

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK
2018-2019



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Introduction: Graduate Programs in Psychology

The Psychology Department of American University offers masters and a doctoral degree:

a. M.A. Program (3 tracks):

1. General Psychology
2. Personality/Social Psychology
3. Biological/Experimental Psychology

b. Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology

Each graduate student is assigned a faculty advisor. A student may change advisors at any time, provided the student receives a commitment from another faculty member who is willing to advise the student. At the start of the degree program, the faculty advisor and student should meet to develop an individual Program of Study for fulfilling all requirements for the degree. Completion of this Program of Study plan is required by our University.

Programs of study should be designed to meet annual goals for completion of degree requirements that have been set by the GCC and our University. These timelines are provided in the pages immediately following this section and are primary criteria for the annual evaluation of graduate student progress in May of each year. Students will receive a form to complete and update several weeks prior to this annual evaluation.

Graduate students must consult with and receive authorization from their advisors each semester before registering for classes. It is, however, the responsibility of the graduate student to verify that she or he is fulfilling all requirements for the degree. Many requirements are program specific, others apply to all programs, and all are detailed in separate sections of this handbook. These are followed by a general section for all graduate students, including how to transfer courses and theses, written comprehensive exams, a list of faculty, departmental committees, grievance procedures, and so on. This handbook is revised annually by the Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC). Suggestions for improvements are welcome.

Requirements described in this Handbook do not negate our University's rules found at Graduate Academic Regulations, but refine and augment them. Please note that a new set of Graduate Academic Regulations went into effect August 31, 2015. If a more stringent requirement is provided in the GCC Handbook than in University regulations, the requirement in the GCC Handbook applies. Requests for exceptions to GCC or University regulations must be made by petition from the student, approved by the student's faculty advisor and degree program director, to the GCC Chair or Provost.

Which Handbook Applies to Me?

Graduate students should follow the requirements in the GCC Handbook published in the summer prior to their first enrollment in the program. Note that GCC Handbook requirements add to the Graduate Policies and Procedures. It is responsibility of each graduate student to keep current on Department and University regulations. Minutes of the GCC and of our Department Council communicate changes in regulations, describe exceptions granted and

declined, and announce the dates, times, and places of written comprehensive examinations. Copies of these minutes are available from the departmental Administrative Assistants.

MA Program

The MA program has three tracks, one of which offers both a thesis option and a nonthesis option. We will first describe some distinctions between these tracks and then information common to all the tracks.

General Psychology Track in MA Program

One of the tracks is the general psychology track. The psychology courses for this track must include at least 2 courses from the Social Sciences group, and at least 2 courses from the Neuroscience / Cognition group. (Courses in both groups are listed below).

For the general track, students must choose either the thesis or nonthesis option.

Nonthesis or thesis option. The nonthesis option is available only in the General Track (course requirements detailed below). Students taking the nonthesis option must take Directed Research and Psychological Research.

Students in the General Psychology track of the MA program who choose the *thesis option* must take Seminar in Psychological Research and Masters Thesis Research as well as Psychological Research. The thesis option is only available to students who have secured support from a faculty advisor to sponsor their thesis research. Students pursuing the thesis option also must conduct, write, and successfully defend a research thesis. More information about the thesis can be found in the General Information section of this handbook.

Students are discouraged from opting for the thesis option unless they are certain they will complete and defend thesis research. Requests to switch from thesis to nonthesis options may not be granted. Masters Thesis Research will not count toward the 33-credits required for the nonthesis option. Therefore we suggest that students do not take Masters Thesis Research until they are certain they will complete their thesis.

Personality / Social Psychology Track in MA Program

For these students, the required psychology courses must include at least 4 courses from the Social Sciences group, and at least 2 courses from the Neuroscience / Cognition group. (Courses in both groups are listed below).

To fulfill the research requirement, students in this track must conduct, write, and successfully defend a research thesis. Students in this track also must complete PSYC-650 Psychological Research as well as 6 credit hours from the following: Seminar in Psychological Research (3 hours) and PSYC-797 Master's Thesis Research (3 hours). These additional requirements, plus the required courses in statistics (STAT-514 or higher or PSYC 640), allow only one graduate elective course, which may be in psychology or, if approved by the student's faculty advisor, another discipline.

Experimental / Biological Psychology Track in MA Program

For these students, the required psychology courses must include at least 4 courses from the Neuroscience / Cognition group, and at least 2 courses from the Social Sciences group. (Courses in both groups are listed above).

To fulfill the research requirement, students in this track must conduct, write, and successfully defend a research thesis. Students in this track also must complete PSYC-650 Psychological Research as well as 6 credit hours from the following: Seminar in Psychological Research (3 hours) and PSYC-797 Master's Thesis Research (3 hours). These additional requirements, plus the required courses in statistics (STAT-514 or higher or PSYC 640), allow only one graduate elective course, which may be in psychology or, if approved by the student's faculty advisor, another discipline.

Changing Tracks in the MA Program

Students who wish to establish or change tracks in the MA program should communicate their wish and their course plans in writing to the Director of the MA program.

Requirements for All Tracks of the MA Program

11 courses (33 credits) and one written General Comprehensive exam are required in the MA program:

- 1 statistics course (STAT-514 or higher or PSYC 640; additional statistics courses can count as electives MA students who might apply to one of our Ph.D. programs should note that STAT-514 does not count toward the 2-course statistics requirement for either Ph.D. program.)
- PSYC-650: Psychological Research
- 2 other research courses (if thesis track) or 1 research course (if nonthesis track), as specified above (additional research courses can count as electives)
- 7 other courses in psychology (if thesis track) or 8 courses in psychology (if nonthesis track), while satisfying distribution requirements for your track below, plus additional elective courses to sum to 24 credits
- a “pass” on Areas I, II, III, or IV of the Written General Comprehensive examination (detailed later in this manual).

MA program course requirements differ by track. With the help of their faculty advisor, students should choose one track in the program.

For all tracks of the MA program, psychology courses are categorized as Social Science or Neuroscience / Cognition:

Social Science Group:

- PSYC-515 Psychology of Music (counts toward either the Social Science or Neuroscience / Cognition requirements, not both)

PSYC-521	Ethnic & Minority Issues
PSYC-533	Cognitive Behavior Therapy
PSYC-540	Advanced Social Psychology
PSYC-545	Psychology of Sex Similarities and Differences
PSYC-597	Topics in Psychology. Examples: Forensic Psychology, Anxiety, Personality Disorders. <i>Any other section of PSYC-597 does <u>not</u> count toward the Social Science requirement unless it has been specifically approved by the MA Program Director <u>and</u> the GCC as being in the Social Science group.</i>
	<i>Do not assume approval when registering for courses. Also, the university's DARS (Degree Audit Report System) does not seem able to know which courses do and do not count toward the Neuroscience / Cognition and Social Science requirements.</i>
PSYC-605	Advanced Personality Psychology
PSYC-614	Industrial/Organizational Psychology
PSYC-622	Stress, Coping, and Emotion
PSYC-630	Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, and Practice
PSYC-633	Psychological Assessment I
PSYC-651	Psychopathology
PSYC-660	Advanced Developmental Psychology
PSYC-670	Behavioral Medicine

Neuroscience / Cognition group:

PSYC-515	Psychology of Music (counts toward either Social Science or Neuroscience / Cognition requirements, but not both)
PSYC-518	Advanced Human Neuropsychology
PSYC-530	Conditioning and Learning
PSYC-597	Topics in Psychology: a section of PSYC-597 does <u>not</u> count toward the Neuroscience / Cognition requirement unless it has been specifically approved by the MA Program Director <u>and</u> the GCC as being in the Neuroscience / Cognition group.
	<i>Do not assume approval when registering for courses. Also, the university's DARS (Degree Audit Report System) does not seem able to know which courses do and do not count toward the Neuroscience / Cognition and Social Science requirements.</i>
PSYC-600	Advanced Memory and Cognition
PSYC-601	Physiological Psychology
PSYC-613	Neuropharmacology: The Biochemistry of Behavior
PSYC-618	Principles of Neuropsychological Assessment
PSYC-690	Independent Study Project in a recognized area of experimental/biological psychology (Note that this counts for the Neuroscience/Cognition group only for students in the Experimental/Biological track.)

Table of Requirements for All Tracks of the MA Program

minimum requirements	General track		Personality / Social track	Experimental / Biological track
	nonthesis	thesis		
Social Science courses (PSYC-500 or higher)	2	2	4	2
Neuroscience / Cognition courses (PSYC-500 or higher)	2	2	2	4
statistics courses (STAT-514 or higher or PSYC 640)	1	1	1	1
PSYC-650 (Psychological Research)	required	required	required	required
other research course(s) required	PSYC-698 Directed Research (3 credits)	PSYC-685 Seminar in Psychological Research (3 credits) + PSYC-797 Master's Thesis Research (3 credits)	PSYC-685 Seminar in Psychological Research (3 credits) + PSYC-797 Master's Thesis Research (3 credits)	PSYC-685 Seminar in Psychological Research (3 credits) + PSYC-797 Master's Thesis Research (3 credits)
electives (500-level or higher courses)	4 (12 credits, up to 2 courses can be outside PSYC)	3 (9 credits, up to 2 courses can be outside PSYC)	1 (3 credits, can be outside PSYC)	1 (3 credits, can be outside PSYC)
pass Area I, II, III, or IV of written comp exam	required	required	required	required

research thesis and successful oral defense	not required	required	required	required
total courses required	11	11	11	11
total credits required	33	33	33	33

Written Comprehensive Examinations for MA Students

Content Areas

Each of the four area comp exams consists of questions from a reading list suggested by the faculty in that area. The areas are, with associated faculty:

Biological Bases of Psychology: Davidson, Fantie, Riley, Shapiro, Stoodley

Learning/Cognition/Perception: Peynircioglu, Silberberg, Shapiro, Kearns

Psychopathology/Psychotherapy/Assessment: Carter, Gray, Haaga, Herr, Gunthert,

Social/Personality/Developmental: Ahrens, Haaga. Enchautegui-de-Jesus

Reading Lists

A reading list may comprise any type of readings that professors in an area choose (e.g., books, book chapters, journal articles, monographs). The most current comprehensive exam reading list can be found at

<http://www.american.edu/cas/psychology/resources/upload/CompExamReadingsPsych-3.pdf>

An area may change its reading list at any time, but the comprehensive exam will reflect these changes only six months after the changes have been introduced. Students should feel free to discuss a reading list with the faculty members who designed that list.

Exam Scheduling

The Chair of the GCC is responsible for scheduling the general written comprehensive examinations, having them supervised by one or more faculty members, and informing students of their performance on the examination. Comprehensive examinations for each of the four areas listed below will be held on a single day. Annual dates for General Written Comprehensive Examinations usually are the second full weeks of October (Fall exam), April (Spring exam), and July (Summer exam).

Registering and Studying

Students must notify the Senior Administrative Assistant (Lefteris Hazapis) in the Department of Psychology that they plan to take a specific area of the comprehensive exam at least four weeks ahead of the exam.

Students with documented learning disabilities who need accommodations for the exam should contact the University's Academic Support Center several weeks in advance of the exam to arrange for accommodations.

Exam questions will not be announced ahead of time, and are likely to change from exam to exam. Questions from previous written comprehensive examinations are not made available to students.

Exam Procedures

When the general written comprehensive exam is offered, students may take only one area test. The examination will be closed book and the students will have three hours to work in the questions. Students must take the current form of the comprehensive as it exists when they take it. The use of computers is prohibited during comprehensive examinations unless required as an accommodation for a student's learning disability according to the University's Academic Support Center. Such arrangements must be made with the Academic Support Center at least one week prior to the exam.

Grading and Regrading of Comprehensive Exams

The same groups of faculty that generate questions for an area examination also determine the criteria for what constitutes a Pass in that area. Comprehensive examinations are graded as satisfactory or unsatisfactory only.

Comprehensive examination regrading policy: Grades on comprehensive exam questions are similar to grades for courses. As the GCC does not consider appeals of grades for courses, it will not consider appeals of grades on comprehensive exams. Comprehensive exam graders are encouraged to provide ample feedback on comprehensive examination answers, so that students understand the reason for the grades received.

A student who arranges to sit for one of the general comprehensive examinations, shows up for the administration of the examination, and leaves without submitting anything to be graded, will be considered as having taken the examination.

Our university regulations allow only one failure and one retake for a given comprehensive exam. A failed exam must be retaken within 6 months, according to University regulations, or the student will be dismissed from the University. This re-take must be approved in advance by the students' degree program director. In addition, if any comprehensive exam is failed twice the student will be dismissed, according to University regulations.

Time Allowed to Complete Degree Requirements

Full-time MA students should be able to complete their studies after the Spring semester of their second year. Part-time MA students may take longer, but all requirements must be completed by the end of the third year. In some cases, up to three 1-year extensions may be granted if the GCC deems that the extenuating circumstances are sufficiently compelling. Requests for each 1-year extension of the statute of limitations will be denied unless there is an advisor's letter of support.

Time Limits on Courses

According to the graduate academic regulations courses completed more than six years before finishing a master's degree or certificate may not fulfill degree requirements.

Clinical Ph.D. Program

Our Clinical Ph.D. program has been accredited by the American Psychological Association Committee on Accreditation (CoA) since 1972, based in part on the following degree requirements. Students in this program must complete 72 credits, 2 comprehensive exams (described below), at least one full-year externship, a full-year internship, 1 tool of research, a masters thesis, and a doctoral dissertation. Students also must complete a written research assessment, used for evaluation of research competency.

Students must be in full time residence for at least three years at American University, plus one year of internship. In practice, however, the minimum time students are able to complete the program is four years of full time residency, plus one year of internship. The typical student will complete all degree to requirements in 5 to 6 years, inclusive of internship.

Student Advisement

Students' research mentors also serve as their primary advisors in the program. Students should discuss not only research, but also course planning, career goals, and externship/internship plans with their advisors. The Director of Clinical Training (DCT) is also available for advising on these issues. Students should see the Assistant DCT for advising and support around applying to externship.

Degree Requirements

1. 72 credit hours of approved graduate work

Students who have been admitted to the doctoral program in psychology but do not have an MA in psychology that has been accepted by the department must complete the degree requirements for the MA in Psychology (thesis option; thesis seminar not required) before they can be awarded the doctorate. The comprehensive exam requirement for the MA program does not need to be completed, given that the Clinical Program has two required comprehensive exams that must be completed for the doctoral degree.

2. One tool of research is required but does not result in course credit toward the degree. The tool requirement is defined as the dissemination of a research tool. Please see "Research dissemination tool" for further information.

3. Two comprehensive examinations are required - these involve students in the kinds of activities they will later engage in as professional psychologists. The written comprehensive is an ethics examination. The oral comprehensive is a specialty examination, which involves a clinical presentation (see [Clinical Ph.D. Specialty Comprehensive Examination Oral](#))

4. Dissertation: A written proposal for the dissertation must be submitted and signed by the student's dissertation committee before the student can apply for internship. The dissertation committee must be approved by the Office of Graduate Studies, so it is important to submit the dissertation committee form provided on their website well in advance of distributing the

proposal to your committee. The dissertation, when completed, must be accepted by the dissertation committee, the department chair, and the university.

5. As part of the doctoral requirements, clinical students serve in at least one externship (lasting at least one academic year) and a one-year internship in an appropriate setting outside the university.

Required Courses (50 credit hours)

PSYC-540 Advanced Social Psychology (3)

PSYC-600 Advanced Memory and Cognition (3)

PSYC-618 Principles of Neuropsychological Assessment (3) or assessment course approved by the DCT (3)

PSYC-622 Stress, Coping, and Emotion (3)

PSYC-630 Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, and Practice (3)

PSYC-633 Psychological Assessment I (3)

PSYC-650 Psychological Research (3)

PSYC-651 Psychopathology: Theory and Research (3)

PSYC-652 Assessment of Intellectual Function and Personality (3)

PSYC-660 Advanced Developmental Psychology (3)

PSYC-680 Experiential/Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Practicum I (3)

PSYC-681 Experiential/Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Practicum II (3)

PSYC-690 Independent Study Project in Psychology: Externship (2 credit hours required, may take up to 6)

PSYC-710 Cognitive-Behavior Therapy Practicum I (3)

PSYC-711 Cognitive-Behavior Therapy Practicum II (3)

PSYC-715 Supervision and Consultation (1)

PSYC-797 Master's Thesis Research (3)

PSYC-899 Doctoral Dissertation (2 credit hours required, may take up to 9)

PSYC-091 Internship (0 credits; must register each semester on internship, including summer)

Practicum Sequence (6 credit hours)

Complete one of the following two-course practicum sequences:

PSYC-780 Advanced Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy with Youth I (3) and

PSYC-781 Advanced Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy with Youth II (3)

OR

PSYC-793 Advanced Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Practicum I (3) and

PSYC-794 Advanced Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies Practicum II (3)

Biological Bases of Behavior (3 credit hours)

Complete one course in Biological Bases of Behavior from the following:

PSYC-518 Advanced Human Neuropsychology (3)

PSYC-601 Physiological Psychology (3)

PSYC-613 Neuropharmacology: The Biochemistry of Behavior (3)

Statistics (6 credit hours)

Complete 6 credit hours of approved coursework in statistics from the following:

STAT-515	Regression
STAT-516	Design of Experiments
STAT-517	Special Topics in Statistical Methodology
STAT-519	Nonparametric Statistics
STAT-520	Applied Multivariate Analysis
STAT-521	Analysis of Categorical Data
STAT-522	Time-Series Analysis
STAT-524	Data Analysis

Other statistics courses may be substituted if approved by the GCC. The two-class requirement represents a minimum: other statistics courses can be taken as additional, elective courses that do count toward the overall credit hour requirement.

Electives (7 credit hours)

Complete 7 credit hours of approved electives

Externship and Internship Courses (4 credits)

Externship

In addition to in-house practicum training, students are required to participate in at least two semesters of externships. Students must take a total of 2 credits (1 credit /semester for 2 semesters) of PSYC-690 Independent Study (with the title “Externship”) while engaged in a 16 hour/week externship.

The Assistant DCT (DCT) oversees externship activities (see role listing on page 45 of this Handbook), and will not support a student's application for a full (16 hour/week) externship until the student presents a signed MA thesis proposal and is collecting or has completed data for the thesis.

Registration in PSYC 690 does place the student under AU's umbrella insurance policy, as a supplement to the APA student liability coverage each student needs to carry. It will be important to talk to the Assistant DCT about the timing of PSYC- 690 externship credits, given that some externship sites require the students to be enrolled.

Students who are registered in 690 are required to attend class meetings organized and scheduled by the Assistant DCT. The course is designed to help students reflect on their externship experiences. Students also engage in structured readings and reflection papers to encourage thoughtful attention to issues of identities in externship settings (e.g., intersecting identities), bias and privilege, and being an ally. These reflections will help students to process important cultural and identity issues as they relate to their experiences in externship supervision, providing therapy, and conducting assessments.

Registration in 690 for one credit does not in and of itself give the student full-time status. If a student going on externship (e.g., in 5th year) has already completed two credits of 690 and is not planning to take enough other courses to gain full-time status, then an option is to achieve full-time status by registering for 9 credits (but only paying for 1) of PSYC-898 (Doctoral Continuing Enrollment). The advantage of PSYC 898 relative to PSYC 690 is that it results in full-time status for the purpose of loan deferral. Like PSYC 690, there is a tuition cost of 1 credit and puts the student under AU's umbrella policy.

There are two complications to the 898 strategy for externs: (a) 898 can only be taken twice, and (b) 898 registration does not make a student full-time for the purpose of qualifying for a merit award from AU. However, that second point will seldom be a concern, as students beyond Year 4 are not eligible for AU merit fellowships anyway.

Internship

Interns should register for 1 credit per semester of PSYC-899 Doctoral Dissertation* in addition to PSYC- 091-Internship each semester the student is on internship (including summer).

There is no class meeting attendance associated with Internship registration.

PSYC-899 registration requires that the student have "advanced to candidacy" (aka "ABD"). This is operationally defined in Psychology as having a signed dissertation proposal, all courses completed (with the exception of the clinical internship), and all comprehensive examinations passed. Every applicant for internship must have a signed dissertation proposal. When the student is ready to advance to candidacy, they should obtain from the DCT an advance to candidacy form which needs to be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies with a degree audit and signed dissertation committee approval form. Students are not able to register for PSYC-899 without submitting the Advance to Candidacy form.

PSYC-899 does convey full-time status, including eligibility for AU merit awards.

PSYC-899 does enable the student to be covered by the university's umbrella insurance policy.

The Graduate Continuous Registration form to register for either PSYC-898 or PSYC-899 can be found at this link: <https://www.american.edu/provost/registrar/pdf/upload/Graduate-Continuous-Registration.pdf>

Clinical Ph.D. students may apply for internships only if, by October 1 of the year that the student is applying for internship, the following have been completed:

- thesis orals have been passed,
- the final copy of the M.A. thesis has been submitted to the library with the signatures of all members on the committee,
- the dissertation proposal has been signed by three members of the committee supervising the research, and
- all comprehensive examinations have been passed; the tool of research, written research analysis, and celebration of research presentation must also have been completed.

Students who have not fulfilled all of these requirements by October 1 may not apply for internships for the next academic year. Faculty members will not write letters of recommendation for such students. In addition, clinical students must complete a minimum of 500 hours of direct intervention/assessment clinical experience before applying for internship.

Clinical Ph.D. students are required to serve a one year internship prior to the completion of the Ph.D. Information regarding the availability of these internships is available from the DCT and various APPIC materials.

Students are strongly encouraged to serve internships accredited by the American Psychological Association or Canadian Psychological Association. Students should seek the approval and guidance of the DCT before applying for any nonaccredited internships.

Please be aware that students who do not complete all Ph.D. requirements, including successful submission of the final approved dissertation to the University and receipt of a letter of internship completion by the University by the University deadline in early August of a given year are required by our University to register for maintenance of matriculation for the Fall semester of that year, which typically begins before the end of August. Students in this situation can appeal for a waiver of Fall registration to the DCT, who may forward this appeal to the Chair of the Department of Psychology for possible negotiation with the College of Arts and Sciences. Students are responsible for requesting this waiver, and it should be done well in advance of the start of the Fall semester.

Other Clinical Ph.D. Requirements

First Year “Celebration of Research” MA Proposal Presentation

In May of their first year, Clinical Ph.D. students must present to clinical faculty and students their MA research idea and any progress made in that research. Students and faculty gather for presentations, which are usually about 10 minutes each, followed by 5 minutes of questions.

Written Research Analysis Assessment

The Research Analysis Assessment requires students to critically analyze a research article. It will be completed at the end of their second semester in the program at a time designated by the

DCT. The article to be reviewed and analyzed each year will come from the content areas of Psychopathology and Psychotherapy. This assessment is required and is used to demonstrate research competency.

Comprehensive Examinations

Clinical students must pass two comprehensive examinations: an oral examination on an area of clinical specialization and a written comprehensive exam on clinical and research ethics.

Clinical Ph.D. Specialty Comprehensive Examination (Oral)

The format for the required specialty comprehensive exam for clinical doctoral students is modeled on colloquia typically presented by faculty job candidates: the student prepares a presentation of approximately 45 minutes, demonstrating advanced, specialized competence in an area of clinical practice and knowledge of the relevant empirical work.

Although the “Specialty Comp” is *not* solely a “case presentation,” one or more cases must be used to provide a detailed illustration of the specialty. A committee of two faculty members, one of whom must be full-time in the department (not on reduced load) conducts the 2-hour oral examination. The exam begins with a 45-min presentation by the student, which should include a review of the relevant empirical literature, along with presentation of a case (or cases) that illustrate the expertise in training in that area and connect the observations with the empirical literature. Faculty then pose questions to the student regarding the presentation, specialty area, and empirical literature surrounding the specialty.

Written products, including a detailed outline of the presentation, relevant psychotherapy and testing reports, and any other supporting materials or data, must be made available to the committee at the time of the oral presentation. The presentation also may include an audio- or videotape of a therapy session. If audio or video material is used during the presentation, the presenter must obtain signed releases from the clients and present those releases at the oral exam. In addition, the discussion and analysis of any cases as well as the approach taken to it must demonstrate a comprehensive grounding in research supporting the clinical specialty.

The faculty committee may make more specific or additional requirements in advance of the examination.

Comprehensive Ethics Examination (Written)

Readings

Questions on the comprehensive ethics exam are based on readings. The reading list may comprise any type of readings that professors choose (e.g., books, book chapters, journal articles, monographs). The reading list for the Ethics comprehensive exam is available in the Department office and on the Department website. Changes in the reading list take effect six months after they are made. Students should feel free to discuss a reading list with the clinical faculty.

Content

The ethics exam will consist of seven questions, two for research (Section 1) and five for clinical practice (Section 2). Students must answer one research question and four clinical practice questions. Exam questions will not be announced ahead of time, and are likely to change from exam to exam. Questions from previous examinations are not made available to students.

Scheduling

The examination is given two times a year—during the second full week of April in the Spring semester and during the second full week of July in the Summer. The Chair of the GCC is responsible for scheduling the ethics comprehensive examination, having it supervised by one or more faculty members, and informing students of their performance.

Students must notify, Senior Administrative Assistant (Lefteris Hazapis) in the Department of Psychology at least four weeks ahead of time if they plan to take the ethics comprehensive examination. Students with documented *learning disabilities* who need accommodations for the exam should contact the University's Academic Support Center several weeks in advance of the exam to arrange for accommodations.

Administration Procedure

The ethics exam is closed-book. Students will have three hours to complete the exam. Use of computers is prohibited unless required for accommodations specified by the University's Academic Support Center.

Grading

Questions will be graded pass-fail by a single faculty member for each question. The student must have passes on all questions in order to pass the exam. A pass is defined as C or better. Grades on comprehensive exam questions are similar to grades for courses. As the GCC does not consider appeals of grades for courses, it will not consider appeals of grades on comprehensive exams. Comprehensive exam graders are encouraged to provide ample feedback on comprehensive examination answers, so that students understand the reason for the grades received.

Our university regulations allow only one failure and one re-take for a given comprehensive exam. A student who arranges to sit for the ethics examinations, shows up for its

administration, and leaves without submitting anything to be graded, will be considered as having taken the examination.

A failed exam must be retaken within 6 months, according to University regulations, or the student will be dismissed from the University. This retake must be approved in advance by the students' degree program director. In addition, if any comprehensive exam is failed twice the student will be dismissed, according to University regulations.

Research Dissemination Tool

Clinical students must complete one tool of research, a research dissemination tool. To successfully complete this tool, students must present a poster or paper at a scholarly meeting or have a paper accepted for publication in a peer-reviewed journal. The research must have been primarily conducted during the student's time in the AU Psychology graduate program. Students must have made a major contribution to the presented or published work. Students may fulfill this requirement by disseminating work they conducted as part of AU's terminal Master's program in Psychology. The tool requirement cannot be fulfilled by the dissemination of work that was primarily conducted at a non-AU site prior to beginning the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program or by work that was primarily conducted as an undergraduate at AU.

Master's Thesis

Please see the General Information section in this handbook for details of the master's thesis requirement.

Doctoral Dissertation

Please see the General Information section in this handbook for details of the Doctoral Dissertation requirement. Additional information about the University Office of Graduate Affairs regulations about procedures for approval of doctoral dissertation proposals and committee composition can be found at <https://www.american.edu/provost/grad/Dissertation-Committee-Page.cfm> and <https://www.american.edu/provost/grad/etd/index.cfm>.

Degree Completion Information

Before being awarded the doctoral degree, Clinical Ph.D. students need to complete all program requirements listed in this handbook.

Before receiving an MA degree *en passant* to the Ph.D., clinical students must complete the following requirements for the MA:

33 credits including:

3 credits MA Thesis Research or Seminar

3 credits Psychological Research (PSYC-650)

3 credits Statistics (STAT-515 through STAT-524)

24 credits of graduate electives, approved by the student's advisor Students must also complete a MA Thesis.

These requirements are a subset of the requirements for the Clinical Psychology doctorate. Students who transfer credits in to the program, to receive a doctoral degree from the program, must complete at least three full-time academic years of graduate study (or equivalent) in the program and internship.

Time Limits on Courses

Courses completed more than nine years before finishing a PhD may not fulfill degree requirements.

Clinical Student Evaluation and Feedback

Students will receive feedback on their research and clinical performance annually. In the spring semester, the DCT will ask students to complete a written annual update of their research, clinical experiences, coursework, and multicultural training experiences. The research mentor will complete a written evaluation of research progress throughout the year, including progress on the thesis or dissertation, scientific mindedness, participation in research dissemination, ethical conduct of research, and professionalism. The document is housed in a dropbox file that is accessible to the student and faculty member. Mentors should meet in person with students to discuss these annual evaluations. Practicum and externship supervisors will also complete standard forms each semester to provide feedback on training progress. Supervisors will provide ratings on a number of relevant dimensions, including therapy and assessment skill, multicultural competence, professionalism and timely completion of work, communication, and receptiveness to supervision.

There will be an annual meeting of the clinical faculty to review progress and discuss ways to support individual student growth. The research and clinical evaluations will be collected by the DCT and Assistant DCT, who will review all ratings and bring relevant concerns, areas for improvement, and specific strengths to the attention of the faculty in this meeting. Based on this information, the Clinical Faculty group makes a recommendation to the Graduate Curriculum Committee for any specific actions (see Annual Evaluation of Graduate Student Progress section). Students will receive a letter from the GCC indicating that they are making satisfactory progress or outlining specific steps that need to happen in order to progress in the program. Students who are falling behind in research will be asked to develop a specific timeline with their mentor and submit the timeline to the GCC.

To successfully move through the program in a timely manner, students should have completed their thesis project by the end of their third year. If students have not submitted their completed thesis by the end of the third year, they will automatically be placed on “progress watch” for the coming year. The GCC will ask that they submit a timeline for project completion. If students have not completed the thesis by the end of the fourth year, they will be placed on probation in the program. *Please note that program probation is reported on internship verification forms.*

Dismissal Criteria for Clinical Ph.D. Students

The following is a summary of grounds for dismissal of a student from the Clinical doctoral program:

- a. Students will be dismissed from the University if their cumulative grade-point average (GPA) remains below 3.00 for two consecutive semesters. According to the Graduate Academic Regulations, the University Registrar places graduate students on probation if their cumulative GPA falls below 3.00. The Registrar permanently dismisses the student if the cumulative GPA does not rise to 3.00 or better the following semester.
- b. Receiving a second C (or lower) grade can result in probation or dismissal (Departmental regulation), even if the cumulative GPA is 3.00 or higher.
- c. Unfavorable evaluation of progress of graduate student progress by the Clinical Ph.D. program advisory committee, followed by GCC determination that the student should be dismissed (Departmental and University regulation).
- d. Not completing degree requirements within 7 years if the student began the clinical program with a BA or BS, or within 5 years if the student began the clinical program with an MA (Departmental regulation). Students may apply for a one-year extension of this requirement to the GCC through their faculty advisor and then the DCT, understanding that this application could be denied. At most, three possible one-year extensions of the time limit for the degree program can be granted (Departmental regulation).
- e. Failing a comprehensive examination twice, or any two comprehensive examinations once
- f. Not passing a required comprehensive examination within 6 months of taking a previously failed examination (University regulation).
- g. Failing a thesis oral examination twice (Departmental regulation).
- h. Failing a dissertation oral examination twice (University regulation).

Professional Development

We encourage students to seek out additional professional development activities in their time in the program. Our program will provide some workshops and/or outside speakers on career development (e.g., “The Basics of Starting a Private Practice,” “Career Paths in the Veterans Affairs System,” “Finding Work-Life Balance”). In addition, you are strongly encouraged to join a professional society, not just for research purposes, but for the professional development opportunities offered. For example, many students in the program join Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies, American Psychological Association, and/or American Psychological Society. The annual conferences have career and personal development symposia, and there are special interest groups that one can join to network within one’s own area of interest throughout the year. At the First Year Orientation meeting, the DCT will circulate a list of professional societies that might be interesting to students.

Finally, know that your career and personal goals are important to us, and we want to help support individual goals. It is helpful to have ongoing conversations with your advisor and the DCT about your career goals, so that they can connect you with appropriate resources and provide guidance.

Other Considerations for Clinical Ph.D. students

Licensing rules are state-specific: if you know where you plan to practice, we strongly recommend that you investigate laws in that state with regard to requirements for courses in cultural diversity and other areas. For example, if you plan to be licensed in Massachusetts, you must take Advanced Social Psychology and Ethnic and Minority Issues in Psychology.

Conscience Clause for Clinical Ph.D. Students

Program Policies Related to Trainees Who Experience Conflicts Working with Diverse Clients/Patients:

In our APA-accredited program, we are committed to a training process that ensures that graduate students develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to work effectively with members of the public who embody intersecting demographics, attitudes, beliefs, and values. When graduate students' attitudes, beliefs, or values create tensions that negatively impact the training process or their ability to effectively treat members of the public, the program faculty and supervisors are committed to a developmental training approach that is designed to support the acquisition of professional competence. We support graduate students in finding a belief- or value-congruent path that allows them to work in a professionally competent manner with all clients/patients.

For some trainees, integrating personal beliefs or values with professional competence in working with all clients/patients may require additional time and faculty support. Ultimately though, to complete our program successfully, all graduate students must be able to work with any client placed in their care in a beneficial and non-injurious manner. Professional competencies are determined by the profession for the benefit and protection of the public; consequently, students do not have the option to avoid working with particular client populations or refuse to develop professional competencies because of conflicts with their attitudes, beliefs, or values.

Table of Requirements for the Clinical Ph.D.

- 72 credits total
- 2 comprehensive exams
- 1 tool
- Clinical externship
- Clinical internship

To be completed by May of year	RESEARCH	COMPS and TOOLS	COURSES	CLINICAL
First year	Thesis proposal or other research in-progress presented to clinical faculty and fellow students at our Celebration of Research	Written research assessment completed.	6 completed	Positive evaluations by clinical supervisors
Second year	Thesis proposal signed by committee, data collection in progress	Research dissemination tool completed*.	12 completed	Positive evaluations by clinical supervisors
Third year	Thesis defense passed, any revisions completed, final manuscript signed by committee and submitted to Dean	Ethics comp passed * Specialty comp passed *	18 completed	Positive evaluations by clinical supervisors
Fourth year	Dissertation proposal approved by committee. *		All completed *	Externship with positive evaluations *
Fifth year	Dissertation data gathered, analyses in progress.			In fifth or sixth year, Internship with positive evaluations
Sixth year	Dissertation orals passed, revisions completed, final manuscript signed by committee, submitted to Dean			

* Must be completed by October 1 prior preceding application for internship, along with at least 500 assessment or intervention hours.

Note: Students must maintain matriculation each semester or register for one credit during internship year.

General Information for All Graduate Programs

Transferring Courses Taken Elsewhere Before Matriculation

Students may transfer up to 6 credits into the program for courses taken prior to first enrollment at AU and at accredited institutions outside of the Consortium of Universities of the Washington metropolitan area, if the following conditions are met:

- a. Before the end of the first semester of participation in their AU degree program, students must petition, in writing, the GCC for consideration of transfer credits. This petition should attach relevant syllabi and an official copy of all transcript showing courses requested for transfer.
- b. Students' petitions must be approved and countersigned by their advisors and by their degree program director prior to submission to the GCC. Petitions not approved by advisors will be returned to students. All transfer of courses also must be approved by the GCC.
- c. Courses taken at other universities must have a grade of at least B (3.0) in order to be transferred into the graduate program. B- is not acceptable.
- d. Courses transferred from other schools must not have been taken more than 5 years prior to admission to AU.
- e. The courses proposed for transfer were not used as credits toward a completed undergraduate or graduate degree in a similar field, including any area of psychology or public health. [University requirement being revised, however.]
- f. The following course cannot be transferred: Independent Study.
- g. Course transfers approved by the advisor, program director, and GCC will be forwarded by the GCC to the Director of Graduate Academic Programs in the Office of the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences together with the graduate action form and the student's official transcript.

Transferring Courses Taken Elsewhere After Matriculation at AU

Residency requirement: According to University regulations, both master's and doctoral degrees require a minimum of 18 semester credit hours of in residence graduate course work, not counting PSYC-797, PSYC-899, or similar courses in other departments. For Ph.D. students, at least two of three academic training years (or equivalent) must be completed at AU; at least one year must be in full time in residence. However, please note that APA requires that clinical doctoral students must be in residence for three years.

Ph.D. students may take a maximum of 12 credits outside the Department. This limit and the permission process described next refer to courses taken in other departments at American University or through the Consortium. They do not refer to courses transferred in from other universities prior to beginning graduate work or to statistics courses taken in the Department of Mathematics and Statistics.;

Permissions required for Ph.D. students to take courses outside the University while enrolled at AU vary by type of course as follows:

- a. For elective courses, students must have the permission of the advisor and of the instructor (if any) of the same course at American prior to enrolling in the course.
- b. For required (not elective) courses, the student must have approval from the GCC prior to enrolling in the course.

Dismissal Due to Poor Grades

Graduate students are dismissed from the University if their cumulative grade-point average (GPA) remains below 3.00 for two consecutive semesters. According to university regulations, the Registrar places graduate students on probation if their cumulative GPA falls below 3.00, and permanently dismisses the student if the cumulative GPA does not rise to 3.00 or better the following semester.

Receiving a second C (or lower) grade can result in probation or dismissal (Departmental regulation), even if the cumulative GPA is 3.00 or higher.

Annual Evaluation of Graduate Student Progress

Individual faculty advisors are responsible for monitoring graduate student progress. Also, the director of each graduate program (Clinical Ph.D., and MA) appoints an advisory committee of faculty who review the progress of all students in the program once or more each academic year. The results of this review are forwarded to faculty members of the GCC for possible action. (Student members of the GCC are excluded from review of fellow students' progress, as this can involve disclosure of course performance course grades, as well as other personal matters).

All graduate students are required to complete progress report forms to facilitate this review of progress. The evaluation form, and a deadline for its completion, are sent to students each Spring by program directors.

If evaluation of a student's progress is favorable, a recommendation for a favorable evaluation of progress is made to the faculty members of the GCC. The GCC communicates its evaluation of each student's progress to the student and the faculty advisor of the student.

If the advisory committee's evaluation of a student's progress is unfavorable, the committee will report the nature of the problems to the GCC faculty, along with recommendations for action by the GCC faculty (e.g., warning, academic probation, or dismissal from the degree program and University). The GCC faculty will decide what action to take and will communicate this action to the student, student's file, faculty advisor, program advisory committee, and department chair.

Due Process and Grievance

A student may come into disagreement with a faculty member or with the policies and actions of an academic unit as they affect the student's progress toward completion of their degree. In cases of complaint or disagreement over academic matters not resolved by consultation among the parties, the University provides the student the right to initiate a grievance procedure, as

described in the Student Academic Grievance Policy located on the Office of Undergraduate Studies website under Academic Policies (<https://www.american.edu/policies/upload/Academic-Grade-Grievances-Policy.pdf>)

Students should have protection through orderly procedures against prejudiced or capricious academic evaluation. At the same time, they are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled. Evaluation of students and the awarding of credit must be based on academic performance professionally judged and not on matters irrelevant to that performance, such as personality, physical disability, age, race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, degree of political activism, or personal beliefs.

Judgment regarding standards of evaluation for a student's academic performance is a faculty responsibility and is not grievable. Normally, only questions relating to whether a faculty member complied with the stated requirements of the course and applied standards of evaluation fairly and equitably are potentially grievable.

Note that there is also a University grievance policy on disability-related accommodations (<https://www.american.edu/policies/upload/Reasonable-Accommodations-Grievance-Procedures-for-Students.pdf>).

Academic Integrity

The Academic Integrity Code for American University defines honorable conduct, outlines attendant rights and responsibilities, and describes procedures for handling allegations of academic misconduct. All graduate students should be sure to read the code (<https://www.american.edu/academics/integrity/code.cfm>) and to conduct their studies with intellectual honesty.

Nondiscrimination Policy

American University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action institution that operates in compliance with applicable laws and regulations. The University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, pregnancy or parenting, age, sexual orientation, disability, marital status, personal appearance, gender identity and expression, family responsibilities, political affiliation, source of income, veteran status, an individual's genetic information or any other bases. The University expressly prohibits any form of discriminatory harassment including sexual harassment, dating and domestic violence, rape, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and stalking. For more detailed information regarding University policy on nondiscrimination, please see this webpage:

<https://www.american.edu/policies/upload/Discrimination-and-Sexual-Harassment-Policy.pdf>

Financial Aid

Departmental Support

Graduate students in the doctoral program may be supported by graduate assistantships (GAs) funded primarily to help faculty with teaching (TAs) or research (RAs), although both types may involve a mixture of teaching, research, and some administrative activities. Only students

in good standing receive such awards. During the academic year (later August through early May), students with departmental fellowships:

- a. are prohibited from holding full-time jobs within the university (University policy)
- b. are prohibited from holding full-time jobs outside the university except with the approval of the Graduate Curriculum Committee; and
- c. are discouraged from holding part-time jobs (20 hours/ week or less) either within or outside the university.

Students receiving University graduate awards are paid monthly during the academic year. They are expected to work an average of twenty hours per week throughout this period, subject to negotiation with their supervisors. University holidays are, of course, excepted.

Administrative Support

The department senior administrative assistant (Lefteris Hazapis) is available to assist you with navigating paperwork, registrations, filing, and other administrative tasks. Britten Rollo, senior administrative assistant, is available for budgetary support for research labs, research awards, and travel awards.

Courses

Prerequisites

Please see the schedule of classes for information on prerequisites as you plan your program.

Only students who have completed the prerequisites and have the permission of the instructor may take PSYC-618 Principles of Neuropsychological Assessment, regardless of the track in which they are enrolled.

Only students in the Clinical Ph.D. program track may take the therapy practicum courses or PSYC-652 or PSYC-654.

Students who have not defended their Master's thesis should not register for Doctoral Dissertation Research.

Testing Out of Required Courses

Students may test out of required courses by passing an exam prepared by the professor who teaches the course. Except for entering first year students, students should notify the professor of their intent one month prior to the start of the course. Students may test out of a maximum of three courses. If a graduate student fails such an exam, they may not retake it.

Thesis and Dissertation Procedures

Transfer of MA Thesis

University regulations favor approval of transfer of an MA thesis prior to admission to one of our graduate degree programs. The GCC recommends that, for expediency in admissions decisions, the director of the graduate degree program to which the student has applied decide

whether the thesis should transfer. Directors are urged to obtain the opinions of two faculty whose expertise is in the area of the thesis prior to deciding whether to transfer the thesis.

Theses that have been defended successfully and completed while the student is enrolled in our MA Program in General Psychology are automatically accepted as fulfilling the thesis requirement for our graduate programs.

If a graduate student recently enrolled at our University wishes to have a thesis completed at another institution fulfill the MA thesis requirement for one of our graduate programs, the director of the student's program should send it to two full-time AU faculty members whose expertise is in the area of the thesis for consideration. During this time, the thesis should be on file in the Psychology Department office for 10 days, and its availability made known to the department at large. If both AU faculty approve, the requirement is waived at the departmental level. The student's degree program director should forward this recommendation to the Office of the Provost via the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for consideration. If both faculty readers disapprove, the thesis requirement is not waived. If there is a difference of opinion between the two readers, the matter is returned to the director of the degree program for further consideration. With a waiver approved by the Department, Dean, and Provost, the Department requirement for the master's thesis itself is satisfied.

Note that University regulations prohibit transfer of course credits to fulfill the necessary 3 hours of thesis research, however, so that course credits for the thesis cannot also be transferred, although the requirement that these 3 credits be allocated to thesis research may be waived if approved by the Dean as an exception to university regulations. Thus, with an accepted thesis transfer, the 3 credit hours otherwise allocated to thesis research may be used to take another course to fulfill the 33 (Masters) or 72 (Doctoral) hour total credit hour requirement.

Content Overlap of Theses and Dissertations

Theses and dissertations should be different studies. However, these studies can be in the same topical area; the dissertation cannot be a replication of the thesis and should be a substantially additive contribution. If there is a question concerning similarities between a student's thesis and dissertation, the question should be brought to the attention of the GCC.

Committee Composition

For both Theses and Dissertations

It is important that students and faculty understand that even signed thesis and dissertation proposals are not contracts that in any way obligate acceptance of the product of the proposed research by the thesis or dissertation committee.

Students must have at least one core committee member who has demonstrable expertise in the area being investigated. Students are reminded that they may select the faculty members for their committees from the *entire* faculty, not just faculty from their area of specialization.

Thesis committee and dissertation membership must be approved by the Director of the student's graduate degree program (University regulation).

Thesis Committee

A student's masters thesis committee must consist of at least three members (at least 2 must be full-time faculty in our Department of Psychology). One of the three members will preferably be from outside the Department and will be chosen by the student and the chair of the thesis committee.

Members of thesis committees cannot include former American University graduate students who have graduated less than 5 years before the date of the oral examination.

"Outside" members of thesis committees must be approved by the chair of the committee and must have clear, proven expertise in the area of the thesis. In order to preclude any misunderstandings, it is essential that the details concerning how the committee will operate and the respective role of each member of the committee be discussed and agreed upon at the time the committee is formed.

Dissertation Committee

Rules and procedures for the forming of dissertation committees have been recently revised by the University: students and faculty advisors are encouraged to consult the graduate academic regulations at [http://www.american.edu/provost/grad/upload/Graduate-Academic-](http://www.american.edu/provost/grad/upload/Graduate-Academic-Regulations.pdf)

[Regulations.pdf](http://www.american.edu/provost/grad/upload/Graduate-Academic-Regulations.pdf) for the most current information. The dissertation chair must be full-time and tenured. The Dissertation Committee will typically have four or more core committee members, including the chair of the committee. However, according to university regulations, the minimum number of core committee members, including the chair of the committee, is three. At least two of the core members must be full-time, tenure-line faculty members at American. Qualified individuals, either outside the department or outside the University, may sit on the committee as external members once the minimum requirement of two internal full-time, tenure-line faculty from American University has been met. Together, the internal and external members form the core of the Dissertation Committee. All core members are encouraged to become involved in the planning and execution of the dissertation. In consultation with the student's primary research mentor, the doctoral student should solicit faculty members for the committee and then submit the names of the Chair and other committee members for approval by the Graduate Program Director. Once approved by the Graduate Program Director, the proposed membership of a Dissertation Committee is then approved by the Doctoral Council. If the status of any member of an approved Dissertation Committee changes, the doctoral student and the Graduate Program Director will recommend a replacement for approval by the Doctoral Council. The Doctoral Dissertation Committee Approval Form can be found at

http://www.american.edu/provost/grad/upload/Dissertation-Committee-Approval-Form-FINAL-04_2016.pdf

At the time of the final examination of the dissertation, at least one additional member will join the core of the Dissertation Committee as an outside reader for the final examination. The outside reader should have no direct association with the student. The purpose of the outside reader(s) is to provide a review of the dissertation by a colleague with the appropriate terminal degree who is an expert in the subject matter of the dissertation. An outside reader serves an advisory role, and the charge to the outside reader is to determine if the dissertation meets

general standards in the field, not necessarily to critique the work in detail. Once the dissertation has been successfully defended, all committee members sign the dissertation title page. A letter of approval from the outside reader may replace the outside reader's signature on the dissertation title page.

Members of dissertation committees cannot include former American University graduate students who have graduated less than 5 years before the date of the oral examination. In order to preclude any misunderstandings, it is essential that the details concerning how the committee will operate and the respective role of each member of the committee be discussed and agreed upon at the time the committee is formed.

Oral Defenses of Theses and Dissertations

Oral Defense Scheduling and Attendance

University rules regarding dissertation defense have been revised: please consult the for the most current information.

Master's and dissertation orals must be public. It is the student's responsibility to reserve a room that will accommodate at least 20 people. Students are also responsible for asking a department administrative assistant to notify all faculty and graduate students in our department of the date, time, and room of the defense at least two weeks (14 days) in advance of the defense. Graduate students are required to either upload a copy of their thesis or dissertation to the departmental thesis and dissertation website at least one week before the defense, or to place a printed copy in the main office of the Department. Faculty and a departmental administrative assistant can upload the thesis or dissertation to the website, which currently is on the university's Blackboard platform: LIBWEB-999-067: Theses and Dissertations.

For the masters orals, at least two of the three committee members must be physically present and the third committee member must be either physically present or participate via phone or computer connection.

For the dissertation orals, at least three of the four committee members must be physically present and the fourth committee member must be either physically present or participate via phone or computer connection.

No more than one member of the thesis or dissertation committee can participate in oral defenses via phone or computer connection *if* this is agreed to by the student, the chair of the thesis or dissertation committee, and the person to be telepresent at the defense.

Oral Defense Procedures

- a. The chairperson will determine the examination procedure and the sequence of questioning.
- b. It is expected that final oral examinations will require approximately two hours for theses, and three hours for dissertations. During the examination, each committee member should have a minimum of 30 minutes for presenting questions.
- c. Questions from visitors will be taken at the discretion of the chairperson, but only after an initial round of questions by the committee members has been taken. Questions may be submitted in advance of the examination by interested faculty and students not

planning on attending. Such questions should be submitted to the chairperson, at whose discretion they may be raised during the examination.

- d. Following the oral defense, the candidate and all visitors will be excused from the room. However, the committee members may request consultation from one or more visitors who have attended the examination. All noncommittee members must leave the examination room before a final decision is made concerning the candidate's performance.

Written Format and Revision Timeline

The format for the thesis and dissertation must follow University guidelines. A manual titled "Requirements for Preparation of Theses and Dissertations" is available from the Dean's office. Issues not discussed there should follow the APA format, as per the Publication Manual of the APA, 6th edition (2009). An electronic copy of every thesis and dissertation must be provided to the Department of Psychology: this is the student's responsibility before graduation.

After the oral defense of the thesis or dissertation, students are expected to make requested revisions and to submit the revised manuscript to the thesis or dissertation committee chair within two months. The final manuscript should be submitted to the Associate Dean for Graduate Studies within six months from the date of the oral defense.

Graduate Students Teaching Courses in the Department

Graduate students who would like to teach a course in the department must fulfill the following requirements:

- a. Completion of the MA degree, and
- b. Either of the following:
 - a. Completion of the Greenberg Seminars or
 - b. Completion of a Teaching Assistant position for the course to be taught, with supervision by a faculty member.

The student is expected to let the faculty member know that they are interested in teaching the course, and write a contract with the faculty for specific supervision in course development and execution. The graduate student will be expected to develop a course portfolio documenting course preparation, including samples of a course syllabus, assignments, and lectures (ideally, the student will have sought opportunities to guest lecture in the course).

Graduate Student Participation in Committees in the Psychology Department

The Psychology Graduate Student Council elects officers, usually in the spring. The council is allotted a certain amount of money each year, to be distributed in any way the students decide. Officers include:

- a. President
- b. Vice-President
- c. Secretary/Treasurer

- d. Representative to the Graduate Student Council of the University. This council meets regularly, and the representative will have a role in University policies as a source of student input.

As detailed in the Department Constitution provided elsewhere in this handbook, there are several departmental committees upon which graduate students can serve. Elections for these representatives are held approximately two weeks into the fall of each year, and the elections are run by the previous year's President of the Psychology Graduate Student Council.

Faculty of the Psychology Department and Research Interests

Contact information for full-time faculty and additional information are available in the [website of the Department of Psychology](#). The designations of term [], tenure-track [*], and tenured [**] are provided because the university graduate regulations require that at least two dissertation members including the chair be tenured.

- ** ANTHONY H. AHRENS, Professor, Ph.D. from Stanford University. Depression, gratitude, mindfulness, fear of emotion.
- * LAURIE BAYET, Assistant Professor, Ph.D., University of Grenoble. Early visual, cognitive, and social-emotional development, with particular focus on facial emotion perception in infancy and early childhood. Her laboratory uses electro-encephalography, behavioral methods, and statistical or computational tools such as multivariate analysis to investigate the early development of representations involved in the processing of facial emotions and other high-level visual stimuli, and their relation to broader mechanisms of perceptual, social-emotional, or cognitive development.
- * NICOLE E. CAPORINO, Assistant Professor, Ph.D. from University of South Florida. Anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, cognitive-behavioral therapy with children and adolescents.
- ** MICHELE CARTER, Professor, Ph.D. from Vanderbilt University. Assessment and treatment of adult anxiety disorders; psychotherapy outcome; interpersonal relationships; African-American issues.
- ** TERRY DAVIDSON, Professor, Ph.D. from Purdue University. Neural basis of learning and memory; biological and associative controls of energy and body weight regulation.
- LAURA DUVAL, Professorial Lecturer, Ph.D. in Social Psychology from Tulane University. Her research interests include stereotyping and prejudice, media violence and other applications of social cognitive constructs.
- NOEMI ENCHAUTEGUI-DE-JESUS, Assistant Professor, Ph.D. from New York University. Job stressors, work-family balance, and coping resources in low-income families and communities; African-American and Latino issues; women and child/youth well-being.
- ** BRYAN D. FANTIE, Associate Professor, Ph.D. from Dalhousie University. Human neuropsychology, neural mechanisms and correlates of behavior and cognition (emotion, language, memory, attention, etc), brain dysfunction, closed head injury, autism, schizophrenia, dementia, behavioral neurology, diagnosis.
- MARIA GOMEZ-SERRANO, Senior Professorial Lecturer, Ph.D. from American University. Neuroscience, basic physiology, epigenetic factors in drug abuse, maternal behavior in drug use and abuse.

- ** JAMES J. GRAY, Professor, Ph.D. from Fordham University. ABPP in Clinical Psychology. Behavior therapy; psychotherapy; training of behavior therapists; abnormal psychology; psychology of religion.
- ** KATHLEEN C. GUNTHER, Associate Professor, Ph.D. from University of Delaware. Stress and emotion regulation, depression, anxiety, neuroticism, experience sampling methodology .
- ** DAVID A. F. HAAGA, Professor, Ph.D. from University of Southern California. Cognitive assessment, cognitive therapy, rational emotive behavior therapy, cigarette smoking, depression.

ERICA HART, Professorial Lecturer, Ph.D. from American University. Implicit bias, cross-cultural psychology, health disparities, body image.
- ** NATHANIEL HERR, Associate Professor, Ph.D. from University of California, Los Angeles. Interpersonal functioning, emotion regulation, and identity disturbance among individuals with borderline personality disorder and related affective problems.
- ** LAURA M. JULIANO, Professor, Ph.D. from State University of New York at Binghamton. Tobacco, caffeine, drug expectancies, placebo effects .
- ** DAVID KEARNS, Associate Professor, Ph.D. from American University. Learning, conditioned inhibition, stimulus control, drug self-administration.
- ** BARRY W. McCARTHY, Professor (Full Time, reduced load). Ph.D. from Southern Illinois University. ABPP in Clinical Psychology. Behavior therapy and behavioral groups; training and utilization of paraprofessionals; sex therapy and human sexual behavior; crisis intervention.
- ** ZEHRA PEYNIRCIOGLU, Professor, Ph.D. from Rice University. Cognitive Psychology, human memory, inhibition in memory, nonverbal memory.
- ** ANTHONY L. RILEY, Professor, Ph.D. from University of Washington. Psychopharmacology; drug use and abuse; animal models of addiction; conditioned food aversions.
- ** ARTHUR SHAPIRO, Professor, Ph.D. from Columbia University. Visual perception and cognitive neuroscience, color, motion, visual camouflage, and low-light-level vision.
- ** ALAN M. SILBERBERG, Professor. Ph.D. from University of Pennsylvania. Experimental analysis of behavior; autoshaping; choice behavior; microstructural analysis of rate.
- ** CATHERINE STOODLEY, Associate Professor, Ph.D. from University of Oxford. The neuroscience of cognitive development, particularly the role of the cerebellum in learning and skill acquisition.
- ** JONATHAN TUBMAN, Professor, Ph.D. from Pennsylvania State University. Health risk behaviors among adolescents in treatment for substance abuse problems; brief motivational interventions for reducing sexual risk behavior and related risk behaviors.

** BRIAN T. YATES, Professor. Ph.D. from Stanford University. Program evaluation; cost effectiveness and cost-benefit analysis; development and training of self-management; drug abuse treatment; health psychology and behavioral medicine.

Faculty Emeritus/Emerita (may not be eligible to chair dissertation committees)

ELLIOT M. MCGINNIES, Professor Emeritus, Ph.D. from Harvard University. Functional analysis of social behavior; persuasion and attitude change, cross-cultural research.

SCOTT PARKER, Professor Emeritus. Ph.D. from Columbia University. Psychophysics, scaling, and measurement; perceptual and judgmental processes; sensation and perception; mathematical and statistical models.

BURTON M. SLOTNICK, Professor Emeritus, Ph.D. from University of Illinois, Urbana. Neuroethology; neuroendocrinology; olfaction.

CAROL S. WEISSBROD, Associate Professor Emerita, Ph.D. from Northwestern University. Clinical child psychology; gender issues in parenting; sports psychology; gender and competitiveness.

Constitution of the Psychology Department Council (Revised April 25, 2018)

Preamble

The Department of Psychology serves to further scholarship in psychology and its various subdisciplines, both by engaging in research and by teaching. Faculty members are drawn from many of the subdisciplines of the field, such as animal learning, clinical psychology, cognitive psychology, community psychology, developmental psychology, neuroscience, psychophysics, program evaluation, and social psychology. The department offers two doctoral programs, one in Behavior, Cognition, and Neuroscience, the other in Clinical Psychology. Reflecting the disciplinary variety of the field, any given faculty member might be affiliated with one of these doctoral programs, both, or neither. The department also offers BA and MA programs. This constitution provides guidelines by which the department will operate so as to further research and teaching. Guiding principles for this constitution are transparency, voice for all members, shared responsibility, and accountability.

The Department Council

The Department Council is the basic governing unit of the department. In accordance with University regulations, it has full dominion over all matters of policy and requirements regarding the academic programs offered by the department. The Council approves any changes in the administrative organization of the department, such as the creation of new committees and the re-allocation of duties among existing committees, and may set guidelines for the recruitment of new faculty, the conduct of courses and programs, and other matters of concern to the department as a whole.

The Department Council shall comply with the rules and operate within the spirit of all academic policies of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) and the University.

The Department Council shall be composed of the following members:

- a) all members of the AU faculty who hold academic rank in the Department of Psychology and are employed full-time in the University,
- b) all Affiliated Faculty or joint-appointed faculty whose affiliation agreement or joint appointment Memorandum of Agreement appoints them to the Department Council, and in addition
- c) the graduate student constituencies (M.A., Ph.D.) shall elect one student representative each to be members of the Department Council.

All members of the Department Council have a full vote, except as otherwise specified in this document. Votes may be granted for a specific time interval to additional persons on an individual basis by a two-thirds vote of the department.

The Department Council Meeting

Department meetings will be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order. The rules in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the department in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with the bylaws of the department.

Council Voting: A quorum shall be 60% of the Department Council eligible to vote, rounded to the nearest whole number. Faculty on leave or sabbatical shall not be considered in the calculation of a quorum. They shall, however, be allowed to vote if present. In order that the Department Council may consider important matters prior to a department meeting, every substantive motion which is to be voted on at a meeting must be distributed to the entire Department Council in writing at least seven days before a meeting, or must have been brought up at a previous meeting. In the latter case, the minutes of the previous meeting will be made available at least seven days before a meeting in order to serve as written notice of substantive matters to be considered. A two-thirds vote of those present and eligible to vote will be required to suspend this rule.

Notice of Council Meetings and Guests: Customarily, the Chair will announce the time of a departmental meeting at least seven days in advance of the meeting. The council may invite guests to attend as non-voting observers whose presences may be germane to the council's proceedings.

Minutes of Council Meetings: Minutes of council meetings will be taken by a person selected by the Chair and will be distributed within two weeks of each council meeting, with corrections and additions formally noted at the next council meeting.

Special Meetings: Special meetings may be called by the Chair and shall also be called upon the request of the majority of the council. At any special meeting, no business outside of the purpose of the meeting shall be conducted.

The Department Chair

The Chair is the academic leader of the department. The Chair coordinates all facets of departmental operation and oversees the administrative functioning of the department, including course scheduling. In addition to these and other responsibilities described in this Constitution, Chairs have responsibilities specified by College and University regulations and policy.

Subject to approval and appointment by the Dean of CAS, the Chair is selected by the means of the department's chair-search process. The chair-search process commences when the Department Council creates a Chair Search Committee in the first semester of the last year of a Chair's term in accordance with department guidelines for ad hoc committees and in accordance with University procedures.

The Chair shall be elected by a majority vote of the Department Council taken by secret ballot. The Chair's term of office shall be for 3 years. Subject to approval and appointment by the Dean of CAS, the Department Council may recommend that the Chair's term of office be

renewed for an additional three years. One person may not serve more than two consecutive terms. Under extraordinary circumstances, a Chair's term can be terminated by a two-thirds vote of the Department Council.

The Chair reports to the Department Council and to the Dean of CAS. Although Chair work can be delegated, the Chair remains responsible for ensuring that all major departmental functions are carried out in such fashion that all interested parties are informed, that the obligations set by the office of the Dean of CAS are met punctually, and that University-stipulated procedures are followed.

The Chair makes recommendations to the Dean of CAS for faculty reappointment, for faculty tenure and promotion and for faculty salaries. In addition, the Chair forwards to the Dean of CAS recommendations of departmental committees for faculty hiring, tenure and promotion, for faculty salaries, and other matters.

The Chair is an *ex officio* member of most department committees, with exceptions specified below (e.g., Merit Committee, Rank and Tenure Committee). To avoid having a "double vote" on merit, the Chair will not sit on the Merit Committee. Except where prohibited by AU regulations (as with the Rank and Tenure Committee when it considers individual faculty actions), the Chair may choose to sit on other departmental committees, whether ad hoc or standing.

Committees

- a. Most of the administrative work of the department will be carried out in committee.
- b. Faculty membership on all committees shall be determined by the following procedure, except as specified elsewhere in this document. Early in the Fall semester the faculty members of the Department Council will, by majority vote, elect faculty members to the following committees. The vote shall be by secret ballot unless all voting members of the faculty who are present choose otherwise. Membership on committees shall be for a term of 12 months, ending as new members are elected to committees the following Fall.

Replacement of committee members: If a committee member vacates her or his position during the term of the committee, the Department Chair requests volunteers for replacement of that committee member. The Department Chair then can appoint an interim replacement. The Council will then vote on a replacement for the remainder of the committee term at its next meeting.

Committee Chairs: The committee shall elect its Chair by a majority vote of the committee with the exception of the Executive Committee, for which the Chair of the department will be committee Chair. Committee chairs should have deep knowledge of the department. Also, new faculty members should primarily devote their time to developing their courses and research programs. Therefore, Committee Chairs will either be tenured or they will be term faculty members who have been members of the Department Council for at least six years.

C. Virtual Committee Meetings. To facilitate productivity, flexibility, fulfillment of personal responsibilities, and energy conservation, a majority of committee members present can vote to allow faculty and students to participate in that meeting either in-person or via audio or

audio+video link or other form of virtual participation. This includes meetings of the Department Council. Votes may be cast via virtual media, but only after virtual or real participation in most of the committee meeting in which the item being voted upon is considered. Faculty participating virtually are responsible for arranging information technology to make this possible, and for assuring that most of their attention is focused on the meeting. Committee chairs are encouraged to aid faculty in this endeavor.

c. Committee reports that contain proposed actions shall be dated and distributed in writing to all Department Council members. When deemed necessary by the committee, confidentiality of faculty and student identities will be maintained. The proposed actions shall be automatically accepted as a departmental resolution unless a written objection is distributed to all Department Council members within seven days from the distribution of the proposal by a member of the Department Council. If such an objection is raised, the committee proposal specified by the objection (and only that proposal) shall not become a departmental resolution unless the proposal receives a majority vote of the Department Council.

d. All committees shall operate according to Robert's Rules of Order. Every substantive motion that is to be voted on at a meeting must be distributed to the committee members in writing at least two days in advance of a meeting.

The following committees shall be standing committees for the department and shall have the functions described below.

Graduate Curriculum Committee

The committee shall consist of (a) two graduate students, one each from the Ph.D. and M.A. constituencies and (b) not fewer than three faculty members, at least one of which is not an *ex officio* member of the Graduate Curriculum Committee. The graduate student members will be elected by the students enrolled in the graduate programs of the Department of Psychology. The coordinators or directors of graduate programs shall be *ex officio* members of the committee. The committee responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- assessment and evaluation of the graduate curriculum, including certificate programs;
- maintenance of faculty-graduate student relations;
- interpretation of and approval of exceptions to departmental graduate degree requirements;
- annual evaluation of the progress of all graduate students in their degree programs;
- determination of which requirements are filled by new courses;
- recommendation to the Council's attention and consideration such legislation or other action as may pertain to graduate curriculum or graduate academic life in the department, including graduate student awards.

Undergraduate Curriculum Committee

The committee shall consist of not fewer than three faculty members and one undergraduate student majoring in psychology (and elected by undergraduate students majoring in psychology). The coordinators or directors of undergraduate programs shall be *ex-officio* members of the committee.

The UCC responsibilities shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- assessment, evaluation, and revision of the undergraduate curriculum;
- maintenance of faculty-undergraduate student relations;
- approval of petitions for exceptions to department curriculum requirements;
- designation of whether any courses outside the department shall be credited towards the related field requirement of the major;
- determination of interpretations and applications of department undergraduate requirements in specific cases;
- recommendation to the Council's attention and consideration such legislation or other action as may pertain to undergraduate curriculum or undergraduate academic life in the department, including General Education courses, Honors Program, undergraduate student awards, and Psi Chi matters.

The chair of the UCC shall oversee the process by which undergraduate majors fulfill requirements for graduation, coordinate undergraduate exit assessments, and maintain accurate undergraduate files and files pertaining to undergraduate education, internships, and other pertinent subjects.

Executive Committee

The committee shall consist of three faculty members of the department and the Department Chair. These faculty members shall either be term faculty members who have been full time in the department for at least six consecutive years or tenured faculty members who have been full time in the department for at least two years. The Executive Committee shall make recommendations to the Dean of CAS as to when a new faculty position is to be filled and the area of psychology in which the new member should have expertise. A performance review of the Department Chair will take place at the mid-point of the Chair's first term. The composition of the Chair Review Committee will be determined by the Executive Committee (meeting without the Department Chair). By the end of the semester in which the review takes place, the results of the review will be communicated to the Department Chair and the Executive Committee.

Unless an ad-hoc Space Committee is created, decisions regarding space (other than those involving negotiations for new faculty hires) also are made by the Executive Committee. Appeals regarding these decisions may, of course, be made to the Department Council.

The committee shall also decide upon requests for reconsideration of the Department Chair's decisions on such faculty matters as student assistant support, initiation of recommendations for tenure and promotion, teaching assignments, departmental research funds, etc. Requests for reconsideration with supporting justification must be submitted in writing. When an appeal is made, the Executive Committee must meet (without the Department Chair present, though they may seek information from the Chair) to consider the appeal within two weeks during Fall or Spring semester, and within four weeks during breaks and the summer.

Human Participant Pool Committee

The committee shall consist of at least one faculty member, one graduate student, and one undergraduate representative. All members must have experience conducting research with human participants. The committee shall organize the human participant pool. The committee

shall also be responsible for recommending actions and amendments that pertain to the organization of the human participant pool to the Department Council.

Merit Committee

The Merit committee will be composed of one graduate student, and three faculty members no two of whom hold the same rank. Any term faculty member whose contract extends into the academic year following the service on the Merit Committee is eligible to serve. The graduate students shall select the graduate student member of the committee. The faculty shall select the faculty members to serve on the committee by majority vote at a meeting held in the Fall term.

Rank and Tenure Committee

As required by University regulations, the department Rank and Tenure (R&T) Committee consists of all tenured members of the department faculty, unless excluded by AU regulations. For actions involving promotions or reappointments of term faculty, no less than one term faculty member shall be elected by term faculty to the Committee.

Faculty who have a separate vote in faculty actions, such as the Department Chair, or any faculty member serving as Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, are excluded from all R&T meetings that consider individual faculty actions. According to University Faculty Senate rules, faculty serving on the university-level Committee on Faculty Actions vote on faculty tenure and promotion in their departments and abstain from those votes on the Faculty Senate's Committee on Faculty Actions.

Using Department, College, and University criteria, the R&T committee makes recommendations to the Chair concerning the following: promotions, tenure decisions, tenure-track reappointments, and leaves of absence (including sabbaticals). The R&T committee also will make recommendations to the Chair regarding reappointment of term faculty, again using Department, College, and University criteria for these appointments. ([Faculty Manual](#))

Also as required by University regulations, voting on recommendations for promotion for term and tenure-line faculty is restricted to committee members whose rank exceeds that of the candidate for promotion.

Before the end of classes in the Spring semester of the academic year, the R&T Committee will elect a subcommittee of at least 5 faculty to draft detailed recommendations for the R&T Committee for actions during the next 12 months. This subcommittee may include representatives from the term or tenure-line rank from which the faculty member is being considered for promotion. It will include a graduate student representative from the Ph.D. programs.

Ad Hoc Committees

At the request of the Chair or under its own initiative, a simple majority of the Council may at any time create additional department committees on an ad hoc basis. Such committees are usually created to handle specific questions of immediate concern to the department. The Council may at any time alter the membership of (or disband) an ad hoc committee by simple majority vote.

Chair Search Committee

Following the rules for constituting ad hoc committees, the Department Council may create a Chair Search Committee. This committee will screen prospective candidates and report to the Department Council, which will then forward its collective recommendation to the Dean of CAS.

New Faculty Appointments

Subject to approval by the Provost, after the Executive Committee recommends a tenure-line or term appointment in a given area, the Department Council shall appoint an ad hoc committee of faculty to conduct a search. The graduate students of the department may choose one of their number to serve on the search committee as well. The search committee shall be responsible for recommending candidates for offers of faculty appointments. For searches for term faculty members, a body consisting of all faculty on the Department Council and also the graduate student who served on the search committee shall consider the search committee's recommendations. For searches for tenure line faculty, a body consisting of all tenure-line faculty on the Department Council will consider the search committee's recommendations. A majority vote of the body that considered the recommendations of the search committee will determine to whom and in what sequence offers of employment are to be made.

Library Liaison

One faculty member shall serve as a liaison between the Department and whatever member of the Library staff is in charge of the Psychology collection. The purpose of the liaison will be coordination of library acquisition policies and departmental faculty preferences.

Constitutional Amendments

Following the rules for constituting ad hoc committees, the Department Council may create a Bylaws Committee to consider proposed amendments to this Constitution. The Bylaws Committee will report to the Department Council on the proposed amendments and its recommendations. The Council will meet to consider this report and vote on the proposed amendments. A proposed amendment is accepted if a) at least a quorum (60%) of voting members of the Department Council is present, and at least five-sixths of the voting members present vote in favor, or b) two-thirds of total eligible voting members of the Department Council vote in favor. All computations will round to the nearest whole number

There is no other method for altering or amending this Constitution.

Faculty, Staff, Student Roles

Department Chair	David Haaga	dhaaga@american.edu
Senior Administrative Assistants	Britten Rollo	broлло@american.edu
	Eleftherios Hazapis	ehazapis@american.edu
Graduate Degree Program Directors	BCaN Ph.D.: Mark Laubach	Mark.laubach@american.edu
	Clinical Ph.D.: Kate Gunthert	gunthert@american.edu
	MA in General Psychology: Tony Ahrens	ahrens@american.edu
Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) Chair	Maria Gomez	mgomez@american.edu
Clinical Externship Director	Erica Hart	hart@american.edu
Director of Animal Research Facility	Tony Riley	alriley@american.edu
Human Participants Committee Chair	Laura Duval	duval@american.edu
Graduate student roles		
President	Tara Spitzen	ts5806a@american.edu
Vice President	Tommy Gunawan	tg9252a@student.american.edu
Social Chair	Sarah Lawhorn	sl0879a@student.american.edu
Treasurer	Cahner Manns	cm2770a@student.american.edu

Graduate Curriculum Committee (GCC) representatives	Josh Tatz Abbie Bower	jt5673b@american.edu ab0682a@american.edu
Merit Committee representative	Sabrina Jones	sj8677a@student.american.edu
Human Participants Committee representative	Cynthia Sundahl	cynthiaannes@gmail.com
Department Council representatives	Katie Nelson	kn9165a@student.american.edu
	Naomi Stahl	ns0001a@student.american.edu
APAGS (APA Graduate Students) Representative	Sabrina Jones	sj8677a@student.american.edu