/forms/commencement\\_participation\\_form/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/current_students/forms/commencement_participation_form/)). Check with the Graduate School early in the semester to make sure you have the proper forms, know the filing deadlines, and pass your thesis defense at least seven days before Commencement, which is generally scheduled on the Friday or Saturday on or immediately following the last day of final exams in December and May. Tell your advisor your commencement plans. During the commencement ceremony, your advisor will “hood” you onstage before you receive your diploma.

### **C. Placement or Employment upon Graduation**

It is never too early to start thinking about career goals. Securing employment will likely depend on your flexibility with respect to geographic locations and positions, your vita, letters of recommendation, expertise, etc. As a Ph.D. student, we want you to aim high, which means a competitive vita with multiple publications. Being successful in landing a good job will likely require much more than mere adequacy. Potential excellence in either teaching or research or both will be an advantage. Publishing original research is quite often the most important criterion for later academic success. Publishing research can be immensely satisfying and need not be viewed as a requirement. Nevertheless, it is your responsibility to obtain satisfactory placement or employment upon graduation.

Faculty can assist you with career plans (see also select books and articles that can aid your efforts, e.g., *The Compleat Academic*). You should inform members of the faculty of your career ambitions so that they can help you select the most relevant activities and courses and suggest possible employment prospects. It is your responsibility to follow up on these suggestions. The faculty can also provide feedback on your vita as you are developing it and write letters of recommendation, but it is your responsibility to ask for such assistance. It is best to talk with several faculty members to get their input and suggestions. The Graduate School and the NDSU Career & Advising Center also provide helpful career information (<https://career-advising.ndsu.edu>).

You have several career options upon graduation. You may decide to apply directly for academic positions that have a teaching emphasis, a research emphasis, or a balanced teaching/research emphasis. You may choose to gain additional skills or expertise in a post-doctoral research position. Or you may pursue a non-academic position (e.g., research and development in a business environment, statistical consultant, marketing research). Our faculty can help you weigh your options and decide the best fit for you.

## XI. Appendices

### ***Appendix A: Support of Student Research***

The Department of Psychology has Foundation funds and other monies set aside to help graduate students complete their thesis work. This announcement describes how students should request help and some of the spending procedures.

#### Requesting Help

The Department Chair will take research support requests to facilitate completion of the master's thesis or doctoral dissertation. Requests will depend on specific research plans.

To request research support, you should prepare a proposal not to exceed two pages in length. The proposal must contain three sections: (1) an abstract of the research proposal, (2) proposed line-item budget, and (3) budget justification. The request should be signed by both you and your advisor. Allowable costs and how to spend research support money are described below.

#### Use of Funds

The typical research support limit is \$200. You may, however, request less or more depending on your special project needs. For example, if you pay participants you may ask for more money. Check with the administrative assistant for information about record keeping before starting your project. Here are some possible ways to use the research support:

*Photocopying and Printing.* You may budget for photocopying and printing. For multiple copies it is cheaper to have your printing done at Document Publishing on campus rather than simply copying it on the department machine. See the administrative assistant for advice and help about the best way to meet your printing needs.

*Travel.* You may need to travel to obtain participants. If so, you should keep a log of your mileage, and we will reimburse at the state approved rate.

*Other.* You may need special supplies for your thesis. Or perhaps you need a small piece of equipment. These sorts of costs are allowable. Simply describe why they are needed for your project. After you complete your research project, "ownership" of such equipment reverts to the department.

*Not allowable.* Research support funds cannot be used for additional stipend support or final thesis costs (e.g., the costs of binding or special paper).

## ***Appendix B: Student Travel and Professional Development***

- I. Requests for travel funds should be submitted in writing to the Chair of the Department as early as possible but at least one month before the trip.
- II. Approval Policy
  - A. Requests will be routinely approved if they involve:
    1. Presentation of thesis-related (graduate or undergraduate) research at a major conference (e.g., regional or national) regardless of order of authorship.
    2. First author presentations or posters of non-thesis research at major conferences. *You should simultaneously apply for Graduate Student Travel Awards from the Graduate School for which the department funds will serve as a match.* Also apply for College-level funds if available. **[Matches are currently unavailable for graduate student travel for presentations.]**

\$300.00 should be provided for the above purposes, negotiable in exceptional circumstances (e.g., need, distance).
  - B. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis for funding attendance at workshops, conferences at which no presentations will be made, and other activities related to professional development.
  - C. Students receiving awards should contact the administrative assistant for instruction on reimbursable expenses. Travel Authorization Requests must be completed at least ten days before departure in order to receive reimbursement.
  - D. Save receipts (for airfare, hotel, registration, ground transportation, food) during your trip. You will need these receipts for reimbursement purposes. Organize the receipts and give them to the administrative assistant when you return. Note that there is a per diem (i.e., daily allowance) for food expenses – check with the administrative assistant before you travel to learn the current per diem rate.

### ***Appendix C: Sample Requirements for PSYC 790 Graduate Seminar***

You should register for the weekly colloquium series each semester (1 credit). Course requirements for colloquium may change from semester to semester, depending on the faculty organizers. What follows is a representative example of criteria for a course.

1. Submit one substantive discussion item or a thought-provoking question each week based on the reading assignment. The submission should address some significant theoretical or methodological issue or an issue pertaining to the implications of the results. Your contribution should be turned in to the organizer of the colloquium series by 3 pm of the Thursday preceding the talk.
2. Anyone missing three or more colloquia without a valid excuse (e.g. illness, death in family, professional meetings) will be given a failing grade for the course.
3. If you miss a colloquium for any reason you will need to get another student to video record the talk for you. You will be required to submit a one page typewritten summary of the presentation. The only exception to this is for attendance at a professional conference. Failure to submit the summary within one week will be counted as an unexcused absence (see #2 above).

**Appendix D: Annual Graduate Student Progress Report**

NDSU Psychology Ph.D. Program  
Annual Graduate Student Evaluation  
Progress Report

Name

Primary adviser

Program Requirement	Date Completed
MS Thesis Proposal	
MS Thesis	
Area Paper	
Didactic Coursework	
Teaching Requirements	
Grant Submission Requirements	
Doctoral Dissertation Proposal	
Doctoral Dissertation	

Please describe all research and scholarly activity that you have conducted in the last 18 months. (include work in progress; be succinct)

Please list all presentations and publications since matriculation.

List all courses taken in the last 18 months. (Please organize by semester.)

Describe progress toward satisfying the teaching requirement over the past 18 months.

Describe progress toward the proximal writing milestone (i.e., thesis, area paper, or dissertation) over the past 18 months.

List any departmental involvement or professional development activities over the past 18 months.

Describe your goals and plans for the next 12 months.

Please indicate any resources, including specific course offerings, that would facilitate your progress and support you toward your goals.

Thank you for providing this information. Please send this completed form to the Chair of the Graduate Programs Committee, and copy your primary adviser. Your completed form will be forwarded to all faculty in the Psychology Department and included in your file. Your progress will be evaluated at an upcoming faculty meeting and you will receive a letter containing the results of that evaluation soon after that meeting. Questions regarding this process should be directed to the Chair of the Graduate Programs Committee.

## ***Appendix E: Requirements for the Ph.D. in Psychology Program***

### **Master's Curriculum in the Ph.D. Program**

The Ph.D. in Psychology at North Dakota State University requires a master's degree as part of the requirements for candidacy for a doctoral degree. For students entering the program without a master's degree (e.g., students with a bachelor's degree), the following guidelines are provided for students' curricula and plans of study.

Graduate training in Psychology at NDSU includes five objectives: (1) course experiences in different areas of experimental psychology, (2) exposure to courses in quantitative and research methods, (3) intensive training and experience in conducting research as part of an apprenticeship system with faculty members in the program, (4) coursework, training, and experience in the preparation and submission of a grant or fellowship application, and (5) course work, training and experience in the teaching of psychology in academic environments. Many of these objectives are reflected directly in the curriculum developed for students pursuing the master's degree on the way toward doctoral candidacy.

#### Didactic Coursework

Didactic course requirements for the Ph.D. program are listed in Appendix F. For Ph.D. students completing their M.S. en route to the Ph.D. at NDSU, the first 16 credits (or 18, if students take only 3 credit courses) taken from this list will count toward the didactic requirement for the M.S. in Psychology degree. The remaining courses in Appendix F (i.e., those taken after the first 16-18 credits) will count toward the Ph.D. degree, even if they are taken before the M.S. is earned. The didactic coursework is designed to expose graduate students to core areas of experimental psychology and to provide training in quantitative and research methods, grant writing, and college teaching.

#### Research Apprenticeship

We will select students for our program who have the interest and desire to be engaged in intensive, cutting-edge research with faculty members in our department. Consequently, we expect that students will become involved in research with a faculty mentor during their first month in the program, and to continue this involvement throughout the time they are in the program. Thus, we expect that students will register for course credit (PSYC 793) each term.

#### Specific Additional Requirements for the Master's Degree

All students need to prepare a program of study for the master's degree. This program of study describes the coursework the student will take while pursuing a master's degree. This program of study should be constructed in consultation with the student's major advisor and program committee members. The program of study should be completed during Spring semester of the first year, and when all signatures have been provided, deposited with the Graduate School.

A student pursuing the master's degree should begin to outline a thesis research project during Spring semester of their first year. To ensure that students are on a fruitful track for their thesis research, students are to meet with their program committee (April of Spring semester first year) to gain guidance, advice, and direction as they prepare intensive literature review and conceptualization for their theses. This meeting can also serve to consider a student's plan of study and coursework to receive the program committee's approval for these aspects of the student's program of study.

The program requires completion of 40 semester hour credits with an overall GPA of 3.0 or better.

Aspects of the master's thesis, proposal meeting, and oral-defense meeting are described elsewhere in the Graduate Programs Policies and Procedures Manual.

**Appendix F: M.S. Requirement Checklist for Psychology**

1. Complete PSYC 640 (Experimental Methods) Semester & Year: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Complete 13 additional credits of didactic coursework from the list of courses required for the Ph.D. in Psychology (see Appendix G)

<u>Course title</u>	<u>Semester &amp; Year</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Participate in a continued program of **research apprenticeship** with at least one faculty member and, accordingly, enroll in **PSYC 793** each semester for 1-5 credits.

- \_\_\_\_\_ PSYC 793, Fall of First Year (\_\_\_ credits)
- \_\_\_\_\_ PSYC 793, Spring of First Year (\_\_\_ credits)
- \_\_\_\_\_ PSYC 793, Fall of Second Year (\_\_\_ credits)
- \_\_\_\_\_ PSYC 793, Spring of Second Year (\_\_\_ credits)

4. Participate and fulfill the requirements for the Graduate Seminar each semester (Colloquium)

- \_\_\_\_\_ PSYC 790, Section 1, Fall of First Year (1 credit)
- \_\_\_\_\_ PSYC 790, Section 1, Spring of First Year (1 credit)
- \_\_\_\_\_ PSYC 790, Section 2, Fall of Second Year (1 credit)
- \_\_\_\_\_ PSYC 790, Section 2, Spring of Second Year (1 credit)

5. Thesis Credits, PSYC 798 (not fewer than 6 credits and no more than 10 credits)

- \_\_\_\_\_ 4-5 credits of PSYC 798 Fall of Second Year
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4-5 credits of PSYC 798 Spring of Second Year

6. Recruit a Program Committee, Prepare a Plan of Study, Receive Signed Approval of it from Committee members and Department Chair, and deposit Plan of Study with Graduate College

(Suggested April of First Year) Date Deposited with Graduate College \_\_\_\_\_

Meet with Program Committee Regarding Plan of Study Coursework, and general directions for a topic/area of thesis problem/research (Suggested April of First Year \_\_\_\_\_)

7. Write an acceptable Thesis Proposal (suggested meeting time, October of second year)

Date of Proposal Meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Thesis Committee Approval \_\_\_\_\_

8. Submit an acceptable Thesis and successfully defend it (suggested defense, April of 2<sup>nd</sup> year)

Date of Oral Defense \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Approval by Thesis Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Final Copy Approval by Graduate College \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix G: Ph.D. Requirement Checklist for Psychology**

1. A **master's degree** in Psychology. Date completed \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Complete all required didactic coursework for the Ph.D. in Psychology program**

In total, the Ph.D. in Psychology requires completion of a minimum of 31 didactic credits for students entering the program without a master's degree. The didactic coursework may be completed at any time throughout the M.S. or Ph.D. program. The M.S. Plan of Study should include only the first 16 credits completed from the list below. All courses from the list below should appear on the Ph.D. Plan of Study, including those that appeared on the M.S. Plan of Study. Didactic courses on the Ph.D. Plan of Study must include a minimum of 15 doctoral level credits (700 or 800 level).

Quantitative & Methods (9 credits)

PSYC 640 Experimental Methods; Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

PSYC 761 Applied Research Design; Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

PSYC 762 Advanced Research Methods and Analysis; Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

Core Areas of Psychology (12 credits)

PSYC 731 Fundamental Processes in Cognition (Cognitive Psychology); Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

PSYC 771 Social/Health Psychology Research (Health Psychology); Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

PSYC 720 Cognitive Neuroscience (Neuroscience); Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

PSYC 787 Advanced Social Psychology and Health (Social Psychology); Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

Grant Writing in Psychology (3 credits)

PSYC 763 Grant Writing for Psychological Scientists; Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

College Teaching (3 credits)

COMM 702 Introduction to College Teaching in the Humanities and Social Science

Or STEM 810 Teaching College Science; Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

Electives (4+ credits)

Complete a minimum of 4 credits of didactic electives at the graduate level (600, 700, or 800 level). These credits may come from Psychology or another department.

Elective 1: \_\_\_\_\_; Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

Elective 2: \_\_\_\_\_; Semester & Year \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Teaching of Psychology.** All students will teach a full semester course in psychology for which they should enroll for 5 credits in Psyc 794 - Teaching Practicum  
Semester taught \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Submit a grant or fellowship application.** All students will prepare and submit a grant or fellowship application. Enroll in 1-3 credits of PSYC 893 (Grant Writing Experience) and submit a confirmation of your submission to the graduate program coordinator.  
Semester & Year completed \_\_\_\_\_
5. Participate in a continued program of **research apprenticeship** with at least one faculty member and, accordingly, enroll in **PSYC 793** each semester for 1-5 credits.
6. Participate and fulfill the requirements for the **Graduate Seminar** (PSYC 790) each semester for 1 credit. This is the Psychology Department's Colloquium Series.
7. Recruit an **Advisory Committee**, Meet with Advisory Committee Regarding Plan of Study Coursework, and general directions for a topic/area of research  
(Suggested April of 1<sup>st</sup> Year after completing MS; conducted \_\_\_\_\_)
8. Prepare a **Plan of Study**, Receive Signed Approval of it from Committee members and Department Chair, and deposit Plan of Study with Graduate College  
(Suggested April of 1<sup>st</sup> Year after completing MS)  
  
Date Deposited with Graduate College \_\_\_\_\_
9. Complete a **major area paper** to serve as the comprehensive exam for Ph.D. candidacy.  
  
Meet with Advisory Committee members regarding general directions for a topic and area of review (Suggested *April of 1<sup>st</sup> Year* after completing MS \_\_\_\_\_)  
  
Write an acceptable major area paper (suggested oral defense date, *October of 2<sup>nd</sup> year after completing MS*) Date of Oral Defense \_\_\_\_\_
10. Write an acceptable **Dissertation Proposal**  
  
Date of Proposal Meeting \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Dissertation Committee Approval \_\_\_\_\_
11. **Dissertation Credits**, enroll in PSYC 799 each semester while pursuing dissertation research (not fewer than 6 credits and no more than 15? credits total).
12. **Presentation of Dissertation** Research. A full presentation of each student's dissertation research to the faculty is expected, generally as part of the colloquium series.  
  
Date of Presentation \_\_\_\_\_
13. Submit an acceptable **Dissertation** and successfully defend it  
  
Date of Oral Defense \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Approval by Dissertation Committee \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Final Copy Approval by Graduate College \_\_\_\_\_

14. Complete at least **90 hours of graduate credit** including those completed for the master's degree. *These credits must be earned with an overall GPA of 3.0 or better.* Of this total of 90 credits, at least 60 credits must be earned at NDSU.

***Appendix H: Important Links to NDSU and Graduate School Policies***

Graduate School Bulletin:

Please see: <https://bulletin.ndsu.edu/graduate/>

Graduate School Scholastic Standards

Please see: <https://bulletin.ndsu.edu/graduate/policies/>

Procedures for Graduate Student Appeals

Please see: [www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/bulletin/graduate\\_school\\_policies/appeals/](http://www.ndsu.edu/gradschool/bulletin/graduate_school_policies/appeals/)

NDSU Code of Student Behavior

Please see: <https://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/601.pdf>

NDSU Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct

Please see: [www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/335.pdf](http://www.ndsu.edu/fileadmin/policy/335.pdf)