

# **GRADUATE HANDBOOK 2024-2025**

## **DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY**

College of Science

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The Graduate Student Handbook contains information about University and Departmental requirements, procedures, as well as office and research facilities. Additional information and course descriptions may be found in the UT Arlington Graduate Catalog, which also contains rules and procedures of the Office of Graduate Studies. An additional source of information about the Psychology Department can be found on the web at <https://www.uta.edu/psychology>. Note that the Handbook is periodically amended to reflect the deliberations of the members of the Graduate Studies Committee. The Department of Psychology Graduate Advisors should be contacted when questions arise about topics addressed in the Handbook. Graduate students assume full responsibility for knowledge of all UT Arlington rules, regulations, and deadlines published in the Graduate Catalog, and of all Departmental and Program requirements concerning their degree programs.

The Handbook is not an official publication, and the contents hereof are not official policy of The University of Texas at Arlington or The University of Texas System. In all matters, the Rules and Regulations of the Regents of The University of Texas System, The Handbook of Operating Procedures of The University of Texas at Arlington, and the Graduate Catalog of The University of Texas at Arlington shall supersede this Handbook.

## **II. CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO PSYCHOLOGY MS AND PhD PROGRAMS**

There are no fixed criteria for admission to the MS or PhD programs in Psychology; many aspects of the student's application inform our admission decisions, but a complete application package before the departmental deadline of December 1<sup>st</sup> (PhD program) / December 15<sup>th</sup> (I/O Masters) is highly recommended for Fall admissions. There are, however, some standard requirements. A student is expected to have successfully completed the appropriate work prior to admission, including an undergraduate BA or BS degree. The Office of Graduate Studies requires a minimum grade point average of 3.0 in undergraduate work for unconditional admission to the program.

The Department of Psychology strongly encourages undergraduate courses in statistics and experimental research methods prior to admission. Graduate coursework, if any, will also be taken into consideration for all graduate applicants. These standard requirements will be reviewed along with the entire application package.

### **A. Admissions Focus**

Graduate admissions committees are subcommittees of the Graduate Studies Committee. Each PhD specialization (i.e., Psychological Sciences, Health/Neuroscience, I/O) and MS program (I/O) will convene an admissions committee to make recommendations to the Graduate Studies Committee regarding advisors of applicants. Each is composed of faculty representatives from the specialization or program, the Graduate Advisor, and the Department Chairperson. Admissions decisions are based on interpretations of indications of potential success in the program. The following points are generally considered:

1. Grade point average. Most candidates for admission present averages greater than 3.2. We do, however, examine the applicant's coursework as evidence of research interest. Positive indicators of success in our program include better than average work in the biological and physical sciences, mathematics, and psychology. In a similar fashion, evidence of relevant research experience is viewed as a

predictor of future research potential. For students interested in the Master's degree in Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology, appropriate coursework is taken into consideration.

2. Submission of GRE scores is currently (through the Fall of 2025) not required to have your graduate school application processed.

3. Submission of English Language Test scores is required for applicants whose native language is not English and will only be waived if a Bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution is earned. TOEFL/IELTS test scores are acceptable (per the Office of Graduate Studies). An applicant whose native language is not English must demonstrate a sufficient level of skill with the English language to assure success in graduate studies. This requirement will be waived for non-native speakers of English who possess a Bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution. Otherwise, applicants are expected to submit a score of at least 550 on the paper-based TOEFL, a score of at least 213 on the computer-based TOEFL, a minimum score of 40 on the TSE, a minimum score of 6.5 on the IELTS, or a minimum TOEFL IBT total score of 79. Further, when the TOEFL IBT is taken, sectional scores of at least 22 on the writing section, 21 on the speaking section, 20 on the reading section, and 16 on the listening section are preferred. Meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance and programs may give preference to students with higher scores.

4. Three letters of reference. These are important insofar as they offer evidence of commitment to research, the ability to think independently, critically, and creatively, and to integrate knowledge. Letters also provide additional information about a candidate's experience and interests. Evidence of success in employment relevant to I/O psychology will be considered for the Master's degree in that area.

5. A personal statement is required. This should describe the applicant's laboratory, field, or applied interests, career plans, and a discussion of how the UT Arlington program can serve to further these interests and plans. The statement is required and will be examined for evidence of the appropriateness of the candidate to the UT Arlington program. The personal statement should contain information about the student's intended specialization or program, and preferred faculty mentor(s). Students are encouraged to contact specific faculty members during the application process. Please note that this is a separate and more detailed essay than the graduate application essay. **It is not acceptable to copy and paste your graduate application essay and use it as your personal statement.** The personal statement submitted is meant to be more specific concerning your career goals/interests and our program, as well as the points specified on our website.

6. Finally, successful completion of a Master's degree in another department may be viewed positively even when the degree was received in an area outside of psychology. In this latter case, some conditions in terms of make-up (or deficiency) coursework may be specified.

In sum, the Department's mission is primarily to prepare students to conduct cutting-edge research in the psychological sciences. Therefore, we seek students who show aptitude in, as well as motivation for, research.

## **B. Admission Status and Eligibility for Assistantships/Fellowships**

As noted in the Graduate Catalog, there are several categories of admission in addition to unconditional admission to the Graduate Program in Psychology.

1. **Probationary Admission:** If an applicant does not evidence a majority of the positive indicators for unconditional admission described above, they may, after careful examination of their application materials be given probationary admission. Probationary admission requires that the new student receive a 3.0 (B average) GPA or better in the first 9-12 hours of graduate course work at UT Arlington.
2. **Deferred Admission:** A deferred decision may be granted when a file is incomplete or when denial of admission is not currently appropriate.
3. **Provisional Admission:** An applicant unable to supply all documentation (including certified transcripts, GRE scores, letters of reference, and personal statements) prior to the admission deadline, but otherwise appears to meet admission requirements, may be granted provisional admission.
4. **Denial of Admission:** Applicants whose records in the aggregate do not show sufficient positive indications of potential success will be denied admission. Please note that not all "qualified" applicants are admitted. Successful admission depends upon the competitiveness of the applicant pool, the number of positions available, and the applicant's fit with the current research interests of the faculty.
5. **Eligibility for Assistantship/Fellowship:** Applicants to the PhD program who wish to be considered for assistantships (I/O MS students are not eligible for assistantships) should have their applications and Department forms sent to The University of Texas at Arlington by December 1<sup>st</sup> for the Fall Semester. Students unconditionally admitted to the program are eligible for scholarship and fellowship support. Students who are provisionally admitted (pending receipt of their transcript or because they are international students who have not yet met the English language requirement) can receive a 1-semester waiver from the Office of Graduate Studies to hold the assistantship until these missing items have been received. International graduate teaching assistants who make scores that fall below the required test score on the TSE, SEA, or Speaking Section of the TOEFL iBT test must contact the English Language Institute Office at 817-272-2730, or at <http://eli.uta.edu>.

The criteria applied will be the same as those applied to admission decisions. To be eligible, candidates typically must: be a new student, have a GPA of 3.0 or better in their last 60 undergraduate credit hours, plus any graduate credit hours as calculated by the Office of Graduate Studies; and be enrolled in a minimum of 9 hours of coursework in both long semesters to retain their fellowships (see section entitled "Department Enrollment Policy" below).

Assistantship assignments are made by the Department Chairperson in consultation with the Associate Chairs and the Graduate Advisors. Students may be eligible for other forms of support including fellowships. Please refer to the Office of Graduate Studies for further information about Financial Aid Resources.

### III. UT ARLINGTON GRADUATES

Facilitated Admission of Outstanding UT Arlington Undergraduates: Students with extraordinarily strong undergraduate records at UT Arlington may receive admission to the program without having to pass through the normal application process. Qualified students will be able to gain admission without completing a formal application or paying application fees. The following conditions must be met in order to qualify for advanced admission of outstanding undergraduates:

1. The student must have graduated from a commensurate bachelor's degree program at UT Arlington no more than one academic year prior to the semester for which admission to a graduate program is sought. A commensurate bachelor's degree program is one that is a normal feeder program for the master's degree or degree-bound PhD program to which the student seeks admission. Undergraduate students in their final year of study are also eligible; in such cases, facilitated admission is conditional upon successful completion of the bachelor's degree.
2. The student's GPA must equal or exceed 3.5 in each of the following calculations:
  - a. The grade-point average in the last 60 hours of study as calculated in the Office of Graduate Studies for admission purposes
  - b. All work completed at UTA to date
3. The student's record will be assessed for strengths relevant to success in the program. All prospective facilitated admission applicants must also submit a personal statement and two (2) letters of recommendation with the understanding that the submitting the facilitated admission form does not guarantee admission into the program; all facilitated admission applicants will be reviewed by committee the same as applicants applying via regular application.

Students who are accepted via facilitated admission will be admitted directly to graduate school without completing the application for admission, or submitting an application evaluation charge. Students who believe they may qualify for this process should contact the Graduate Coordinator first, who will then notify the appropriate Graduate Advisor in the Department of Psychology, who will arrange to meet with the student.

### IV. DEGREE PROGRAMS AND AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION

The Department of Psychology at UT Arlington currently offers a Master of Science in Industrial/Organizational (I/O) Psychology and the following areas of specialization within the PhD program: Psychological Sciences, and Health/Neuroscience. In addition, students may elect to specialize further in Psychological Sciences by selecting course work and faculty mentorship in areas such as cognitive, social, health/neuroscience, or I/O Psychology. Please visit the Department's web page (<http://www.uta.edu/psychology>) for a complete description of Faculty research interests.

#### A. Master of Science in Industrial/Organizational Psychology

Thirty-eight (38) hours for the non-thesis option OR forty-one (41) hours for the thesis option in psychology are required for this degree. The program and curriculum are designed for students who intend to pursue an applied, professional career as practitioners in the field. The program offers both a thesis and a non-thesis option; however, all students enter the program under the non-thesis option. The decision to change to a thesis option will be made on a case-by-case basis and will be based on the student's aptitude and

career focus, as well as on the fit between the student and faculty mentor. Whether thesis or non-thesis option is chosen, all students earn a Master of Science in Industrial/Organizational Psychology and will therefore be required to conduct research related to I/O psychology.

Required psychology courses include PSYC 5405, 5407, 5324, 5326, 5327 (5127 and 5227), 5330, 5432, 6300, and 5391 OR 5698. Students are also required to complete 400-hours of outside internship. Students typically complete their thesis or non-thesis option (Individual Research) at the end of their second year.

A typical program of study looks like this:

	<b>Fall</b>	<b>Spring</b>
<b>Year 1</b>	PSYC 5325 – Organizational Behavior PSYC 5227 – I/O Internship PSYC 5405 – Advanced Statistics I	PSYC 5326 – Employee Selection PSYC 5324 – Applied Research Design PSYC 5407 – Multivariate Data Analysis
<b>Year 2</b>	PSYC 5330 – Advanced Employee Training & Development PSYC 6300 – Seminar Restricted Elective*	PSYC 5342 – Leadership PSYC 5127 – I/O Internship <i>Non-Thesis Track Students</i> PSYC 5391 – Individual Research Restricted Elective* <i>Thesis-Track Students</i> PSYC 5698 – Thesis Restricted Elective*

\*Restricted Electives:

- MANA 5322 – Compensation and Benefits
- MANA 5327 – Human Resource Law
- MANA 5329 – HR Metrics & Analytics
- MANA 5330 – Negotiations & Conflict Management
- MANA 5337 – Ethics & the Business Environment
- MANA 5339 – Entrepreneurship
- MANA 5344 – Evidence Based Practice
- MANA 5348 – Human Resource Business Strategy
- MANA 5392 – Selected Topics in Management: Fundamentals & Practice of Innovation
- MANA 6348 – Seminar in Human Resources
- BSAD 6311 – Advanced Research Methods and Experimental Design
- INSY 5336 – Python Programming
- INSY 5340 – Managing the Digital Enterprise
- INSY 5360 – Computational Techniques for Business Analytics
- INSY 5375 – Management of Information Technologies
- INSY 5377 – Web and Social Analytics
- CSE 6363 – Machine Learning
- BCOM 5375 – Advanced Business Communication Theory & Practice
- Any graduate level Psychology course
- Other courses upon approval

## **B. Master of Science in Psychology (Master's in Passing)**

As soon as is feasible, a student should decide on an area for specialization and research. After discussion with, and consent of, the involved faculty members, the student selects a supervising professor and a thesis committee. No student may enroll in PSYC 5698 (Thesis - 6 hours) until the thesis committee has approved a proposal for the thesis project. Please note that PSYC 5698 must be taken in the semester during which the student will defend and complete the MS thesis. Once the student enrolls in PSYC 5698, they must be continuously enrolled in the course until they successfully defend their thesis, but no more than 4 times. Thus, it is advisable to plan accordingly and to take PSYC 5698 only during the semester during which the thesis will be defended.

Earning the Master's in passing requires the completion of a Master's thesis (with the exception of the I/O program) and is considered as preparation for doctoral work. Progress toward the PhD degree requires the completion of a Master's degree in a specialization in psychology or a "Master's equivalency paper" (see Research Requirements below), as well as other criteria and milestones detailed below. The MS thesis proposal must be approved by a thesis committee consisting of at least three members of the Psychology graduate faculty (additional members are optional) before the candidate for the MS degree may enroll in PSYC 5698 (Thesis - 6 hours). The completed thesis must receive final approval by the committee in an oral defense, which is open to any interested member of the Department, including students.

Students are to post signs and make e-mail announcements informing the local academic community about their upcoming defense no later than two weeks prior to the defense date. A Final Master's Examination Report form must be completed, signed, and filed by the posted submission deadlines on the UTA website (see additional deadlines for graduate students [here](#)). For students who elect the thesis substitute, the final examination(s) will be determined and administered by all of the members of the student's supervising committee. As above, a Final Examination Report form must be filed by the dates listed in the Graduate Calendar.

Students who have earned a Master's degree from another institution and who seek a doctorate in our program will be subject to several rules. In order to count towards their Ph.D. program, their Master's thesis must have involved research equivalent to that required by students who earn their Master's degree in our Program, or they must complete the Master's degree equivalency paper. All Master's theses earned elsewhere must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Committee for review and acceptance. Transfer students may also be able to reduce the course requirements normally applied to Master's students at UT Arlington. They may make a written request to the Graduate Faculty to have courses substituted or waived that are equivalent to those taken at the institution granting their Master's degree. If after reviewing the student's course syllabi, outlines, transcripts, and other relevant materials, and the Faculty agree that the courses are essentially the same, the student will not be required to retake them. Up to nine credit hours from other institutions may be transferred and applied toward a UT Arlington degree plan for the Master's degree. However, doctoral students must request a substitution or waiver to have hours (not limited to nine hours) credited to their degree plan and will be required to make up the time by taking the equivalent research/readings hours. See the section titled Transfer Credit below.

## **C. Doctor of Philosophy**

Since its inception, the focus of the doctoral program has been to train general experimental psychologists. To quote the UT Arlington graduate catalog: "The objective of graduate work in psychology is to educate



the student in the methods and basic content of the discipline and to provide an apprenticeship in the execution of creative research." In earlier years, the primary emphasis was on laboratory research. More recently, some members of the Department have developed a substantial capacity to do research in applied settings and conduct field work. The interests of the Department's faculty as a whole span a broad range of areas. Although we cannot guarantee that a particular student's interests will be met, it is highly probable, particularly if the student maintains some flexibility.

There are two related points to take into account as one considers entering graduate study in Psychology. First, required courses are designed in part to provide students with the capability of training themselves; successful completion of the doctoral degree demands the ability to direct oneself. Second, areas of psychology change rapidly. Although it is impossible to anticipate the exact nature of these changes, the faculty does try to provide basic skills and knowledge to meet the challenge provided by change. In short, completion of the doctoral program requires both an interest in scholarly inquiry and the ability to work independently. The areas of specialization in Psychology have somewhat different rules and procedures but they share many common origins, theories and approaches. Across the specializations, the PhD program is intended to provide students with broad knowledge of psychology and with deep knowledge of a specialty area. In addition, through a series of formal and informal experiences, students are expected to develop research competence in their specialty areas. It is possible to specialize in any of a variety of areas, including, cognitive psychology (learning, memory and higher mental processes), health psychology, industrial / organizational psychology, behavioral neuroscience, quantitative psychology, and social psychology.

The Psychology program also recognizes the need to offer students opportunities to acquire skills that enable them to work effectively outside of formal academic and/or research settings. Some students will find their career interests are best fulfilled in business, industrial, governmental, or social services settings. To enable people with these career goals to compete for desirable opportunities and to excel when employed, we encourage students to develop a program of work that allows them to develop skills required in the nonacademic job market. Some of these skills can be developed in courses taken by most students as part of their Master's and Doctoral studies in Psychology. Others may be acquired by selective enrollment in courses offered by other departments in the University or in neighboring institutions. Advice concerning career options and how to ready oneself for life after earning one's degree(s) should be sought from one's Graduate Faculty Mentor and the appropriate Graduate Program Advisor regularly.

### **Transfer Credit**

If you have already completed some graduate-level work at another institution or in another program at UT Arlington, please read the following section on transfer credit.

Transfer credits and enrollment in graduate courses in other departments or other area institutions:

1. Current University policies limit the total number of transfer credit hours to nine (9) that a student may apply to a Master's degree at UT Arlington. Thus, a total of nine graduate credit hours from courses taken in fulfillment of requirements for degrees in Psychology at other institutions may be applied to a degree from our Department. However, for persons with a Master's degree seeking a Doctoral degree from UT Arlington, transfer credits cannot be awarded and applied to the Doctoral Program of work. Instead, courses required of doctoral students may be waived; there is not a nine-hour limit to waivers for doctoral students. Students must petition the specialization faculty, who forward their

recommendation to the Graduate Studies Committee for transfer credit or waiver. Justification is based on either of two considerations:

- a) The Committee's assessment of whether there is sufficient similarity between courses offered here and the petitioned courses to allow those courses to substitute for ones in our curriculum or:
  - b) Whether the previously taken courses directly complement and enhance the student's professional development in their primary areas of study without detracting from the general educational objectives of the program.
2. Credit for courses taken in other departments on the UT Arlington campus: Graduate courses offered by other departments on the UT Arlington campus may be taken with the permission of the student's Faculty research advisor and the instructor of the course. The permission must be in writing and filed as a permanent part of the student's record. Only six credit hours may be taken outside of the Psychology Department without approval by the Committee on Graduate Studies. Beyond six credit hours, students must submit a petition to the Committee on Graduate Studies for approval.

NOTE: Students on assistantship support must be enrolled in at least six hours of courses in the Psychology Department, along with the hours they are taking in other schools and departments (these must total nine hours; see Department Enrollment Policy, below). Students may petition the Psychology Department's Graduate Studies Committee for an exemption from this rule if special circumstances apply.

3. Credit for courses offered at the University of Texas at Dallas and UT Southwestern Medical Center at Dallas is available to students enrolled at UT Arlington. Written permission from the student's research advisor and the graduate program advisor must be filed in the student's permanent record, and the student must obtain the appropriate enrollment forms from the Registrar. In the past, two forms have been required. They are titled "Concurrent Enrollment Form" and "Approval to Complete a Course at Another School Following Enrollment at UT Arlington".

Specific course requirements for each area of specialization can be found in Sections D and E. In addition to those requirements, the Doctoral Program has general requirements related to research, teaching skills and computer knowledge. For research requirements, please see Sections D and E.

### **Teaching Skills Requirement**

Students are required to take and pass PSYC 5110 (Professional Development) in order to qualify for consideration of continued financial support from a teaching assistantship. Typically, students take PSYC 5110 in the fall semester of the first year and must be enrolled in this course if they are assigned as a teaching assistant. This course requirement is in place in order to serve both the Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) and the people they teach. Teaching is both a skill and an art that takes knowledge and practice to develop. This course imparts information about the mechanics of teaching, such as course and syllabus development, lecturing, and evaluation and offers students a chance to identify and develop skills needed for effective classroom teaching.

Additionally, students are required to complete a CRTLE teaching training program specifically designed for graduate students. Requirements to satisfactorily complete the program depend in part on the student's assignment (i.e., GTA or GRA).

To obtain texts and other teaching aids for your GTA assignment, please see James Cotten. If you would like to obtain alternate texts for review, please see James Cotten as well as the instructor of the course.

### **Graduate Student Seminar**

Beginning in the first semester of PhD studies at UTA, students shall enroll in PSYC 6101 (Graduate Student Seminar) each semester until the dissertation proposal ("Comprehensive Exam") has been successfully defended. The primary focus of the 6101 seminar will be to discuss contemporary topics in science that are of interest to the various areas of psychology and to discuss research in progress from different students and faculty in the area. Each week, a student (or faculty member) will give a talk on ongoing research that they are conducting, a research proposal idea, practice a conference presentation, discuss an interesting paper that just came out, etc. The purpose is to get practice speaking and discussing research, while also receiving important feedback on research ideas from other students and faculty in the department. This is also a way to foster interdisciplinary collaborations within the department.

### **D. Areas of Specialization and the MS degree**

#### **Specializations in Psychological Sciences or Health/Neuroscience Psychology**

Twenty-four (24) credit hours, including six hours of thesis (PSYC 5698), are required for the MS. It is designed to form the master's in passing as part of the doctoral program. Required courses are the following: PSYC 5110, 5405, 5407, 5324 (or 5307), 3 of the 4 core courses [5333 (or 5334), 5313, 5322, or 5342], and a 3-hour research course (5391, or a combination of 5191 and 5291, or 5600). Thesis research and thesis document, approved by a thesis committee, are also required for the Psychological Sciences and Health/Neuroscience specializations. Any external committee members from outside of the university will be subject to approval via the External Faculty Nomination Form; please see the Graduate Coordinator for more information. Details about each course can be found at <http://catalog.uta.edu/science/psychology/#courseinventory>.

### **E. Areas of Specialization and the PhD degree**

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy in psychology requires distinguished accomplishments in both scholarship and original research, and a deep understanding of the strategic role of thoughtful research in the development of an empirical science. Although students must meet the minimum requirements of a planned course of study, the ultimate basis for conferring the degree must be the demonstrated ability to plan and conduct independent and creative research, and the exhibition of a profound grasp of the subject matter of the field.

Student accomplishments in coursework, research, teaching, and other professional activities, as well as timely completion of milestones in the program will be considered during an annual evaluation by the specialization Faculty. Students will receive written feedback based on these evaluations.

The major milestones in the process to obtain a PhD degree are:

Year	PhD student milestone	University requirement
1	RPS/diagnostic evaluation	Diagnostic exam form
2	Thesis defense (if applicable)	Final master's exam form (if applicable)
3	Gap to do research/publish	
4	Dissertation proposal	Comprehensive exam form
5	Dissertation defense	Dissertation defense form

## Diagnostic Evaluation

The Department of Psychology uses a holistic evaluation process for PhD students in their first year, including specific evaluations in five domains: (1) academic performance, (2) research progress, (3) GTA/GRA performance, (4) departmental citizenship, and (5) a department-wide research talk during an event called the Research Progress Symposium (RPS; see section on RPS below). In their first semester, students will form an Advising Committee (See Section F below), and that committee will also serve as their Diagnostic Evaluation committee at the end of their first year. Students shall compile and regularly update a dossier on their performance in each of the first four categories above, and will discuss them at least once per semester with their Advising Committee. At the end of the first year, students will give an RPS talk, which serves as the final component of the Diagnostic Exam. The Graduate faculty will discuss each student's RPS scores and vote on whether the RPS talk was satisfactory or unsatisfactory. If unsatisfactory, the student will have one more attempt in the following semester to pass the RPS.

Following successful completion of the RPS, students will present their performance dossier to their Advising/Diagnostic committee, who will then evaluate the student on each of the five domains. Each domain will be scored as "below expectations", "meets expectations", or "exceeds expectations". Students must attain a score of "meets expectations" or "exceeds expectations" in each domain in order to pass the Diagnostic Examination. The committee shall then submit an overall recommendation of "pass", "fail with opportunity to repeat", or "fail with no opportunity to repeat". With a "pass" score, the student continues in the doctoral program as planned. With a "fail with opportunity to repeat" score, the student is permitted to make a second and final attempt at passing their diagnostic exam in the following long semester; in this case, students are required to repeat all components of the diagnostic exam, including the public RPS presentation. With a "fail with no opportunity to repeat" score, the student is terminated from the doctoral program. If a student fails their final attempt at the RPS/Diagnostic Evaluation, that student will not be permitted to continue as a doctoral student. If that student is eligible to earn a psychology master's degree en route to the doctorate, they may be permitted to receive a temporary extension allowing them to stay up to one additional long semester to complete their master's degree (but they will not be eligible for a departmental GTA position during this extension period).

## Dissertation

**Dissertation Proposal:** Students who pass their Diagnostic Evaluation and Master's thesis defense may continue in the PhD program by having a dissertation proposal approved by their dissertation supervising committee. The committee is formed by a student in consultation with his or her major advisor and the Graduate Advisor, and consists of at least five members, at least three of whom are from the psychology Graduate Faculty (additional members are optional). Please note that any external committee members from outside the university are subject to approval via the External Faculty Nomination Form. Members of

the Graduate Faculty within the university (but outside the department) are auto-approved by the GSC committee. Please see Marta Galván, the Graduate Coordinator, for additional details regarding any necessary paperwork.

The meeting with members of the dissertation committee is a closed one so that the proposed project can be discussed in a confidential manner. The oral presentation of the dissertation proposal satisfies the University requirement that a graduate student take and pass a "Comprehensive Examination" prior to advancement to candidacy for the PhD degree (see section in UT Arlington Graduate Catalog under "Comprehensive Examination"). During the presentation, the student responds to any questions the committee members may have about the project. The committee may approve the project, suggest modifications that would make the project acceptable, or reject the proposal and require a new one. In addition to satisfying the comprehensive examination requirement, approval of the dissertation proposal implies that the project is acceptable as a research topic that the project's conceptualization, design, and proposal methods are acceptable and that particular results ("positive results") are not required. As noted above, approval of the dissertation proposal also is the final step for the student to be admitted to candidacy for the PhD degree. The dissertation course (PSYC 6399, 6699, 6999, 7399) can then be taken.

During this period, meetings with the committee are on an "as needed" basis. The dissertation project is then carried out as approved, or as modified with prior approval of the committee members, and the dissertation is written. When a student has completed a draft of the dissertation that the primary mentor deems appropriate for his or her committee, a date for the oral defense is scheduled, and written drafts must be provided to committee members at least two weeks before this date.

**Dissertation Defense:** The PhD final oral examination (that is, the "dissertation defense") is conducted by the dissertation committee in a meeting that is open to any member of the University community and to guests. Graduate students are urged to attend all dissertation defenses, and especially those in their own area(s) of specialization. Defending students will post fliers approved for posting and stamped by the Student Governance Office and make e-mail announcements informing the local academic community about the defense at least two weeks prior to the defense date. The PhD oral examination is conducted by the dissertation committee. The first part of the examination is an oral presentation of the research and its findings. This portion of the meeting is open to any member of the University community and guests. The second part is a closed examination and consists of specific detailed questions about the dissertation. Both oral defense and the written dissertation must be passed. A Dissertation Defense Report form must be filed in conjunction with the oral dissertation proposal presentation (see University Forms).

### **Specializations in Psychological Sciences (Graduate Advisor: Dr. Jared Kenworthy) and Health/Neuroscience (Graduate Advisor: Dr. Yuan Bo Peng)**

The specialization in Psychological Sciences allows students to work in a general experimental context while specializing in one of several areas (e.g., cognitive, social, industrial/organizational, etc.). The specialization in Health/Neuroscience Psychology is designed to train researchers in health/neuroscience and behavior, working at the cutting edge of interdisciplinary, biomedical and biobehavioral investigations in areas such as pain, addiction, stress, psychoimmunology, memory, cancer, and aging. Most research activity is based on the neurophysiological, biobehavioral, or biopsychosocial model of health and illness.

**Foundational and Core Course requirements:** Graduate students entering the Psychological Sciences specialization will be required to take the following foundational and core courses during their first four

semesters of enrollment (28 hours). Exceptions may be made only with written permission of the Graduate Studies Committee.

### **Foundational Courses**

- Professional Development (PSYC 5110)
- Graduate Student Seminar (PSYC 6101; repeated every semester until the Comprehensive Exam)
- Advanced Statistics I (PSYC 5405)
- Experimental Design (PSYC 5407)
- Applied Research Design (PSYC 5324) or Research Methods (PSYC 5307)
- 3 hours of Research in Psychology (5391, a combination of 5191 and 5291, or 5600)

**Core Courses:** Students must also take three out of four courses from the following:

- Cognitive Psychology (PSYC 5313)
- Social Psychology (PSYC 5322)
- Behavioral Neuroscience (PSYC 5333) or Human Physiology (PSYC 5334)
- Leadership in Organizations (PSYC 5342)

Having fulfilled the above, the following are also required:

1. Four courses (12 hours) from among Psychology electives and seminars (PSYC 63xx).

The other required elective courses must be approved by the appropriate Graduate Advisor and/or Committee on Graduate Studies and can include graduate-level courses in statistics, genetics, immunology, endocrinology, or other specialized biomedical topic available at UT Southwestern or another UT Arlington department.

2. Two six-hour research courses. These may be taken from Thesis (PSYC 5698) or Advanced Research (PSYC 5600). Students who plan to obtain the MS should elect PSYC 5698 as one of the research courses and students who do not plan to obtain the MS should select two sections of PSYC 5600. If the student does not elect to obtain the MS, one of the research courses must result in a formal thesis-equivalent paper, which will be evaluated by a committee and defended in an oral examination. The two research courses are a minimum requirement.

3. Additional hours of coursework to be determined by the Graduate Advisor and dissertation committee and as needed to maintaining funding status. Graduate students entering the Experimental Psychology Program will typically complete 81 hours in a 5-year plan. This means that the student should plan to take approximately 66 hours, including a total of 9 dissertation hours (combination of 6399, 6699, 6999, and 7399) and a minimum of 12 hours of Research/Readings or more as needed/advised by faculty mentor. At least 31-34 of these hours must be in organized courses, lectures, or seminars. No student may enroll in a dissertation course until the dissertation committee has approved a Dissertation Proposal for the dissertation project.

Students with prior graduate work may be waived from any of the above requirements by a written request to the Graduate Studies Committee. The request should include a syllabus or other documentation showing that a prior course and one of our required courses are equivalent. Students should discuss course equivalency with the professor(s) who teach the course(s) in question before submitting a request.

A student has completed the course requirements when he or she has maintained at least a B average in all courses.

A doctoral student must pay non-resident tuition beginning the first long semester (Fall or Spring) in which a) the student has been enrolled previously as a graduate student for 14 or more long semesters, AND b)

the student has accumulated more than 99 semester credit hours of graduate study at any Texas state university. Students exceeding either limit will not be eligible for assistantships supported by state funds.

Research requirements: Research requirements include general expectations of student involvement in research throughout their graduate career and specific milestones that must be accomplished in order, including the Research Progress Symposium (as part of the Diagnostic evaluation), the Master's Thesis or equivalent paper, the Dissertation Proposal (Comprehensive Exam), and the Dissertation Defense. University requirements mandate completion of six hours of Master's research in the semester you are graduating and a total of nine hours of Dissertation research by the time you are ready to graduate.

### **Specialization in Industrial/Organizational Psychology (Graduate Advisor: Rachel Baldrige)**

The doctorate in Psychology with an emphasis in I/O is designed for students who intend to conduct research in I/O psychology and begin their professional career as either an academician or a research-oriented practitioner in the field. Students working toward the doctoral degree are expected to develop, implement, and complete research as part of the degree requirements. At present the students in this program are following Specialization in Psychological Sciences sequence of courses and supplementing this with the courses offered as part of the I/O MS program. With the addition of new faculty in I/O MS Psychology, the program will be modified in the coming years, providing additional course options.

Due to the applied nature of I/O programs, if an MS degree has been conferred or is conferred en route to the Ph.D., then it is not necessary to conduct a thesis or a formal thesis-equivalent paper. Students may take two 6-hour courses of Advanced Research (PSYC 5600), under the supervision of their major professor, to work toward obtaining additional publications and strengthening research-oriented skills.

### ***Current MS students in the I/O Masters program***

Students currently enrolled in the MS I/O program who wish to be considered for admission into a PhD program must submit the Change of Program form for either the Psychological Sciences or Health/Neuroscience program and must follow the formal admission procedures as stated previously in this document. Students must meet the criteria for admission to the PhD program which will be determined, in part, by the scholarly achievements accomplished prior to applying for PhD candidacy as well as the fit between the student and faculty mentor.

## **F. Timelines, Committees, and General Expectations for Master's and Doctoral Degrees**

### **Time Limits**

The following are Office of Graduate Studies deadlines, which the members of the Graduate Studies Committee of the Department of Psychology view as liberal:

1. All work for the Master's degree must be completed within six years from initial registration in the Office of Graduate Studies.
2. All work for the PhD degree must be completed within four years after passing the comprehensive examination (dissertation proposal presentation).

## Timelines

Students should propose and conduct their MS thesis project during their second year. A thesis can be a good basis for a dissertation project. Students planning to graduate in four years need to propose by the end of the summer of the third year. It is important for students to stay as close to that schedule as possible. Students should plan to be finished with their dissertation within five years. Although that timeline is not always feasible, students should organize their courses and research projects with that goal in mind. Adherence to the course of study for this program and satisfactory academic progress will ensure that students can earn their degree within two years, although some might require longer time to complete their coursework.

## Faculty Advising Committees

During a student's first semester in the doctoral program, they must form an Initial Advising Committee, comprising the student's primary faculty advisor and two additional tenured or tenure-track professors in the department. The formation of this committee must be agreed upon by the student and three faculty members (see Committee Verification Form) and submitted to the graduate academic advisor (Marta Galvan) and Graduate Studies Committee chair (Dr. Peng). The composition of the advising committee can change, but an updated Committee Verification Form must be completed and submitted to the graduate advisor.

**Advising committee meetings:** Beginning in their first semester, the student will meet with this committee **once per semester** to verify progress toward program milestones. Students should be prepared to present documentation of their progress toward milestones at the committee meetings (e.g., c.v., publications, abstracts, manuscripts in progress, target dates for milestone completion, etc.) The Advising Meeting Form must be completed, signed, and submitted to the graduate advisor and graduate committee chair once per semester. Students have the right to meet with their committee members without their primary faculty advisor in the event the student would like to change their primary advisor or discuss any issues for which they would like the primary faculty advisor not to be present.

## Committee Formation and Committee Member Replacement

Over the course of graduate studies in Psychology at UTA, students will be required to form up to four (4) separate committees, depending on each individual student's circumstances. If a student begins the Doctoral program with a bachelor's degree only, she or he will be required to form, at the appropriate times, an initial faculty Advising committee (also the Diagnostic Evaluation committee), a Master's thesis committee, and a Comprehensive Exam / Dissertation committee. If a student begins the Doctoral program already having completed a Master's degree at UTA or at another institution (see section IV.A for rules concerning review and acceptance of such degrees), then she or he will be required to form, at the appropriate times, an initial faculty Advising/Diagnostic Evaluation committee and a Comprehensive Exam / Dissertation committee. Committees for the Advising/Diagnostic and Master's thesis shall be comprised of three (3) relevant members of the UTA Graduate Faculty; committees for the Comprehensive Exam/Dissertation shall be comprised of five (5) relevant members of the UTA Graduate Faculty. As noted elsewhere, any external committee members from outside of the university are subject to approval via the External Faculty Nomination Form; please see the Graduate Coordinator for more information. Students shall form these committees in consultation with their faculty mentor (who is typically the Committee Chair) and with each prospective committee member. Joining a committee constitutes a "good faith" agreement that members will remain on the committee through to its completion.



Should committee members need to be replaced because of standard circumstances such as resignation, retirement, illness, or death, students should first consult with their faculty mentor (Committee Chair) in selecting an appropriate prospective replacement member. Departing members who are Committee Chairs should, when possible, consult with the student to select a replacement Committee Chair who can serve in that capacity temporarily until a permanent Chair is found. Faculty members who are asked to replace another committee member shall be given, before accepting membership on the committee, all necessary information concerning the project, including a full disclosure of what has been proposed, approved, conducted, and completed to that point, as well as which elements of the project still remain to be completed, which would then be under that faculty member's purview as part of the committee. A memorandum of any such change in committee membership (using a Memorandum of Committee Change form) shall be submitted in writing and filed with the student's records.

For cases in which replacement committee members are sought for non-standard reasons (e.g., strong intellectual, social, or procedural disagreements or grievances), a petition must be filed for discussion and approval with the Psychology department's Graduate Studies Committee (GSC). A memorandum of any such GSC-approved change in committee membership shall be submitted in writing, signed by the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee, and filed with the student's records.

## **General Expectations**

Students often wonder about the expectations of the Graduate Faculty. The following are all required to make good progress in the Program and to increase the odds of professional success upon graduation.

a. **Classroom Performance:** Meeting the course requirements described above is necessarily a part of success in the graduate program. Course grades are also used in evaluating student progress. Students are required to maintain a 3.0 GPA in all foundation and core courses and in an overall GPA calculation.

b. **Research:** Research is perhaps the most important activity that students will engage in during their time in graduate school. It is through research and publication that you develop knowledge, and credentials are developed that ultimately determine career success. Students are expected to be active laboratory researchers in their very first semester of graduate study and throughout their entire graduate career. This is accomplished in a mentoring relationship with a faculty member. Initially, a student works on investigations initiated by the faculty member. Later, as their laboratory skills and knowledge develop, the student will have increasingly greater input in "the process". As the expectation is that students will begin research in their first semester, students should contact their faculty mentor as soon as possible after accepting admission.

Faculty assignments are not permanent, but they have a minimum duration of one semester. After all, sometimes a "close match" is not possible, or a student may discover that she/he is really interested in pursuing some other faculty member's research areas. A friendly "parting of the ways" is required, and students should understand that they are free to move on. However, if a student decides that they need to work with another faculty member, it is important that both faculty members be informed as early as possible, and that the student make every effort to make the transition a smooth one. The student should also write a one-page letter, giving written notification of the change of faculty research mentor. A copy of this letter should be given to the student's former mentor, their new mentor, the Graduate Advisor (or

Graduate Advisors in the case of switching specializations), the Department Chairperson, and the Graduate Coordinator. This letter will then be filed for reference.

Students should be aware that their future success is in large measure determined by their success in generating publications. Ideally, it would be nice to know how many publications are required to move onto the next level of employment. Unfortunately, a specific number can't be easily designated. But this much can be said: A student will need more than zero publications. The Master's thesis and the Doctoral dissertation are very likely to provide publishing opportunities that meet this minimum requirement. However, students must also be involved in research that is not part of their theses or dissertations. Indeed, students should strive to do work that is publishable rather than simply attempt to meet minimum requirements. Students are collaborators with their Faculty mentors who have active research programs. Students should seek to be actively involved in efforts to publish this research in the best journals available. They should also take advantage of whatever other opportunities to publish (book chapters, commentaries, book reviews, etc.) might come their way. Quality obviously counts (one major theoretical paper in the highest quality journal might be worth a number of narrowly focused empirical works), but quantity is important as well. Collaboration with other students and other faculty members helps generate additional publications. Faculty mentors and Advising Committees can be very helpful in guiding students through this process.

Presenting papers at (and attending) professional meetings is another aspect of expected professional activity that grows from research involvement. Papers presented at conventions are listed on one's vita and provide evidence of active involvement in the field, speaking skills, etc., that may affect future job prospects. Attendance also affords students the opportunity to learn about the newest developments in their field and to develop professional relationships with people with similar interests. Networking is valuable to everyone, and particularly to academics. Students should plan to attend and to present papers at regional meetings sponsored by various organizations (e.g., Southwestern Psychological Association Meetings, Armadillo, Texas Association for Behavior Analysis), as well as those convened by larger or national organizations (e.g., American Psychological Association, Society for Neuroscience, Psychonomic Society, Association for Behavior Analysis, American Pain Society, Society of Personality and Social Psychology, Society for Industrial and Organization Psychology, etc.).

c. **Research Progress Symposium:** Students anticipating the completion of a Ph.D. should begin preparation for the Research Progress Symposium in their first semester. That is, a student and a mentor should select a collaborative project that would allow them to have either a research proposal or some data to present during the RPS at the end of the first year.

As part of the Diagnostic Evaluation, students in the Ph.D. programs (Psychological Sciences and Health/Neuroscience) will present their Research Progress Symposium talk at the end of their first year, or in the second year with approval from their faculty mentor and Advising Committee. The Research Progress Symposium talk is to be in "convention paper" style (i.e., a 12-minute presentation followed by a 3-minute question and answer period; time is kept strictly), and is to be based on an original research idea, or on original data from the student's lab. Students may request a copy of the evaluation criteria prior to the Symposium. Upon completion of the Research Progress Symposium, faculty scores and comments shall be considered at the next meeting of the Graduate Studies Committee meeting. At this meeting, Graduate Faculty members will discuss the speakers' performance and will vote to pass or fail each candidate. This vote will be considered to be part of the Diagnostic Evaluation criteria, to be discussed by each student's Advising/Diagnostic committee as part of the Diagnostic Exam. Only upon receipt of a letter indicating that

a student has passed the Diagnostic Exam shall the milestone be considered complete. The student may then progress to the next milestone in their Doctoral studies.

d. **Annual Evaluations:** The Diagnostic Examination, Master's thesis or the thesis equivalent paper and oral examination, and the dissertation oral defense, discussed above, are formal evaluation points. In addition, each student receives a yearly evaluation by the Graduate Studies Committee. In preparation for the review by the Graduate Studies Committee, students should provide their faculty mentors with a copy of their vita (or for I/O students, a copy of their resume), along with their degree plan worksheet and goals summary form. In addition, students should review annually their Graduate Maverick Academic Progress Report (Graduate MAP Report) for accuracy and completeness with the advisor assigned to their specialization. The Graduate MAP Report replaces the Tentative and Final Program of Work forms formerly used by the Office of Graduate Studies. Please see the Graduate Coordinator, Marta Galván, for a copy of your Graduate MAP Report.

Each annual evaluation is based on course work, research completed or in progress, performance of assistantship assignments, progress in the program and judgments of the student's ability and motivation to complete the PhD requirements. Students will be shown a written assessment of performance on assistantship duties and will have an opportunity to respond to the comments. During the evaluation meeting, members of the Graduate Studies Committee are likely to note a student's "Department Citizenship" as well. Participation in department activities (i.e., colloquia, brown bag luncheons, etc.) is expected of all full-time graduate students. Part-time students should make every effort to engage in these activities as well. Absence of such involvement will be noted during evaluations, and will adversely impact grades in the required Graduate Student Seminar (PSYC 6101).

Students who receive favorable evaluations at this point will be encouraged to complete the remainder of the Program. Students having problems in one or more areas will receive academic counseling regarding these problems. Students having major problems with the Program will be dropped from the Program or counseled not to plan on continuing beyond the MS degree.

## V. DEPARTMENT AND UNIVERSITY FORMS

### Department Forms - Master of Science in Psychology and Doctor of Philosophy Programs

Each student will need to get course approval for the intended term of enrollment via email and then notify the graduate coordinator to receive clearance to register by forwarding the email approval or copying the graduate coordinator in the original email as proof of approval. The advice and oversight of the Faculty advisor should always be sought before the student registers for courses each semester.

Other forms for internal use by the Department include:

- **Committee Verification Form:** This form will be used to verify that any external committee members (Initial Advising/Diagnostic, Thesis, Dissertation) have been approved by the Graduate Studies Committee and/or the Dean of Graduate Admissions.
- **Advising Committee Meeting form:** This form is to be filled out once per semester following each meeting with the advisory committee. This form is a record of student progress toward milestones.
- **Diagnostic Evaluation Summary form:** This form is completed by the Advising/Diagnostic committee and makes a recommendation based on evaluation of the first year performance dossier and RPS.

- **Graduate Degree Plan:** Psychological Sciences, Health/Neuroscience, Industrial/Organizational. The degree plan provides an at-a-glance summary of the student's progress toward the degree, including all coursework and completion of other benchmarks such as performance on the research progress symposium and diagnostic/qualifying exams. The degree plan should be updated and reviewed annually at the end of each semester. Students are encouraged to share their degree plans with their mentors and respective Initial advisory committees to discuss their progress.
- **Thesis Proposal Form:** Psychological Sciences, Health/Neuroscience, Industrial/Organizational: This form must be completed and signed by the members of the thesis committee upon successful completion of the thesis proposal.
- **Demographic Information Form.** This form has all your contact information, and it is retained by the Department for internal use. It should be updated as needed.

## University Forms

The Office of Graduate Studies requires that a variety of forms be filled out and submitted at appropriate times. A handout listing these forms is available from the Psychology Department Office or from the [Office of Graduate Studies website](#). Among these are:

1. **Credit for courses offered at the University of Texas at Dallas and Southwestern Medical School** is available to students enrolled at UT Arlington. Written permission from the student's advisor must be filed in the student's permanent record and the student must obtain the appropriate enrollment forms from the Registrar (ext. 3372, Room 129 University Administration Building). In the past, two forms have been required. They are titled [Concurrent Enrollment form](#) and the Approval to Complete a Course at another School Following Enrollment at UT Arlington.

2. **MS Graduation forms:** The required forms and their deadlines are described in the Graduate Catalog. They include a Final Master's Examination Report, and an Application for Graduation (fees applicable). In addition, an electronic copy of the thesis (if applicable) must be submitted via the ETD website, as well as the Intellectual Property Form. Please see the UT-Arlington Library website, Graduate Catalog, and the Graduate Calendar for additional details and dates.

3. **Request for Change of Graduate Program or Degree Level:** This form should be filled out and filed by students who want to be considered candidates for the PhD degree after they have completed their work at the MS level. Students should file this form the semester after they have completed 30 hours of course work. Students who enter the Program with a Master's degree do not have to complete this form. However, to be eligible for the Office of Graduate Studies sponsored STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) fellowships for "doctoral" graduate assistants, all GTAs and GRAs who have completed 30 graduate hours should be instructed to submit the Request for Change of Graduate Program form to change their classification from MS to PhD prior to the Fall semester to be eligible for this fellowship.

Please note that the classification of being a "doctoral" student is merely a means to track student progress in terms of the number of credit hours earned; admission to candidacy requires successful completion of all coursework and diagnostic/qualifying examinations. A formal application is required, which will be reviewed by the graduate faculty. Faculty may vote to preclude a student from PhD candidacy but allow for a terminal Master's degree.

4. **Diagnostic Evaluation Report:** This form is signed by the student's Advising/Diagnostic evaluation committee and the appropriate Graduate Advisor following completion of the diagnostic examination. It certifies that the student has (or has not) successfully completed the department's diagnostic evaluation. This form is to be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator (Marta Galván), who will forward it to the Office of Graduate Studies.

5. **Comprehensive Examination Report (PhD):** Formal approval of a dissertation proposal signifies a passing grade on the Psychology Comprehensive Examination for the PhD degree. This form is signed by the student's dissertation committee, and the appropriate Graduate Advisor. This form is to be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator (Marta Galván), who will forward it to the Office of Graduate Studies. It notifies the Office of Graduate Studies of the results of the examination.

6. **Doctoral Graduation Forms:** The Dissertation Defense Report is required, as well as an application for graduation (fees applicable). An electronic copy of the dissertation must be submitted via the ETD website, and the Intellectual Property Statement Form and Survey of Earned Doctorates must be submitted to the Library. Please see the UT-Arlington Library website, the Graduate Catalog, and the Graduate Calendar for additional details and deadlines.

## VI. SOME UNIVERSITY AND DEPARTMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

### Deadlines

A variety of University and Office of Graduate Studies deadlines are published each year by the Office of Graduate Studies. Students are responsible for meeting any deadlines that may apply to them. For your convenience, the Office of Graduate Studies and University calendars are provided here: <https://www.uta.edu/records/graduation/deadlines.php>; <http://www.uta.edu/uta/acadcal.php>.

### Assistantships

As noted previously, students who wish to be considered for assistantships should have their applications and Department forms sent to The University of Texas at Arlington by December 1<sup>st</sup> for the Fall Semester. The Department of Psychology offers Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs) to as many graduate students as its annual budget allows. These are offered to students who are interested, and who apply to the Department Chairperson, in accordance with Departmental needs and The Graduate Studies Committee's judgments of student competencies. Failure to participate in the Research Progress Symposium, or to take or pass the diagnostic exam on the student's first opportunity will lower the student's priority standing in qualifying for an assistantship. To qualify for an assistantship, a student is typically admitted unconditionally and must be in good standing (i.e., not on academic probation, making satisfactory progress toward a degree, and, if previously an assistant, have performed assistantship duties satisfactorily; please refer to the assistantship policies pertaining to provisional admission and international enrollments in section Admission Status and Eligibility for Assistantships/Fellowships). Students offered teaching assistantships must successfully complete PSYC 5110 during the first year in which they are granted the assistantship. Students on assistantships must carry a minimum of nine credit hours per semester.

Because of the limited number of assistantships available, it is also a general policy of the Department of Psychology that GTAs are available only to students who are admitted prospectively to the general Psychological Sciences and Health/Neuroscience PhD program, and who are not planning to leave the program after completing the MS degree.

Most of our assistantships are teaching assistantships (GTAs) and require some involvement in the teaching responsibilities of the Department. Teaching assignments for graduate assistants and associates are made each semester on the basis of a combination of graduate student preferences, past experience, performance in the CRTLE training program, and Departmental needs. First-year students are typically

assigned as teaching assistants to the instructor of record. Once students have at least 18 hours of graduate level courses in Psychology, they are eligible to teach their own courses, becoming the “instructor of record” for the course. Assignments for such courses are based on seniority and indications of past success in teaching labs, the CRTLE program and/or courses. Some students may receive Graduate Research Assistantships that allow them to devote their assistantship activities exclusively to research. Such assistantships are mostly derived from grants to individual Faculty members.

Each semester, the Faculty members are required to provide an evaluation of the overall performance of each graduate teaching and research assistant. This evaluation is shown to students for their information and signature. Students should photocopy their course evaluations and teaching effectiveness data to construct teaching and/or research portfolios in preparation for their job searches. These evaluations are also important in determining the student’s eligibility for continued support as a graduate teaching and/or research assistant.

### **Additional Employment While an Assistant or Associate**

#### **All Students**

In accepting a graduate assistantship/associateship, students agree to devote their efforts to graduate studies and assistantship/associateship responsibilities. In some circumstances, however, additional employment may be justified. Immigration policies severely restrict the amount that an international student may work.

#### **U.S. Citizen Students**

Full-time (20-hour) graduate assistants wishing to hold additional assistantships/associateships or accept additional on or off-campus positions must obtain the approval of the department Chair. Approval will only be given if the additional work will not impact the student's academic progress negatively or exceed employment limits allowed by law.

#### **International Students**

During the fall and spring semesters, international students may work on campus only 20 hours per week unless authorized for additional employment through Curricular Practical Training (CPT). During vacation and the summer, international students may work more than 20 hours per week on-campus without additional authorization. At any time during the year, employment with an off-campus employer must be authorized by either BCIS or by the International Office in the case of CPT. The Office of International Education must grant approval prior to taking on additional employment if that employment is to be authorized by CPT. Students holding a UT Arlington assistantship wishing to work off-campus in addition to the assistantship, must 1) meet and maintain the enrollment requirements for holding an assistantship 2) meet the immigration requirements for CPT 3) work only part-time (20 hours or less) off-campus and 4) be employed in off-campus work that is clearly connected to his or her assistantship. If these requirements are not met, a student will be obliged to give up either the assistantship or the off-campus employment.

### **Department Enrollment Policy**

**Graduate Assistantship/Associateship Policy:** Graduate assistants holding full assistantships (20 hours of employment per week) may register for and must complete no fewer than nine semester hours when employed in Fall or Spring Terms and at least 3 credit hours during the Summer Terms.

The nine-hour minimum registration requirement in Fall and Spring Terms may be reduced for students who 1) have completed all required coursework and 2) are registered for thesis research or required completion course (e.g., capstone) or dissertation research only.

Master's students defending their theses typically must enroll in 5698 in the Term in which they defend their theses unless their program allows the six-hour thesis hour requirement to be met by enrolling in two 5398 courses. In such instances a student may enroll in 5398 in the term in which they defend if they will meet or exceed the six-hour requirement by enrolling in that course.

Non-thesis master's students with only three to six hours of organized coursework left to complete a program in his or her final semester are permitted to hold an assistantship while enrolled in the appropriate three- to six-hour course.

Doctoral students who have completed or will complete a total of at least nine hours of dissertation research in 6399, 6699, 6999 and/or 7399 courses prior to graduation may meet minimum registration requirements in the term they intend to defend their dissertations and graduate by enrolling in 7399. With permission of the program's Graduate Advisor, students may enroll in 7399 a second time because unforeseen circumstances prevented completion during term in which the course was initially taken. Students may not petition for a course load reduction below these requirements.

Enrollment in Readings (PSYC 5151, 5251, 5351) will not be allowed without prior approval of both an appropriate Faculty member and the Graduate Advisor (see also the enrollment requirements for teaching assistants under section: Teaching Skills Requirement). International students are required to enroll in nine hours each semester that they are in attendance.

### **Thesis, Capstone, and Dissertation Courses**

A student may not enroll in Thesis (Psychology 5698) until a written thesis proposal has been formally approved by a thesis committee. PSYC 5698 cannot be taken more than 4 times. A student may not enroll in Dissertation hours (Psychology 6X99 or 7399) until the Comprehensive Examination (Dissertation Proposal) has been conducted and the proposal has been formally approved. Thesis and Dissertation committees normally require two weeks to read and evaluate a proposal for a thesis or dissertation.

### **Academic Honesty and Behavioral Standards Policy**

The Department of Psychology at the University of Texas at Arlington expects graduate students to uphold the highest standards of ethics and academic integrity. All forms of academic fraud, including plagiarism, cheating, collusion, falsification, and misrepresentation of research data, are strictly prohibited. Students must ensure that all work—whether an exam, dissertation, thesis, research paper, project, or any other academic task—meets these standards. Additionally, students should respect the diversity of the community and the rights of others, including property, privacy, opinion, and expression. Violations may result in disciplinary actions by the Department, Graduate School, and/or University's Office of Community Standards. All students are expected to be familiar with American Psychological Association and American Psychological Society publications on ethical principles in the conduct of research using online databases, as well as human and/or animal subjects.

Sexual harassment claims involving students, staff, faculty (including GTAs and GRAs), other students, or third parties should be reported to both the Office of Community Standards and the Title IX office (<https://www.uta.edu/student-affairs/community-standards>; <https://www.uta.edu/eos-title-ix/title-ix>). These offices will assess whether the conduct qualifies as sexual harassment under University policy. Depending upon the nature of the offense, the Department of Psychology may also establish a subcommittee to

address repeated disruptions by graduate students within our community. Any conduct threatening the health or safety of individuals, including physical abuse, threats, intimidation, harassment, or sexual misconduct, is strictly prohibited and may result in removal of funding or complete dismissal from the program.

### **Grade Grievances**

The student must first discuss the appeal of a course grade with the instructor who issued the grade. This step must be taken promptly. The student must file the grievance within one (1) year from the date that grades are posted, and preferably within 45 days. If the instructor is unavailable, the student may proceed in the appeal process and discuss the matter with the Department Chairperson responsible for the course for which the grade is being appealed.

In the event the student and the instructor are unable to reach agreement, or the instructor is unavailable, the student must follow the departmental protocol for grade appeals:

1. The student is responsible for contacting the Department Chairperson
2. The Department Chairperson will convene a subcommittee
3. The subcommittee will review the appeal and relevant documents, and will provide a recommendation to the Department Chairperson.
4. The Department Chairperson will review the subcommittee's recommendation and make a decision.
5. If the student wishes to pursue a grade appeal beyond the Department Chairperson, the student must complete the Student Grade Appeal Form and deliver it to the Dean's Office, College of Science, with any supporting documentation the student wishes to provide.
6. The Dean's decision is final.

### **Continuing Enrollment and the Re-admission Requirement**

The Office of Graduate Studies requires that students be continuously enrolled (each semester) except in those cases in which a formal leave of absence has been requested and approved. Any student who does not enroll for a long semester must apply for readmission through the Graduate Advisor. This must be done at least 20 days prior to registration.

### **Part Time Students**

The schedules suggested above and the Department enrollment policy (at least six hours per semester, nine hours if on Departmental support) apply to full time students. Please note that it is not possible to obtain the PhD without a period of intensive full-time study, and that Office of Graduate Studies time limits are not waived for part-time students.

### **Withdrawing from the University**

Students requiring a medical withdrawal should speak to their faculty mentor and department staff as soon as possible to determine the appropriate course of action and paperwork required. Please refer to the University catalog to review all appropriate procedures and regulations regarding medical withdrawals. In contrast, those needing to withdraw for non- medical reasons (e.g., dismissal from the program) are responsible for dropping their own classes prior to the start of the semester. If the classes are not dropped



prior to the first day of class, the student accepts financial responsibility for any issues regarding a refund or lack thereof. It is also the student's responsibility to contact the graduate coordinator to determine how to drop their classes.

## **VII. DEPARTMENT ORGANIZATION**

### **Faculty**

The faculty of the Department of Psychology consist of the full time Assistant, Associate, and Full Professors, in addition to the academic professional track (APT) faculty, on the regular UT Arlington budget. In addition, joint appointment professors (faculty in other UT Arlington departments who have been offered a joint appointment in Psychology) and adjunct professors (faculty from outside UT Arlington who have been offered adjunct appointments in Psychology at UT Arlington) are considered Psychology Faculty while they hold these appointments.

### **Department Chairperson and Associate Chairs**

The Department Chairperson, Dr. Linda Perrotti, in consultation with the Associate Chairs, Dr. Nicolette Hass and Dr. Tracy Greer, and the Chair's Advisory Committee, decide upon all administrative directives of the Department, including budgetary decisions, specific teaching assignments, and the awarding of assistantships. Please consult your Faculty advisor and/or Graduate Advisor before contacting Dr. Perrotti.

### **Graduate Faculty**

The Graduate Faculty of the Department of Psychology consists of Department Faculty members approved by the UT Arlington Graduate Assembly and the Office of Graduate Studies, primarily on the basis of their scholarly activities. A list of Psychology Graduate Faculty and Associate Graduate Faculty may be found in the current Graduate Catalog. Associate members of the Graduate Faculty may chair or serve on MS thesis committees, and may serve on PhD dissertation committees. They may chair a dissertation committee with prior approval of the Graduate Studies Committee. Members of the Graduate Faculty may serve the above functions and may also chair dissertation committees.

### **Graduate Studies Committee (aka the Committee on Graduate Studies [or CGS])**

The Psychology Graduate Studies Committee consists of all Psychology Graduate Faculty. Associate members of the Graduate Faculty have full participation rights on this committee, but only full members vote on formal decisions. The committee is responsible, in principle, for anything related to graduate study in Psychology, including, but not restricted to, the graduate curriculum, degree requirements, rules applying to graduate study, and student evaluation. Students may ask questions in writing of the Graduate Studies Committee regarding any of its decisions, or regarding any rule which directly affects them. The Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee is appointed by Chair of the Department. Currently, that Chair is Dr. Peng.

The committee members will consider formal petitions to the Office of Graduate Studies carefully and will respond to them as promptly as possible. A petition to the Office of Graduate Studies is a request for an exception to Office of Graduate Studies policies and procedures (e.g., a request to take more than 15 credit hours in 1 semester; a request to extend a leave of absence). Any petition should be presented to the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee on a Petition to the Graduate Faculty form. These forms are available

online. For information regarding petitions including the wording of petitions to the Office of Graduate Studies, please consult the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and the Graduate Catalog. Please do not use the Petition form to request exceptions to departmental policies or procedures; simply fill out the departmental petition form after consulting your faculty advisor, the Graduate Advisor in your area of specialization, and/or the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee. Please see the Graduate Coordinator for additional details.

### **Graduate Advisors**

The Department's Graduate Advisors are appointed by the Chair of the Department of Psychology. The Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee, Dr. Yuan Bo Peng is responsible for setting the agenda and conducting the Graduate Studies Committee meetings. Each specialization is represented by a graduate advisor who is responsible for overseeing the graduate program and for monitoring the progress of students in the program. Any student should feel free to discuss any aspects of the program with the Graduate Advisor assigned to their area of specialization or program. Contact information for our Chair of the CGS and current advisors is given below:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Specialization/Program</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Email</b>
Dr. Yuan Bo Peng	Chair, CGS	817-272-5222	<a href="mailto:ypeng@uta.edu">ypeng@uta.edu</a>
Dr. Jared Kenworthy	Psychological Sciences	817-272-0746	<a href="mailto:kenworthy@uta.edu">kenworthy@uta.edu</a>
Dr. Yuan Bo Peng	Health/Neuroscience	817-272-5222	<a href="mailto:ypeng@uta.edu">ypeng@uta.edu</a>
Rachel Baldrige	Industrial/Organizational	817-272-2281	<a href="mailto:rachel.baldrige@uta.edu">rachel.baldrige@uta.edu</a>

### **VIII. FACULTY ADVISING**

Each student either chooses or is initially assigned an advisor whose interests are similar to those expressed by the student. Students are free to change advisors with the consent of the Graduate Advisor. Students are encouraged to select their faculty advisor carefully. The faculty advisor will serve as the student's major professor and mentor. Changes in faculty advisors may adversely affect the time a student takes to complete the degree. It is suggested that during their first semester, students get to know the Faculty and familiarize themselves with each person's research. Students must consult with their advisor prior to each registration period.

Ordinarily, the advisor is also the student's principal research mentor. Unless instructed otherwise students must have written approval from their faculty mentors in order to be cleared to register which can be sent to the graduate coordinator via email. In rare cases students may be asked to, or required to, leave their advisor's lab. Students are not required to work with a given advisor and advisors are not required to work with students who do not meet their expectations. If a decision is made to discontinue the mentor-mentee relationship the Department of Psychology will attempt to find a suitable mentor for the student. Dismissal from an advisor's lab does not mean that the student is dismissed from the graduate program and carries no penalties. Students may not be able to continue the collaborative work that they started in the lab and may be required to change their source of support. A student dismissed from their advisor's lab should discuss their situation with the appropriate Graduate Advisor or the Department of Psychology Chair to ensure successful academic progress.

### **IX. STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS**

**Psychology Society** - The Psychology Society is open to all psychology majors and minors, graduate or undergraduate. It sponsors several programs each year, including speakers, field trips, and social activities. The Psychology Society maintains an office in room LS 324, and further information about the Society may be obtained there.

**Psi Chi** - Psi Chi is the National Honor Society in Psychology. Membership is open to graduate students in psychology and to undergraduate students who meet the qualifications. Information and applications for Psi Chi membership can be obtained in the Psi Chi office located in LS 326.

**Graduate Association of Psychology Students (GAPS)** - GAPS is open to all graduate students in Psychology. The organization was established to fulfill several purposes, listed below in order of priority:

1. The collective representation of its members in Departmental and University-wide decision making on issues believed to be relevant to the Organization's membership;
2. Assistance in the maintenance of the scholarship of the individual members of the Organization in their graduate education in psychology;
3. Services at times and with respect to matters deemed appropriate by the Organization's membership;
4. Information and assistance to undergraduates majoring in the field of Psychology.

**National Latinx Psychological Association** – The purpose of this NLPA chapter on campus is to create a supportive community at UTA that advances psychological education and, science, along with organizational change to enhance the health, mental health, and well-being of Hispanic/Latinx populations. Undergraduate and Graduate students of any major or program are encouraged to join. Please visit <https://mavorgs.campuslabs.com/engage/organization/nlpa> for more information or the office in LS 326.

## **X. FACILITIES AND RESOURCES**

### **Research Facilities**

The physical facilities and equipment necessary for support of study and research in Psychology are comparable to those required of any scientific discipline. At UT Arlington, there are excellent physical facilities for psychological research in the areas noted above. Resources available in the Department include modern desk top computers with software and hardware suited to basic research with human and non-human populations, and other more specialized equipment including, for example, video and audio recording and presentation equipment, small animal operant and non-operant conditioning test chambers, tests of anxiety, learning and memory, psychophysiological recording devices, apparatus for electrophysiological investigations involving humans and rodents, and other tools required for basic research in the neurosciences such as small animal surgeries, brain stimulation and lesion devices, and basic protein biochemistry, etc.

One valuable resource is the Human Subject Pool, provided by a research participation requirement in introductory psychology and the opportunity to earn extra credit in various middle and upper-level Psychology courses. This pool provides a substantial number of subject hours annually. Experiments involving human subjects must be cleared through the university Human Subject Review committees. After they have obtained the necessary Institutional Review Board approval, researchers must contact the

Departmental subject pool manager in order to request access and receive approval to use the Human Subject Pool.

The animal research wing was fully renovated in 2001 and provides excellent laboratory and colony facilities. In February 2013, UT Arlington was awarded full accreditation by AAALAC International, the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care International; this demonstrates our commitment to high standards for the welfare, care, and humane treatment of animals in science. The facility and its researchers operate in full compliance with State and Federal Regulations. In addition, all research is conducted under the regulation and approval of our local Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) and the University's Compliance Officer.

In general, all graduate student research must be performed under the supervision of a Faculty member. Within this framework, most students develop their own research problems and are performing essentially independent research by the end of their graduate careers.

### **General Facilities and Other Resources**

Questions about our facilities and resources should be directed to the department's Administrative Assistant, Lindsay Porras, who will refer you to the appropriate person.

Offices and computer facilities: Shared office space is provided for all full-time graduate students and, where possible, for part-time students. Internet access is available throughout graduate student office spaces. If you have questions or problems with your computer, please consult our Personal Computer Specialist, Luis Zornosa. Most computers in the Department are loaded with Microsoft Windows operating system and Microsoft Office Suite. All other software requests will be handled on an individual basis.

The Office of Information Technology (OIT) has established several wireless network access points on campus. These wireless access points allow 802.11a/b/g devices to connect to the UT Arlington network for on and off campus Internet access. Recently, the University has adopted an E-Culture Policy. The University of Texas at Arlington has adopted the University email address as an official means of communication with students. Through the use of email, UT-Arlington is able to provide students with relevant and timely information, designed to facilitate student success. In particular, important information concerning registration, financial aid, payment of bills, and graduation may be sent to students through email. All students are assigned an email account and information about activating and using it is available at [www.uta.edu/email](http://www.uta.edu/email). New students (first semester at UT Arlington) are able to activate their email account 48 hours after registering for courses. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, and it remains active as long as a student is enrolled at UT-Arlington. Students are responsible for checking their email regularly. You can check your MavMail account on-line using the 'email' link at <https://www.uta.edu/students>. You will log in using your NetID and current password. For information on your NetID username and password, please go to the following website: <https://oit.uta.edu/services/email/>.

**Photocopying and keys:** The Department supports one copy machine in room 311 LS. The Department can pay only for materials related to the teaching of courses, and for some research purposes. See the Office Staff for copying authorization. Using the copy machine for personal purposes is not permitted under State law. Students employed as TAs or RAs may photocopy materials for use by the students or for purposes directly relevant to the ongoing research activities of laboratories in which they work. Photocopying for any other purpose is not permitted under the law. Various copying facilities are available

in and around campus for copies required for personal use. Graduate students may apply for certain building keys. Most students will need a key to their office, and a graduate student submaster key, which unlocks the mail room. Keys to other areas require written permission from the supervising faculty member and the Chairperson. Increasingly, the University is converting to newer technologies for purposes of better security. At the present time, students need a Mav card to open certain classrooms as well as to gain entrance to the Life Science Building after hours and on weekends/holidays.

**Dedicated Rooms:** Mail Room: Each graduate student is assigned a mailbox in room 300 LS. These boxes should be checked regularly because relevant communications are distributed through them. Personal mail is also distributed through these boxes. The mailroom also serves as a kitchen with a full-size microwave oven, toaster oven, and Keurig coffee machine.

**Conference Room:** Room 323 LS is a dedicated space used for Faculty meetings, meetings of the CGS, and thesis and dissertation proposal/defense meetings. To reserve this room, please see James Cotten. No other activities may be scheduled there without the expressed permission of the Department Chairperson.

## **Expenses**

**Thesis/Dissertation Expenses:** The Department attempts to assist with expenses for thesis and dissertation research. Because funds are limited, a guarantee cannot be made that all expenses will be covered, but a reasonable attempt will be made to do so. There is no set limit to what can be requested for dissertation expenses, but amounts over \$300 are rare. Students may seek these funds to cover the costs of copying theses and dissertations. After a thesis or dissertation proposal has been approved (by the supervising committee), an estimated budget is submitted to the Department Chairperson. Once an item has been approved, the student should see the Administrative Assistant for information about purchasing procedures. It is often wise to discuss potential research expenses with the Chairperson before submission of a proposal to the supervising committee. The reasons are that: (a) budget plans must be made in advance by the chair; (b) unrealistic budgets may need to be trimmed, and this can lead to revised proposals; and (c) alternate sources of funds may be available and these need to be applied for in advance.

**Travel Expenses:** Participation in regional, national and international conferences is encouraged. Assistance with travel expenses for students who have appointments as graduate assistants and who are presenting papers at such conferences is available. Requests for travel expenses should be made well in advance of the dates of travel using forms available from the Administrative Assistant in the Psychology Department. These sources of support will supplement the students' own funds; they will typically not cover all expenses.

## XI. APPENDIX

Other links:

American Psychological Association - <http://www.apa.org/>

American Psychological Society - <http://www.psychologicalscience.org/>

Animal Behavior Society - <http://www.animalbehavior.org/>

Association for Behavior Analysis (International) - <http://www.abainternational.org/>

National Latinx Psychological Association – <https://www.nlpa.ws/>

Psi Chi, The National Honor Society in Psychology - <http://www.psichi.org/>

Psychonomic Society - <http://www.psychonomic.org/>

Society for Industrial Organizational Psychology - <http://www.siop.org/>

Society for Neuroscience - <http://www.sfn.org/>

Society of Consulting Psychology - <https://www.societyofconsultingpsychology.org/>

Social Psychology Network - <http://www.socialpsychology.org/>

Southwestern Psychological Association - <http://www.swpsych.org/>