

# PSYCHOLOGY Ph.D. AND M.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Revised: May 5, 2010

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The Graduate Program in Psychology offers a Ph.D. degree. Although students in the program have the option of obtaining an M.A. degree en route to the Ph.D., students are admitted to the graduate program only if they plan to obtain a Ph.D. degree. The program encompasses the broad field of psychology and its interactions with related disciplines. Resources and faculty are concentrated in five areas of specialization: Psychobiology, Developmental Psychology, Social & Personality Psychology, Quantitative Psychology, and Perception, Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience. Each program faculty member is affiliated with one or more of these areas, and each student is admitted into one.

## MASTER'S PROGRAM

### 1) Admissions Requirements

Although students in the Psychology Ph.D. program can, if they choose, satisfy the requirements for the Master's (Plan I or Plan II), the Graduate Program in Psychology does not admit students for whom this is the primary degree objective. The sections that follow explain how students can use the coursework and research project or preliminary exam of the Ph.D. program to earn an M.A.

### 2) Master's Plan I (Thesis) or Plan II (Comprehensive Examination)

**Plan I.** This plan requires 30 units of graduate coursework and a thesis. At least 12 of these 30 units must be graduate work in Psychology.

**Plan II.** This plan requires 36 units of graduate work, of which at least 18 units must be graduate courses in Psychology. Not more than 9 units of research (299 or equivalent) may be used to satisfy the 18-unit requirement. A comprehensive final examination is required of each candidate, and is taken only after course requirements are satisfied. No thesis is required.

### 3) Course Requirements (Plan I: 30 units total; Plan II: 36 units total)

#### a) Required Courses

PSC 204A, Statistical Analysis of Psychological Experiments (4 units)

#### b) Elective Courses (26 units total for Plan I; 32 units total for Plan II)

Any graduate courses in Psychology or a related field, at least one of which is outside the student's area of specialization, as determined by the Individual Advising Committee.

#### c) Summary

Plan I requires 30 units of graduate courses which must include PSC 204A, at least one course outside the student's area of specialization, and at least 12 units of graduate work in Psychology. Plan II requires 36 units of graduate courses, which must include PSC 204A, at least one course outside the student's area of specialization, and at least 18 units of graduate work in Psychology. The minimum course load is 12 units each academic quarter. Per UC regulations, students cannot enroll in more than 12 units of graduate level courses (200) or more than 16 units of combined undergraduate and graduate level courses (100, 200, 300) per quarter.

#### **4) Special Requirements**

None.

#### **5) Committees**

##### **a) Admissions Committee**

The Admissions/Fellowship Committee consists of the Area Heads, who are elected by the respective faculty members of the areas of specialization in Psychology (Psychobiology, Developmental Psychology, Social & Personality Psychology, Quantitative Psychology, and Perception, Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience), along with the Graduate Adviser, who chairs the committee.

The grades, GRE scores, personal statement, and other material for each applicant are reviewed. If a potential Major Professor is identified, the faculty in the relevant area of specialization discuss the candidate and make recommendations about offers of admission, which are forwarded by the appropriate Area Head to the Admissions Committee. These recommendations are reviewed by the Admissions Committee, subjected to a vote of the program faculty, and forwarded by the Graduate Adviser to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final approval. Notification of admissions decisions are sent by Graduate Studies.

Applications are accepted through Dec. 15 of the previous year for the following fall quarter's entering class.

Recommendations for new and continuing student fellowships are also made by this committee.

##### **b) Individual Advising Committee (IAC)**

The Individual Advising Committee is responsible for guiding students through coursework, reading, research, and other activities in order that they may attain the background in general psychology needed for professional competence in their area of specialization. Students meet with their IAC each winter quarter, at which time their progress is evaluated in preparation for the annual review of progress by the program faculty (see section 6b of the Ph.D. Requirements).

At the beginning of their second quarter in the program, students must select the members of the IAC, which should include the Major Professor along with two other faculty members whose expertise will provide breadth in the area of specialization. At least two of the members of the IAC must be members of the faculty of the Graduate Program in Psychology. One of these two members will serve as chair. The third member should normally hold a faculty appointment either in Psychology or in another UC Davis department. Exceptions with regard to this third member must be approved by the Graduate Adviser. The proposed list of committee members is to be presented for approval to the Graduate Adviser, who will consult with the program faculty as needed. Once the IAC is constituted, any changes require a petition from the student and approval by the Graduate Adviser.

The IAC is the examining committee for the Written Preliminary Examination, which serves as the comprehensive exam for the M.A. Plan II (see section 8a of the Ph.D. requirements), as well as for the Individual Research Project paper, which serves as the thesis for the M.A. Plan I (see section 4b the Ph.D. requirements).

## 6) Advising Structure and Mentoring

The **Major Professor** is the faculty member who supervises the student's research and dissertation. This person serves as the chair of the Dissertation Committee and as a member of the Individual Advising Committee. The **Graduate Adviser**, who is appointed by the chair of the program, is a resource for information on academic requirements, policies and procedures, and registration information, until the Individual Advising Committee is formed. This person also plays a consultative role in the evaluation of student progress and the formation of examination and advising committees and signs official forms that are forwarded to Graduate Studies for approval. The **Individual Advising Committee** serves as the student's examination and project/thesis committees, provides advising on the plan of study, and evaluates progress on program requirements. The [Mentoring Guidelines](#) can be found on the Graduate Studies website.<sup>1</sup>

## 7) Advancement to Candidacy

Students should submit an official application for Candidacy for the Degree of Master of Psychology after completing at least one-half of their course requirements for this degree and at least one quarter prior to the quarter in which they will file their Individual Research Project paper to satisfy the thesis requirement for Plan I, which is normally in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, or take their Written Preliminary Examination to satisfy the comprehensive exam requirement for Plan II, which is normally in the 7<sup>th</sup> quarter. The [Candidacy for the Degree of Master form](#) can be found on the Graduate Studies website.<sup>2</sup> A completed form includes a list of courses the student will take to complete degree requirements and, in the case of the thesis option, a list of the committee members. If changes must be made to the student's course plan after he or she has advanced to candidacy, the Graduate Adviser must recommend these changes to Graduate Studies. Students must have their Graduate Adviser and, for Plan I, their IAC chair sign the candidacy form before it can be submitted to Graduate Studies.

## 8) Comprehensive Examination and Thesis Requirements

### a) Thesis Requirements (Plan I)

The Individual Research Project paper (described in section 4b of the Ph.D. Requirements) will serve as the thesis for students admitted to the Ph.D. program who choose to complete the M.A. in Psychology, Plan I.

### b) Comprehensive Examination (Plan II)

The Written Preliminary Examination (described in section 8a of the Ph.D. Requirements) will serve as the comprehensive exam for students admitted to the Ph.D. program who choose to complete the M.A. in Psychology, Plan II.

## 9) Normative Time to Degree

The normative time to degree for an M.A. in Psychology is 4 quarters for Plan I and 7 quarters for Plan II.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/gradcouncil/mentoring.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/forms/index.html#Masters>

## 10) Typical Time Line and Sequence of Events

|               | <i>Fall</i>   | <i>Winter</i>   | <i>Spring</i>   |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Year 1</b> | PSC 204A<br>Content course<br>PSC 200<br>PSC 202  | Statistics course<br>Content course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Mini Prospectus due</i><br><i>Initial IAC meeting</i> | Content course<br>Content course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Advance to candidacy for</i><br><i>Plan I M.A. (if applicable)</i> |
|               | <i>Fall</i>   | <i>Winter</i>   | <i>Spring</i>   |
| <b>Year 2</b> | Statistics course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Individual Research</i><br><i>Project paper due</i><br><i>(= thesis for Plan I)</i> | Content course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>IAC meeting to discuss</i><br><i>progress</i>                              | Content course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Advance to candidacy for</i><br><i>Plan II M.A. (if applicable)</i>                  |
|               | <i>Fall</i>   | <i>Winter</i>   | <i>Spring</i>   |
| <b>Year 3</b> | PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Written Preliminary Exam</i><br><i>(= comprehensive exam for Plan II)</i>                                |   |   |

## 11) Sources of Funding

Students in good standing in the Ph.D. program are funded with TA positions, GSR positions, or fellowships.

## 12) PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee Status

Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave), In Absentia (reduced fees when researching out of state), and Filing Fee status can be found in the [Graduate Student Guide](#).<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> <http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/students/handbook/>

## PH.D. PROGRAM

### 1) Admissions Requirements

Applicants for admission must complete the Office of Graduate Studies online application and must meet the University of California minimum requirements for admission. Acceptance into the Ph.D. program is based on a review of the applicant's overall past academic performance. Other requirements for admission include:

- Scores from the Graduate Record Examination (General Test).
- English proficiency examination for international applicants who have not studied at an English speaking University: TOEFL or other University-approved examination. International applicants must meet the Office of Graduate Studies minimum TOEFL score requirement (or equivalent for other University-approved examination).
- A confirmed Major Professor: Prior to admission, a faculty member in good standing with the graduate program must confirm that he or she is willing to act as the student's Major Professor.

Applicants are admitted into one of five areas of specialization:

- Psychobiology
- Developmental Psychology
- Social & Personality Psychology
- Quantitative Psychology
- Perception, Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience

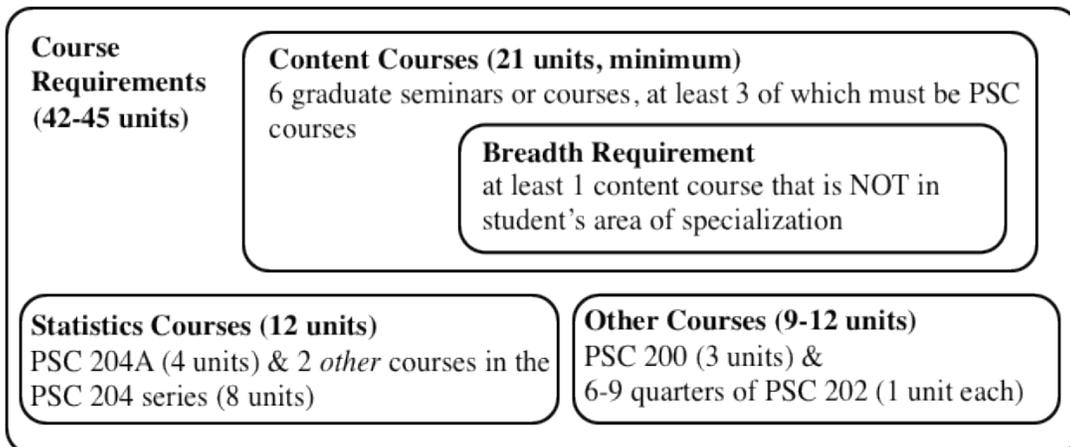
There are no prerequisite courses required for admission to the Ph.D. program.

### 2) Dissertation Plan

The Ph.D. program in Psychology offers Dissertation Plan B, which specifies a three member (minimum) dissertation committee, an optional final oral examination (made on an individual student basis by the dissertation committee), and no exit seminar.

### 3) Course Requirements (42-45 units total)

The course requirements are schematically depicted in the figure below and described in more detail in sections a-c.



Upon arrival in Davis, students should consult with the program's Graduate Adviser concerning the first quarter of academic work. In subsequent quarters and years, the

Major Professor and Individual Advising Committee (IAC; see section 5b) will advise students on the appropriate courses to take.

**a) Content Courses (minimum of 21 units)**

Each student must complete at least six graduate-level courses or seminars (other than those satisfying the requirements in 3b and 3c and variable-unit courses such as PSC 298 and 299).

- A minimum of three of the six courses or seminars must be offerings of the Department of Psychology.
- To ensure adequate breadth in the student's coursework, at least one of the 6 courses must be outside of the student's area of specialization; this breadth course could be a Department of Psychology offering in another area or a relevant graduate-level course offered by another department.
- It is strongly recommended that at least four of these courses be taken during the student's first two years in the program.
- The six courses or seminars must total a minimum of 21 quarter units.

Equivalent course credit from other institutions may be allowed for up to three of these courses or seminars. Students requesting that coursework from other institutions be used to satisfy this requirement should submit a request to the faculty member who is appointed Area Head in their area of specialization; this request should include supporting materials such as a syllabus and reading list from the course taken. The Area Head will evaluate such work, consulting with the instructor who teaches the equivalent course at UC Davis if appropriate, and submit recommendations for appropriate credit to the Graduate Adviser, who will make the final decision about whether the student can apply that coursework to the degree requirements.

**b) Statistics Courses (12 units)**

Students are required to complete the following statistics courses (or their equivalents) with no grade lower than a B:

- **PSC 204A**, Statistical Analysis of Psychological Experiments (4 units)
- two courses from: **PSC 204B, 204C, 204D** (4 units each; 8 units total required). *One course from this series must be completed prior to the Written Preliminary Examination.*

The Graduate Adviser may determine that coursework taken in a previous graduate program is equivalent to one or more of these courses, based on consultation with the corresponding Area Head and with the faculty members who teach the relevant courses. Students may use no more than two such equivalent courses to satisfy the statistics course requirement.

Students interested in developing their expertise in statistical analysis beyond what is required by this course requirement are encouraged to consider the optional minor in Quantitative Psychology described in the Appendix.

**c) Other Required Courses (9-12 units)**

- **PSC 200**, Proseminar (3 units). This course provides an introduction to the research interests and activities of the faculty members in the Graduate Program in Psychology, as well as other issues related to professional development and the program. It must be taken in the fall quarter of the student's first year.

- **PSC 202**, Research Seminar (1 unit each; 6-9 units total). This is an area-based colloquium series, known as the “area brown bag seminars”, in which students learn about research in their area of specialization and develop presentation and speaking skills through both observation and direct experience. Prior to passing the Qualifying Examination, during each quarter in which there is no schedule conflict with other required courses or teaching duties, students must enroll in and attend at least the section of PSC 202 that is associated with their area of specialization. They must also present their research to peers and faculty members at these seminars at least once per year. Students enroll in PSC 202 each quarter, using their Area Head’s CRN for course credit. First-year students may present plans for their Individual Research Project in this course. Students are encouraged to continue attending area brown bag seminars after advancement to candidacy for the Ph.D., although this is not required.

**d) Summary**

Students must complete a minimum of 21 units of content courses, 12 units of statistics courses, and 9-12 units of other required courses for a total of 42-45 units.

Students must enroll in 12 units per quarter. Per UC regulations, students cannot enroll in more than 12 units of graduate level courses (200) or more than 16 units of combined undergraduate and graduate level courses (100, 200, 300) per quarter.

**4) Special Requirement: Individual Research Project**

Each student must design, conduct, and analyze the results of a research project and write a publication-quality summary paper, under the supervision of the Major Professor and the IAC. Work on the Individual Research Project shall begin during the student’s first year in the program.

**a) Mini Prospectus**

In preparation for the project, students will submit a mini prospectus of the project to their Individual Advising Committee (IAC) before the scheduled progress meeting held by the end of the winter quarter of their first year. The mini prospectus is a two-page document which is expected to be similar in format to the Proposed Plan of Research component of the [NSF Graduate Research Fellowship](http://www.nsfgrfp.org/) (<http://www.nsfgrfp.org/>). Although the mini prospectus need not include detailed information about research design, subject recruitment, etc., it should include a clear description of a question or set of questions being addressed in the project, a brief discussion of the relevant background, and a plan for addressing the questions under study. The IAC will evaluate the mini prospectus for merit and feasibility and report to the Graduate Adviser that it is either (1) approved, or (2) requires revisions. In the case of (2), students must have a revised mini prospectus approved by the annual meeting in May of the program faculty to discuss student progress (see section 6b.6), to ensure that they be deemed to be making Satisfactory Progress in the program. Once approved, the mini prospectus should be forwarded by the IAC Chair to the Graduate Adviser and the Graduate Coordinator, with the annual progress report.

## **b) Project Paper**

Each student must submit a paper on the research project no later than September 1<sup>st</sup> following the end of the first year of study. If students have completed an experiment, or have substantial data collected or analyzed, they should write up the results in a style suitable for a typical high-quality journal publication, including data analysis and discussion. This paper can be an actual manuscript that has been submitted for publication or has been published, if the student is the first author of that publication. Or, it may approximate a manuscript that could be submitted for publication if the paper has not yet been submitted or published or if the student is not the first author on a submitted or published paper in which his or her project results are packaged with other work. In the latter case, a paper reporting on only the work completed by the student for the Individual Research Project should be prepared, in the style of a journal publication. If the project itself is not yet completed, students should still write a paper in a format that corresponds to a journal article. This paper should include (1) an Introduction section which describes the background and significance of the project, (2) a Methods section describing stimuli, methods and experimental procedures, (3) a Research Plan section describing the key hypotheses, how they will be tested (i.e., planned analyses), implications of alternative outcomes, a summary of preliminary results, and a description of any follow-up studies or changes to the experimental design that will be made in the coming year.

The completed research project paper should be turned in to both the Graduate Adviser and the student's Individual Advising Committee, who will read and evaluate it. The IAC will report to the Graduate Adviser whether the paper is (1) approved as is (this requires that 2 of the 3 committee members accept it as is), (2) approved with editorial revision, or (3) in need of additional work in order to satisfy the requirement. In the case of (2) or (3), the committee will report to the student and the Graduate Adviser the nature of the revisions required and the time frame for those revisions. If extensive work must be completed and an extended timeline is proposed, the committee should also make a recommendation about whether the timing of the Written Preliminary Examination should also be changed.

Students who enter with a master's thesis completed at another institution will generally be required to complete an Individual Research Project, although they may petition the Individual Advising Committee to consider whether the thesis may be used to satisfy some or all of the requirement. The IAC will forward the petition to the Graduate Adviser with its recommendation. The Graduate Adviser will grant the exception if a compelling case is made and the IAC is unanimous in its recommendation.

## **c) Oral Presentation**

The student shall make at least one public oral presentation on the individual research project either during the planning of the project, while in the midst of data collection, or after its completion. The required presentation must be given prior to the Qualifying Examination, as part of the student's area brown bag seminar (PSC 202) or at a recognized professional meeting; a poster presentation does not satisfy this requirement. The faculty member assigned as Area Head for the student's area of specialization is responsible for reporting to the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Adviser when the student has completed this portion

of the requirement. At the start of each academic year, the Graduate Coordinator and Graduate Adviser will inform each Area Head of the students who have not fulfilled this requirement.

**d) Optional Master's**

An Individual Research Project paper with signature approval by all members of the student's Individual Advising Committee shall be accepted as meeting the thesis requirement for the Master's Degree, Plan I (see M.A. requirements above). Although the project requirement for the program can be satisfied if two of the three committee members approve the research paper, the thesis requirement for the M.A. requires that all three committee members approve.

**5) Committees**

**a) Admissions Committee**

The Admissions/Fellowship Committee consists of the Area Heads, who are elected by the respective faculty members of the areas of specialization in Psychology (Psychobiology, Developmental Psychology, Social & Personality Psychology, Quantitative Psychology, and Perception, Cognition & Cognitive Neuroscience), along with the Graduate Adviser, who chairs the committee.

The grades, GRE scores, personal statement, and other material for each applicant are reviewed. If a potential Major Professor is identified, the faculty in the relevant area of specialization discuss the candidate and make recommendations about offers of admission, which are forwarded by the appropriate Area Head to the Admissions Committee. These recommendations are reviewed by the Admissions Committee, subjected to a vote of the program faculty, and forwarded by the Graduate Adviser to the Dean of Graduate Studies for final approval of admission. Notification of admissions decisions are sent by Graduate Studies.

Applications are accepted through Dec. 15 of the previous year for the following fall quarter's entering class.

Recommendations for new and continuing student fellowships are also made by this committee.

**b) Individual Advising Committee (IAC)**

The Individual Advising Committee is responsible for guiding students through coursework, reading, research, and other activities, in order that they may attain the background in general psychology needed for professional competence in their area of specialization. Students meet with their IAC each winter quarter, at which time their progress is evaluated in preparation for the annual review of progress by the program faculty (see section 6b).

At the beginning of their second quarter in the program, students must select the members of the IAC, which should include the Major Professor along with two other faculty members whose expertise will provide breadth in the area of specialization. At least two of the members of the IAC must be members of the faculty of the Graduate Program in Psychology. One of these two members will serve as chair. The third member should normally hold a faculty appointment either in Psychology or in another UC Davis department. Exceptions with regard to this third member must be approved by the Graduate Adviser. The proposed list of committee members is to be presented for approval to the Graduate Adviser, who will consult with the graduate program faculty as needed. Once the IAC is con-

stituted, any changes require a petition from the student and approval by the Graduate Adviser.

Occasionally, a student may wish to have a fourth member on the IAC. In this case, the student should consult with his or her Major Professor and the Graduate Adviser about how the inclusion of the fourth member impacts the function of the committee—for example, the form and grading of the Written Preliminary Examination and the composition of the Dissertation Committee. The Graduate Adviser may allow a fourth member if it is deemed necessary for the student's development and planning. Students will be encouraged to meet with and collaborate with faculty members who are not members of their IAC, which makes the inclusion of a fourth member unnecessary in most cases.

The IAC should meet as a group with the student at least once during his or her second quarter in the program, and thereafter at least once a year during the winter quarter to plan the academic program for the following year. Although the student and the committee chair are jointly responsible for organizing these committee meetings, the chair is ultimately responsible for making sure that they occur and that a progress report is forwarded to the Graduate Adviser by the deadline (see section 6b). On the rare occasions when a committee member is unavailable (e.g., doing field work at some distant location), the student should arrange a meeting with the two available faculty members, and a meeting with the absent faculty member should be arranged as soon as he or she becomes available. During quarters when such meetings of the whole committee are not scheduled, students should meet at least once with their Major Professor prior to registration for the following quarter to plan an academic program for that quarter.

### **c) Examination Committees**

1. *Written Preliminary Examination Committee.* The Individual Advising Committee is the examining committee for the Written Preliminary Examination.
2. *Qualifying Examination Committee.* The Qualifying Examination (QE) is conducted by the student's IAC, augmented by two additional members. The membership of the IAC, originally chosen to reflect the broad topical areas tested in the Written Preliminary Examination, can be changed to reflect the more specific topics to be tested in the QE. All such changes must be submitted for approval to the Graduate Adviser, who may consult with the faculty as needed. Two additional members shall be chosen to serve on the QE Committee, one who is a member of the Graduate Program in Psychology (preferably whose expertise is as close as possible to the student's interests) and one who is from another graduate program (unless the student's IAC already includes an extra-departmental member). The chair of the QE committee must be a ladder faculty member from the Graduate Program in Psychology, but may not be the chair of the student's Dissertation Committee. The proposed list of members will be submitted to Graduate Studies for official constitution of the Qualifying Examination Committee. Other Academic Senate and Graduate Studies requirements must also be met.
3. *Dissertation Committee.* Once the QE has been passed, the student submits to the Graduate Adviser a list of proposed Dissertation Committee members, which typically includes members of his or her IAC. The Dissertation Committee is appointed by Graduate Studies when the student advances to candidacy. The

majority of members of the Dissertation Committee must be ladder faculty members of the Graduate Program in Psychology.

## 6) Advising Structure and Mentoring

### a) Advisers and Mentors

The **Major Professor** is the faculty member who supervises the student's research and dissertation. This person serves as the chair of the Dissertation Committee and as a member of the Individual Advising Committee. The **Graduate Adviser**, who is appointed by the chair of the program, is a resource for information on academic requirements, policies and procedures, and registration information, until the Individual Advising Committee is formed. This person also plays a consultative role in the evaluation of student progress and the formation of examination and advising committees and signs official forms that are forwarded to Graduate Studies for approval. The **Individual Advising Committee** serves as the student's examination and project/thesis committees, provides advising on the plan of study, and evaluates progress on program requirements. The [Mentoring Guidelines](#) can be found on the Graduate Studies website.<sup>4</sup>

### b) Student Progress Reviews

The progress of all students is reviewed by the faculty each year, using the following procedures.

1. Students should prepare a brief statement summarizing their progress toward meeting program requirements and their scholarly and professional activities of the preceding year. By the end of the third week of the winter quarter, this statement must be given to the members of the IAC. At this time, students are expected to begin to discuss their progress with the members of their IAC, and to schedule a meeting of the committee as a group to discuss their progress and plan of study for the next year.
2. By the end of the last day of instruction of the winter quarter, the Individual Advising Committee meets with the student to discuss any apparent problems that there may be and his or her plans for the coming year. At this meeting the committee informs the student about the recommendation that it will make to the Graduate Adviser regarding progress. The recommendation can be Satisfactory Progress, Marginal Progress, or Unsatisfactory Progress. Although this is the only required meeting, the department encourages frequent communication among committee members and the student.
3. By the end of the first week of the spring quarter, the Individual Advising Committee submits a copy of the student's statement and its own recommendation regarding progress to the Graduate Adviser. **If no student statement or no IAC recommendation is received by the end of the first week of the spring quarter, the result will be an automatic initial motion for Unsatisfactory Progress at the progress review faculty meeting held in May.**
4. Students in their sixth year who have not completed the Ph.D. by the date of the progress review faculty meeting in May, or have not completed most of the work (i.e., the Major Professor cannot confirm that the dissertation will be filed before the beginning of the fall quarter), will be judged to be making Unsatisfactory Progress.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/gradcouncil/mentoring.pdf>

5. In considering progress, faculty will take into account and allow up to three quarters of Planned Educational Leave (PELP) within the six year period; these three PELP quarters will not be counted in the six-year period. While additional PELP quarters beyond the first three quarters may be approved for cause, these additional quarters will be included in the six-year period progress decision.
6. The faculty of the Graduate Program in Psychology will meet in May for a review of student progress. Prior to this meeting, the Graduate Adviser will review each student's progress report from the IAC and the student's statement and, taking these into account, will prepare a recommendation.

In the event that either the IAC or the Graduate Adviser determines that a status of Satisfactory Progress is not warranted, the student will be invited to participate in the review at this meeting. The Graduate Adviser will present his or her assessment of the student's progress to the faculty as well as the recommendation from the IAC, to which the student may respond. For students whose progress is not deemed Satisfactory after the faculty review, there are two possible outcomes:

- The student may be allowed to complete a course of remedial action to overcome the progress deficiencies within a reasonable time, as specified in recommendations from the Graduate Adviser and the IAC.
- The faculty may decide against allowing a course of remedial action.

In case a plan for remedial action is recommended by the Graduate Adviser and the IAC and accepted by the faculty, completion of the details of this plan will constitute binding criteria for removal of the deficiencies. The student's progress in pursuing this plan will be reported to the faculty by the Graduate Adviser, by a date specified by the faculty. If either the binding criteria for removal of deficiencies are not met by the specified date or the faculty decide against allowing a course of remedial action, the Graduate Adviser will recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student be disqualified from the program, provided that this action is supported by a majority vote of all members of the faculty of the Graduate Program in Psychology, not just those present at the review.

### **c) Procedures for Appeals, Exceptions, and Deferrals**

All appeals or requests for an exception to a requirement or a deferral for a deadline (e.g., the Individual Research Project paper, the Written Preliminary Examination, or the Qualifying Examination), should be made in writing to the Graduate Adviser. All exceptions to requirements or deferrals of deadlines should be accompanied by a written statement from the student's Major Professor supporting the request. In most cases, the Graduate Adviser will make a decision about such requests. However, when the requested exception or deadline extension results in a significant delay in progress (e.g., taking the Written Preliminary Examination in the 8<sup>th</sup> quarter rather than in the 7<sup>th</sup> quarter), the Graduate Adviser will request on the student's behalf that the graduate program faculty as a group consider the exception or deferral.

## **7) Advancement to Candidacy**

The student is eligible for Advancement to Candidacy after successful completion of all graduate program degree requirements other than the dissertation and after passing the Qualifying Examination. This must occur no later than three full quarters after passage of the Written Preliminary Examination, or by the student's 10<sup>th</sup> quar-

ter in the program if the Written Preliminary Examination was passed at the Ph.D. level prior to the 7<sup>th</sup> quarter in the program.<sup>5</sup> The student must file the appropriate paperwork with the Office of Graduate Studies.

## 8) Examination and Dissertation Requirements

### a) Written Preliminary Examination

The goal of the Written Preliminary Examination is to establish the student's mastery of the major areas of psychology related to his or her research interests. It satisfies the capstone requirement for a Master's Degree, Plan II, because it is a comprehensive, final exam, taken after two years of graduate study in the program.

1. *Preparation for the Exam.* Individual Advising Committees will advise students on the coursework and readings necessary to prepare them for this exam. Because an important component of the skills to be assessed is the critical analysis of theories and their supporting evidence, the student must have completed at least three content courses in Psychology (see section 3a) before taking the preliminary exam. The student's IAC may decide whether work completed in other departments or institutions is an acceptable alternative, as long as that coursework has been approved by the Graduate Adviser, following the process described in section 3a.

As a first step in preparation for the preliminary exam, students, in consultation with their IAC, must develop and place on file a reading list, taking care to ensure broad coverage of the major aspects of one or more substantive areas of research. As the exam covers major theoretical and empirical work in the chosen area(s), successfully passing the exam requires that students have an in-depth and comprehensive understanding of this work. The final reading list should be approved by the student's IAC, signed by all three members, and filed with the Graduate Adviser, at least 15 weeks in advance of the written exam. For students taking the Written Preliminary Examination at the regularly scheduled time (see section 8a.2 below), the approved list should be filed with the Graduate Adviser by the previous July 1, which is 15 weeks prior to the normal timing of the exam.

After approving the reading list, each member of the IAC will indicate whether the questions he or she contributes to the written exam will test the student's understanding of the content covered by the readings on the approved list, or if one or more questions may also cover material that is not included on the reading list. This may differ between members of the IAC, but must be stated in advance on the reading list, so that each student has clear expectations of what the questions may cover.

2. *Timing, Form and Evaluation of the Preliminary Examination*

**Timing.** The Written Preliminary Examination must be taken no later than two weeks after the beginning of the student's 7<sup>th</sup> quarter in residence. Beginning in August before the fall quarter, the Graduate Coordinator, in consultation with the students who will be in their 7<sup>th</sup> quarter during that fall quarter, will begin to schedule student exams. Exams ordinarily will be scheduled for two consecutive days within a week (e.g., Monday & Tuesday), and the particular dates will be

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<sup>5</sup> The Dean of Graduate Studies has approved an exception to the 9 quarter rule for Psychology students (10/15/2010).

chosen based on (1) room availability, (2) student schedule, and (3) committee member preference and availability. If students want to ensure that their exam is scheduled on a particular date, they should contact the Graduate Coordinator early in August to state a preference.

Students with adequate preparation are strongly urged to take the exam earlier than the 7<sup>th</sup> quarter, but after two years of graduate study (e.g., the end of the spring quarter of the second year, or during the summer after the second year). If the exam is taken in an earlier academic quarter, students must arrange for this with their Individual Advising Committee no later than two weeks prior to the end of instruction; the examination can only be scheduled during the summer with approval from the IAC, which should be forwarded to the Graduate Adviser before the exam is scheduled. The Graduate Adviser must be informed as to the time of the exam at least two weeks before it is to be conducted (see general procedures on appeals and exceptions in section 6c for additional information).

**Form.** It is expected that the Written Preliminary Examination will involve written questions and answers that will require at least 6 hours and no more than 9 hours of writing. Copies of previous Ph.D. exam questions, which are filed in the Department of Psychology office, are available to all faculty members and graduate students. Examinees' answers are made available to the faculty and to graduate students only if they give their written permission. The format for the exam will be open book, and questions will be formulated so as to assess the student's conceptual grasp of the reading material and ability to think critically about it. Students may elect to either have an electronic version of the exam sent to them or receive a hard copy from the Graduate Adviser. During the exam, each student may consult the papers from the reading list as well as notes on these readings. Any departures from these policies must be approved by the Graduate Adviser before the exam is administered.

**Evaluation.** The student's Individual Advising Committee must report its evaluation of the student's performance on the exam to the Graduate Adviser within one week following its administration. The Written Preliminary Examination may be passed at the Ph.D. level, passed at the M.A. level, or failed. If the student's IAC does not *unanimously* agree that the student has passed at the Ph.D. level, the committee will communicate the result to the Graduate Adviser and the student will be allowed to retake the exam one time, with the form and timing to be determined by the IAC, but no later than the end of the following quarter. If the outcome of the retake is not a unanimous decision of "pass at the Ph.D. level" but there is unanimity that the student has passed at the M.A. level, the degree objective may be changed to M.A., following the procedure described in section 13, if appropriate. Otherwise, for any outcome but a unanimous decision that the exam has been passed at the Ph.D. level, the Graduate Adviser will recommend to the Dean of Graduate Studies that the student be disqualified from the program.

## **b) Qualifying Examination (QE)**

1. *General Information and Timing.* Once students have passed the Written Preliminary Examination, they begin intensive preparation for the Qualifying Examination, which is designed to assess their knowledge of a specialized area of theory and research. The primary purpose of the QE is to validate that the student is academically qualified to conceptualize a research topic, undertake scholarly

research, and successfully produce the dissertation required for a doctoral degree. In addition, the QE provides an opportunity for the committee to provide important guidance to the student regarding the chosen research topic.

The following requirements must be satisfied before the QE can be taken: completion of the Individual Research Project (oral and written components), completion of all required coursework, passing the Written Preliminary Examination at the Ph.D. level, filing a dissertation proposal (see section 8b.2), and approval from Graduate Studies for constitution of the QE committee. It is the student's responsibility to complete these requirements in a timely manner.

The QE should be taken no later than the student's 10<sup>th</sup> quarter in the program. Under some circumstances, the QE may be scheduled during a period other than the instructional weeks of a regular academic quarter, but only if the faculty members of the student's QE committee agree. Faculty are under no obligation to schedule meetings during these time periods, and exams should only be scheduled during these time periods under exceptional circumstances and if all committee members are willing.

In order to formally schedule an oral exam date, the student, *no later than four weeks before the examination date*, must: (1) submit a petition to the Graduate Adviser listing the proposed members of the QE committee, and (2) submit a dissertation proposal to the Major Professor and acquire his or her approval signature on the proposal title page. This signature indicates that the Major Professor has read and approves of a draft of the dissertation proposal and that the student is ready to schedule the oral exam. The signature does not necessarily mean that the Major Professor has approved the final draft of the proposal. Thus, the student does not need to provide committee members with a draft of the proposal prior to the Major Professor's approval, but is expected to discuss the ideas in the proposal with all members so that their input can be incorporated into the document. The student will provide all committee members with a copy of the proposal once it has been approved by the Major Professor, providing sufficient time (at least 10 days) for the committee members to read and evaluate it. Ordinarily, this will occur soon after the exam has been scheduled, but can be arranged by mutual consent between the committee members and the student. It is, however, recommended that the student give an approved draft to the committee as soon as possible, so that any modifications suggested by the committee members can be incorporated into the final draft of the document, during the four week period prior to the exam.

2. *The Written Portion of the Qualifying Exam: Dissertation Proposal.* The written portion of the QE will be the dissertation proposal. In order to best define the scope of this examination for the students and the examining committee, students will develop, in consultation with their IAC, a proposal for their dissertation research. The proposal should precisely define the current status and significance of the problems addressed within the general framework of contemporary research and related areas and establish the scientific merit of the proposed line of research. An appropriate format for the dissertation proposal might be an application for an advanced graduate student fellowship from the National Institutes of Health (such as a National Research Service Award [NRSA]), or a proposal for a research grant from the National Science Foundation.

3. *The Oral Portion of the Exam.* The QE shall include an oral examination of approximately 2-3 hours in length, with only the student and entire committee present, and the decision-making process immediately following. Non-voting faculty observers may be invited with the unanimous consent of the committee and student. The QE must evaluate the student's command of the field, ensuring that the student has both breadth and depth of knowledge, and must not focus solely on the proposed dissertation research.
4. *Outcome of the Exam.* The members of the committee should endeavor to reach a unanimous decision as to the qualifications of the student for successful completion of a doctoral program. They should include in their evaluation of the student such factors as relevant portions of the previous academic record, performance on specific parts of the exam, and overall potential for scholarly research as indicated during the exam. A committee, having reached a unanimous decision, shall inform the student of its decision as:
  - **Pass** (no conditions may be appended to this decision),
  - **Not Pass** (the chair's report should specify whether the student is required to retake all or part of the examination, list any additional requirements, and state the exact timeline for completion of requirements to achieve a Pass), or
  - **Fail.**

If the outcome is Not Pass or Fail, the Chair of the QE committee must include in its report a specific statement, agreed to by all members of the committee, explaining its decision, and must inform the student of its decision.<sup>i</sup> Having received a Not Pass, the student may attempt the QE one additional time; only one retake of the QE is allowed and the QE report must list the specific conditions and timing for the second exam. After a second exam, a vote of Not Pass is unacceptable; only Pass or Fail is recognized. Should the student receive a Fail on the first or second attempt on the exam, disqualification from the program will be recommended to the Dean of Graduate Studies.

Under unusual and extenuating circumstances, the committee may suspend an exam in progress and request that it be considered a "No Examination". If the committee wishes to make this request, the chair must indicate "No Examination" on the report of the outcome and inform the Dean of Graduate Studies of the reasons.

Passing this exam makes the student eligible for Advancement to Candidacy. Students are required to file the [form for Advancement to Candidacy](#) for the Ph.D., Plan B,<sup>6</sup> within one quarter after having passed the QE. Following the examination, students are required to file a copy of the signed dissertation proposal with the Graduate Adviser.

#### c) **Completing the Dissertation**

When students advance to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree, Graduate Studies appoints a Dissertation Committee that assists them in developing and carrying out an empirical investigation of a significant problem in their area of specialization. This committee typically includes members who have served on the student's Individual Advising Committee, but changes may be made, subject to Graduate

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<sup>6</sup> <http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/forms/index.html#PhD>

Studies approval. The majority of members of the Dissertation Committee must be ladder faculty members of the Graduate Program in Psychology.

A candidate's Dissertation Committee can require a defense of the completed dissertation in a final oral examination, according to the Plan B requirements. Committees are encouraged by the program to use this option under most circumstances. If this option is chosen by the Dissertation Committee, all members of the committee shall conduct the final oral examination, which consists of an oral presentation of the dissertation, followed by questions to the candidate from the committee members, based primarily on issues arising out of the relationship of the dissertation to the general field of study in which the subject of the dissertation lies.

Upon the Dissertation Committee's acceptance of the dissertation, a hard-bound copy should be submitted to the Psychology Department, where it will be kept on file. A black binding should be used, with the author's name and year of degree printed on the narrow edge. The dissertation must also be submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies, following established procedures.

### 9) Normative Time to Degree

The normative time to candidacy is 10 quarters. The normative time in candidacy is 5 quarters.

### 10) Typical Time Line and Sequence of Events

|               | <i>Fall</i>   | <i>Winter</i>   | <i>Spring</i>   |
|---------------|---|---|---|
| <b>Year 1</b> | PSC 204A<br>Content course<br>PSC 200<br>PSC 202  | Statistics course<br>Content course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Mini Prospectus due</i><br><i>Initial IAC meeting</i> | Content course<br>Content course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Advance to candidacy for</i><br><i>Plan I M.A. (if applicable)</i> |
| <b>Year 2</b> | Statistics course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Individual Research</i><br><i>Project paper due</i> | Content course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>IAC meeting to discuss</i><br><i>progress</i>                              | Content course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Advance to candidacy for</i><br><i>Plan II M.A. (if applicable)</i>                  |
| <b>Year 3</b> | Statistics course<br>PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>Written Preliminary</i><br><i>Exam</i>              | PSC 202<br>PSC 299<br><i>IAC meeting to discuss</i><br><i>progress</i>  | PSC 202<br>PSC 299  |
| <b>Year 4</b> | PSC 299<br><i>Qualifying Exam</i>   | PSC 299D<br>PSC 299   | PSC 299D<br>PSC 299   |
| <b>Year 5</b> | PSC 299D<br>PSC 299   | PSC 299D<br>PSC 299   | PSC 299D<br>PSC 299<br><i>Final Oral Exam</i>   |

### **11) Sources of Funding**

Students are typically funded through a combination of TA positions, GSR positions, and fellowships.

### **12) PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee status**

Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave), In Absentia (reduced fees when researching out of state), and Filing Fee status can be found in the [Graduate Student Guide](#).<sup>7</sup>

### **13) Leaving the Program Prior to Completion of the Ph.D. Requirements**

Students who leave the program prior to completing the requirements for the Ph.D. may still be eligible to receive the Master's if they have fulfilled all the requirements (see M.A. section). Students can use the [Change of Degree Objective form](#) available from the Office of the Registrar.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <http://gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/students/handbook/>

<sup>8</sup> <http://registrar.ucdavis.edu/PDFFiles/D065PetitionForChangeOfGraduateMajor.pdf>

## APPENDIX: Optional Minor in Quantitative Psychology

Any graduate student may obtain a Minor in Quantitative Psychology by satisfying the following requirements.

- Complete three of the four courses in the sequence of Quantitative courses required of all students in the Ph.D. program (PSC 204A, 204B, 204C, and 204D).
- Complete at least two of the courses in the sequence of advanced Quantitative courses (currently PSC 205A, 205B, 205C, and 205D; additional courses may be added to the PSC 205 sequence in the future and may be used to satisfy this requirement).
- Enroll in and attend the Quantitative brown bag seminar (PSC 202) for at least three quarters.<sup>9</sup>
- Complete a minor exam/project, with both written and oral presentation requirements, under the supervision of a three-member committee of faculty from the Department of Psychology.

A minor designation will not appear on the diploma; a record of satisfaction of minor requirements will be retained in departmental records.

### Research Paper

Students should consult with faculty members serving on their Quantitative Minor Committee (see below) in choosing a topic and developing a proposal for the research paper requirement of the Minor in Quantitative Psychology. The actual project will vary between students in terms of its content, and the degree of quantitative sophistication should be decided upon in consultation with committee members.

Previously submitted papers intended to meet Ph.D. degree requirements cannot be used to meet the requirements of this research project, unless they involve substantial revisions to the methodological portion, such as in cases in which the quantitative contribution is new to the research area. The quantitative aspect of the project should be advanced in terms of the student's background. Thus, the student should make clear how the proposed project represents an advance over his or her previous work.

While there is a great deal of flexibility in what will satisfy the research paper requirement, the paper should generally fall within one of the two following categories.

#### 1. *Theoretical Quantitative Paper*

Papers that fall within this category involve advancements in quantitative psychology, such as investigations of the properties of estimators or statistical tests under particular research settings encountered by researchers working in the student's area of expertise. Monte Carlo studies in which data are simulated, for example, may be used to investigate the properties of statistical procedures under special circumstances that pose analytic difficulties in the student's area of specialization. A comparison could then be made between data conditions that meet the statistical as-

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<sup>9</sup> For students whose area of specialization is not Quantitative Psychology, enrolling in the Quantitative brown bag version of PSC 202 *does not* satisfy the PSC 202 course requirement discussed in section 3c of the Ph.D. Requirements. Since the Office of the Registrar prevents simultaneous enrollment in more than one section of PSC 202, students may receive credit in the same term for both the brown bag seminar in their area of specialization and the Quantitative brown bag seminar by enrolling in PSC 202 for the former and PSC 298 (Group Study) for 1 unit, using the CRN of the Quantitative Psychology Area Head, for the latter.

sumptions of a particular method and those conditions that routinely arise in the student's area.

## 2. *Applied Quantitative Paper*

A second project type is one in which the student uses a sophisticated analytic procedure to address a research question of substantive interest in psychology. In most cases, the analytic procedure used will be one that is covered in a course from the PSC 205 advanced quantitative series. In any case, the student should be clear about the appropriateness of the chosen analytic procedure in addressing the research question of interest. The student may discuss, for example, how the chosen procedure addresses any shortcomings of procedures typically applied to such data or how the procedure allows researchers to address new aspects of a common problem. Alternatively, a research paper may be one in which a student develops a theoretical model and provides a quantitative framework by which the substantive model may be evaluated.

### **Meeting the Project Requirements**

#### 1. *Timing of the Project*

In many cases, students will satisfy course requirements for the Quantitative Minor in advance of completing the research paper. Students are encouraged, however, to discuss with faculty members possible research projects as soon as possible, so that a suitable project may be carefully developed, and to begin work on the project prior to completing all course requirements for the minor, although courses directly relevant to the chosen research project will generally be completed prior to developing a project proposal.

#### 2. *The Quantitative Minor Committee*

The Quantitative Minor Committee, which approves and evaluates the project, consists of at least three faculty members selected by the student, of which two must be from the Quantitative area in Psychology. This committee does not need to be the same as the Individual Advising Committee, although it may be.

Students are expected to consult with committee members in developing a research project proposal that will satisfy the paper requirement. They will produce a written project proposal that details the type of paper (e.g., from the types described above) and how the paper will satisfy the requirements of the particular project (e.g., if an applied quantitative paper, the student might describe how the proposed work will address any analytic shortcomings of procedures commonly applied in their area of specialization). Upon approval of the project by the Quantitative Minor Committee, the student will work independently to perform the research and write the paper. This provides students the opportunity to work through problems on their own and helps to ensure that they develop a deep understanding of the methods studied.