

College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Department of Psychology

George Mason University

Biopsychology Masters and Doctoral Graduate Programs

Student/Faculty Handbook

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I. WHO'S WHO IN THE DEPARTMENT

Department Chair:

Dr. Deborah Boehm-Davis 993-1398 / DK 2003 dbdavis@gmu.edu

Associate Chair for Graduate Studies:

Dr. Doris Bitler 993-8817 / DK 2051 dbitler@gmu.edu

Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies:

Dr. James Sanford 993-1351 / DK 2046 jsanford@gmu.edu

Office Manager:

Ms. Susan Ridley 993-1398 / DK 2003 sridley@gmu.edu

Graduate Programs Coordinator:

Ms. Darby Wiggins 993-1548 / DK 2014 dwiggin3@gmu.edu

Undergraduate Program Coordinator:

Ms. Sara Montiel 993-1759 / DK 2086 smontiel@gmu.edu

Grants and Budget Administrator:

Ms. Kristin Fairchild 993-1495 / DK 2003 kfairch1@gmu.edu

Fiscal Services Assistant:

Ms. Frah Abdi 993-3235 / DK 2003 fabdi@gmu.edu

Administrative Support Specialist:

Ms. Stacey Sexton 993-1384 / DK 2001 ssexton@gmu.edu

Director of Undergraduate Advising/Teaching Assistant Coordinator:

Dr. Michael Hurley 993-1384 / DK 2086 mhurley2@gmu.edu

Laboratory Manager:

Mr. Dave Cerri 993-1353 / DK 2024 dcerri@gmu.edu

Director, Applied Developmental Program:

Dr. Susanne Denham 993-1378 / DK 1024A sdenham@gmu.edu

Director, Biopsychology Program:

Dr. Robert Smith 993-4339 / DK 2044 bsmith@gmu.edu

Director of Clinical Training:

Dr. Jerome Short 993-1368 / DK 2057 jshort@gmu.edu

Director of the Psychological Clinic:

Dr. Robyn Mehlenbreck 993-1371 / Clinic 202 rmehlenb@gmu.edu

Director, Human Factor/Applied Cognition Program:

Dr. Raja Parasuraman 993-1357 / DK 2055

rparasur@gmu.edu

Coordinator, Human Factor/Applied Cognition M.A. Program:

Dr. Raja Parasuraman 993-1357 / DK 2055

rparasur@gmu.edu

Director, Industrial/Organizational Program:

Dr. Lois Tetrick 993-1372 / DK 3066A

ltetrick@gmu.edu

Coordinator, Industrial/Organizational M.A. Program:

Dr. Louis Buffardi 993-1363 / DK 3072

buffardi@gmu.edu

Director, School Psychology/CAGS Program:

Dr. Grover Foehlinger 993-5127 / DK 2063

gfoehlin@gmu.edu

II. COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES GRADUATE POLICIES

These policies apply to all graduate students within the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS). For more specific information on your individual program, please read further on in this handbook.

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS)

The College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) is composed of 11 departments and 10 major interdisciplinary programs. The college is also home to New Century College, which offers an innovative interdisciplinary major as well as Mason Cornerstones, a first-year program for students in all majors, and Technology Across the Curriculum, which promotes the use of technology to enhance learning in all courses and disciplines. Together with the College of Science, the college administers the university-wide Honors Program in General Education, the academic program of the Honors College. This is open to qualified students from all majors in the university. The college has a distinguished faculty of more than 400, including a Nobel laureate and recipients of the Pulitzer Prize and Guggenheim Fellowship.

At the undergraduate level, all programs emphasize challenge, opportunity, and success. They challenge students to think critically and creatively and to go beyond what is required by pursuing research experiences, minors, double majors, honors in the major and accelerated master's degree programs, which enable them to earn both an undergraduate and a graduate degree, often within five years. They provide many opportunities beyond the classroom including study abroad programs, service learning, internships, and career-enhancing courses and minors, all of which will help prepare them for success beyond college.

At the graduate level, programs of study provide opportunities for career development and advancement, professional education, participation in research, and personal fulfillment.

All programs encourage the exploration of contemporary issues through a dynamic curriculum that fosters an informed understanding of real world problems. The college provides students with an education that enables them to think critically, adapt to the changing conditions of society, and provide informed leadership to future generations.

The Graduate Council

The Graduate Council is the governing body for all graduate academic policies and procedures. The council approves all new graduate programs; authorizes all graduate course work, policies, and degrees conferred by the university; and sets minimum standards for admission to and graduation from any graduate program. These are minimum standards that all programs must meet; individual programs may set and enforce higher standards. The Office of the Provost administers university graduate policies for the Graduate Council.

Policies for All Students

George Mason uses only Mason e-mail accounts to communicate with enrolled students. Students should activate their Mason e-mail account, use it to communicate with their department and other administrative units, and check it regularly for important information.

Registration and Degree Audit

Students are responsible for correctly registering for courses and paying all tuition and fees by the official university registration and payment deadlines. Instructors do not have the authority to add students to courses, and students may not sit in on classes for which they are not registered. All students should verify the accuracy of their enrollment before the end of the add period and should check [Patriot Web](#) to verify that they are registered for the classes that they think they are.

All students are responsible for reviewing their own transcripts and degree audits regularly to ensure that they are correct and that they are on track to meet all their requirements.

Transfer of Credit

Graduate credit earned prior to admission to a certificate, master's, or doctoral program may be eligible to be transferred into the program and applied to the certificate or degree. Transfer of credit requires the approval of the program director and dean or director of the school, college, or institute. *Each program/concentration reserves the right to determine whether the credit is eligible for transfer and applicable to the specific certificate or degree program.* Note that credits accepted for transfer do not compute into any Mason GPA. Limits on the number of credits that can be transferred derive from the degree requirements given below.

Credit is usually considered for transfer at the student's request at the time of initial registration as a degree-seeking student. Students must supply official transcripts. For transcripts from outside the United States, students must supply an official transcript evaluation and an official translation for transcripts not in English if these documents were not supplied in the admission process. Credit transfer requests from students who are admitted provisionally are not considered until they have fulfilled the conditions of their admission and the provisional qualifier has been removed from their records.

To be eligible for transfer credit, the credit must be graduate credit earned at another accredited university, earned at another institution and recommended for graduate credit in the American Council on Education guidebook, or earned at Mason while in a nondegree status or enrolled through extended studies. The credit must have been earned within six years prior to first enrollment as an admitted student in the specific certificate or degree program, and a minimum grade of B (3.00) must have been earned. The course must be applicable toward a degree at the institution offering the course. Extension and in-service courses that are not intended by the institution offering the courses to be applied to a degree program are not eligible for transfer credit to Mason. The credits cannot have been previously applied toward a degree at another institution or Mason; however, up to 3 credits previously applied to a degree program at another institution may be transferred into a certificate program at Mason.

Reduction of Credit

The number of credits required by a doctoral, master of fine arts, or master's program of more than 39 credits may be reduced on the basis of a previously earned master's degree. Reduction of credit requires the approval of the program director and the dean or director of the school, college, or institute. *Each program/concentration reserves the right to determine whether the credits are eligible for reduction of credit and applicable to the degree program and the number of credits to be reduced.* Reduction of credit is limited to a maximum of 30 credits in a doctoral program, 20 in an MFA program, and 18 in the MA in psychology concentration in school psychology, and derive from the degree requirements given below.

Students requesting a reduction of credit must supply official transcripts. For transcripts from outside the United States, students must supply an official transcript evaluation and an official translation for transcripts not in English if these documents were not supplied in the admission process. Reduction-of-credit requests from students who are admitted provisionally are not considered until the students have fulfilled the conditions of their admission and had the provisional qualifier removed from their records.

Credits used in reduction of credit are not subject to time limits, and the credits must have been applied to a previous degree. All the other conditions given above for eligibility of transfer of credit apply also to reduction of credits.

Permission to Study Elsewhere

Students enrolled in a degree program may take graduate courses at another accredited institution and apply these credits to a master's or doctoral degree with prior approval. Approval must be secured in writing from the director of the graduate program and the dean or director of the school, college, or institute, and submitted to Mason's Office of the Registrar before registering at the other institution. Upon completion of the course, students must arrange for an official transcript to be submitted to Mason so that the credits may be transferred into their Mason degree program. These credits are subject to all the other conditions given above for transfer credit, including limits on numbers of credits that can be taken elsewhere. Note that credits accepted for transfer do not compute into any Mason GPA. Permission to take a course elsewhere does not exempt a graduate student from satisfying the degree requirements given below.

Enrolled, degree-seeking graduate students may be eligible to take a limited number of courses through the Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area. See the University Consortium section in the Registration, Attendance, and Grading chapter of the University Catalog. Credits earned through the consortium are considered resident, not transfer, credits, and are therefore not subject to transfer of credit conditions or limitations.

Washington Consortium of Universities Registration

Eligible students may enroll in courses at any of the institutions in the Consortium of Universities in the Washington Metropolitan area. Students are limited to one consortium course per semester, with a career maximum of 6 credits. To register for a consortium course, students

must have an overall GPA of at least 3.00 and be in good academic standing. Students with grades of IN on their record or who earned grades of C or F in the most recent semester are not eligible to register for a consortium course. Students who have received a grade less than 3.00 in a consortium course are not permitted to enroll in additional consortium courses. Newly admitted graduate students are not permitted to enroll in consortium courses during their first semester of graduate study. Students who wish to enroll in consortium courses during their second semester of study must wait until the grades for the previous semester have been posted. More information about the Consortium of Universities can be found in the [Academic Policies](#) chapter.

Graduate Level Grading

University course work is measured in terms of quantity and quality. A credit normally represents one hour per week of lecture or recitation or not fewer than two hours per week of laboratory work throughout a semester. The number of credits is a measure of quantity. The grade is a measure of quality. The University-wide system for grading graduate courses is as follows:

Grade Quality Points Graduate Courses

A+ 4.00 Satisfactory / Passing
A 4.00 Satisfactory / Passing
A- 3.67 Satisfactory / Passing
B+ 3.33 Satisfactory / Passing
B 3.00 Satisfactory / Passing
B- 2.67 Satisfactory* / Passing
C 2.00 Unsatisfactory/Passing
F 0.00 Unsatisfactory / Failing

* Note: Students are advised that, although a B- is a satisfactory grade for a course, they must maintain a 3.0 average in their degree program and present a 3.0 GPA on the courses listed on the graduation application.

Grade Appeals

Grade appeals should be made to the department or program following the process specified in the Academic Policies chapter of the University Catalog. If they are resolved within the department or program, that unit is the final level of appeal. The departmental decision may be appealed to the dean only on the basis of procedural irregularity. Graduate students should address such appeals through the Office Graduate Academic Affairs. If the grade appeal is not resolved within the department or program, the chair makes a recommendation to the dean, who makes the final determination. The decision of the dean is not subject to review or further appeal.

Academic Warning

A notation of academic warning is entered on the transcript of a graduate student who receives a grade of C or F in a graduate course, or while a grade of IN is in effect.

Academic Termination

Student Status	Students may be terminated for any one of the following reasons:
Provisionally admitted degree seeking graduate students	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fail to meet conditions of admission within time limits2. Fail to make satisfactory progress toward the degree, as determined by the academic unit3. Accumulate 12 credits of unsatisfactory grades in undergraduate courses4. Accumulate grades of F in two graduate courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades in graduate courses <p>[NOTE: undergraduate and graduate course grades are not combined to reach the termination threshold; they are considered separately.]</p>
Fully admitted graduate students enrolled in degree and/or certificate program	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fail to make satisfactory progress toward degree or certificate requirements <p>[NOTE: Fully admitted graduate students who accumulate grades of F in two graduate courses or 9 credits of unsatisfactory grades in graduate courses qualify for dismissal, not termination.]</p>

Although the university will make every effort to notify students when their performance reaches the threshold for termination, each student is responsible for knowing the termination criteria, for knowing when their grades have met the standard and for initiating any appeal to their dean. Once the appeal period has expired, or the student's appeal has been denied, a letter of termination is sent by the dean or director of the school, college, or institute, and notification of academic termination is affixed to the graduate student's official record. Students who are terminated are no longer eligible to take courses in the program, but may apply to another degree program or may apply to take courses in other programs through non-degree studies.

Academic Dismissal

A graduate student is dismissed upon accumulating either grades of F in two courses or nine credits of unsatisfactory grades in graduate courses. These are minimum standards of academic performance; some programs have higher standards. A student may also be dismissed for failure to meet other program requirements such as doctoral competence examinations. The notation of academic dismissal is affixed to the graduate student's official record. A student who is dismissed may not take additional course work at the university.

Graduate Appeals of Dismissal or Termination

All graduate students should be familiar with the university policies on dismissal and termination as stated in the Academic Policies chapter of the University Catalog. Students who meet the criteria for dismissal or termination may submit a written appeal to the Office of

Graduate Academic Affairs. Appeals should include all relevant information on the basis for appeal, as well as any appropriate documentation. Appeals of termination and dismissal are reviewed at the beginning of each semester by a faculty committee. The ruling of that committee represents the final decision of the college.

Voluntary Resignation for a Graduate Degree Program

Degree-seeking students may officially resign from their academic program with the approval of their department or program chair and their dean. The Voluntary Resignation form must be approved by the student's program and Student Accounts, then submitted to the Registrar's Office for notation on the transcript. Resignations after the drop period will result in grades of W on the student's transcript for that semester, and removal from any future registered courses. Program resignation is final. Students who have been granted a resignation will not be able to register for any courses unless admitted to another degree program or nondegree status in a different program.

Full-time Classification of Graduate Students

Graduate students are considered full time if they are enrolled in at least 9 graduate credits per semester or hold a full-time assistantship (20 hours a week) and are enrolled in at least 6 graduate credits per semester.

Master's students may enroll in 1 credit of 799 and be considered full time only if they have completed 3 credits of 799 and the student along with their advisor and department chair certify each semester that the student is working full time on the thesis. See the Master's Thesis section for more information regarding 799.

Doctoral students who are enrolled in dissertation credits (either 998 or 999) are considered full time if they are enrolled in at least 6 credits per semester, regardless of whether they hold an assistantship. Doctoral students who have advanced to candidacy and have completed the minimum number of credits required by the university and their degree program, including the minimum number of credits of 998 and 999, are considered full time if they are registered for at least 1 credit of 999 and the student along with their advisor and department chair certify each semester that they are working full time on the dissertation. See the Dissertation Registration section for more information regarding 998 and 999.

To be considered as full time under the aforementioned clauses, a student must complete and submit the appropriate forms to the Office of the Registrar prior to the first day of classes for the semester.

Note that different criteria for full-time status may apply for tuition, verification, loan deferral, and financial aid. Contact Student Accounts, the Registrar's Office, and Student Financial Aid, respectively, for more information.

Permission to Re-enroll in Graduate Study

Permission to re-enroll in a program must be obtained by all master's and doctoral degree students who have failed to enroll in at least 1 credit of course work for two or more consecutive semesters at Mason. A program may allow a student to petition to graduate under any catalog in effect while the student was enrolled. All program components, including concentrations, must appear in the catalog for the year selected. The final decision as to catalog year rests with the unit dean or director. Forms are available from the Office of the Registrar at registrar.gmu.edu/forms.

Masters and Doctoral Program Time limits

Master's degree students have six years from the time of first enrollment as a degree-seeking student to complete their degrees. Individual master's programs may have stricter time limits, which are published in this catalog. International students attending in F-1 or J-1 status also have more restrictive time limits; contact the Office of International Programs and Services for information. Students who are given permission to re-enroll following an absence from Mason may not count the six-year time limit as beginning on the date of re-enrollment. Students who will not meet published time limits because of circumstances beyond their control may petition for an extension. Failure to meet the time limits or to secure approval of an extension request may result in termination from the program.

Doctoral students have six years from the time of first enrollment as a degree-seeking student to advance to candidacy. Students have five years from the time of advancement to candidacy to graduation. Individual doctoral programs may have stricter time limits, which are published in this catalog. International students attending in F-1 or J-1 status also have more restrictive limits; contact the Office of International Programs and Services for information. Students who are given permission to re-enroll following an absence from Mason may not count the time limits as beginning on the date of re-enrollment. Students who will not meet published time limits because of circumstances beyond their control may petition for an extension. Failure to meet the time limits or to secure approval of an extension request may result in termination from the program.

III. BIOPSYCHOLOGY

About the Program

What We Do

The Biopsychology graduate programs emphasize training in the neurobiological bases of behavior in animals and humans. Students are prepared for work in research settings, such as academic, government or industrial labs. Areas in which theses are encouraged include: neurobehavioral effects of drug exposure in pregnancy and adolescence, neural bases of learning and memory, the role of metals in learning and memory and in Alzheimer's Disease, cognition and aging, schizophrenia and related disorders, and animal models of addiction, including neural bases of addiction and related behaviors. Some students also work with advisors outside of the core Biopsychology faculty, and conduct theses that include noninvasive imaging in humans, computational modeling of neural function, other aspects of basic neuroscience, or genomic work. The program website has more information on current faculty research.

<http://www.gmu.edu/depts/psychology/GMUBio/>

PhD students are also prepared for faculty positions. Generally, all students will teach at least one course under faculty supervision while in the PhD program.

Research Resources

The Department maintains approved rat and mouse colonies. Experimental equipment includes behavioral testing equipment and histological/histochemical facilities. Behavioral equipment includes a number of video-based systems [Morris water maze for rats and mice, rat and mouse radial arm mazes, novel object recognition, open field, elevated plus maze], a fear conditioning system, and Skinner boxes for self-administration studies. The histological equipment includes a Neurolucida system for morphological quantitation, two state of the art cryostats, and a humidity chamber for Golgi work. Various other histological stains and techniques [optical and fluorescent] are also supported, including in situ hybridization histochemistry and PCR. The program has collaborative arrangements with the Center for Biomedical Genomics, at the Prince William campus, allowing for genetic analyses.

The Department, and individual faculty, now have a variety of up-to-date equipment for use in research. Please bear in mind that some of it was purchased by individual faculty from research grants [and thus requires permission of the owner], that some of it is hazardous, that most of it is used by more than one person, that many items are rather expensive, and that a number of items are somewhat delicate. Your rule of thumb should be that you never use a piece of equipment, or perform an experimental process, unless you have been trained properly and have permission of the equipment owner. Violation of this may result in serious injury, charges for repair of damaged equipment, and loss of use of equipment - if the owner of a piece of equipment bans you from use of it, there is no appeal. Our students are now benefiting enormously from these recent purchases, but you must use them responsibly.

Some Biopsychology students may also wish to take advantage of other resources outside of the Psychology Department. The department works closely with other Neuroscience faculty. Three of the faculty of the new Molecular Neuroscience department [Ascoli, Butler, Blackwell] were Biopsychology faculty until formation of the new department, and working relationships with these faculty and recent additional hires in Molecular Neuroscience continue to be cordial – the faculty of that department are prime sources of outside members of dissertation committees, and procedures not available within Biopsychology. More information on neuroscience assets at Mason outside of Biopsychology can be found at the Krasnow <http://krasnow.gmu.edu/> and Neuroscience <http://neuroscience.gmu.edu/> websites.

Some students also take advantage of local area resources outside of Mason. Thesis and dissertation work has been done at various NIH laboratories, for example. We encourage students to conduct research on campus when feasible, but work at off-campus sites may be permitted with approval of the advisor and program director.

Approval of Research Projects

All research involving human subjects must be approved by the University's Institutional Review Board, and all animal studies must be approved by the Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC). Forms and procedures may be found on the website of the Office for Research Subject Protection. <http://www.gmu.edu/research/ORSP/IACUCMeetingSchedule.html>

Detailed information on applying for approval for research and using the Department's PSYC 100 subject pool can be received from the office manager in the Chair's office.

Computer Facilities

The university has numerous computer labs around campus that access to the Web. To activate your account, visit the following site: <https://chimera.gmu.edu/e-mail/prod/index.html> if you have any questions, please call the support center at 703-993-8870. Most GRAs have space and access to computers within the lab. GTAs may conduct their office hours either within department adjunct/GTA space [currently located in Thompson Hall] or in their advisor's research space if available. Please bear in mind that computer access does not include print support for personal uses [you can print work related to your GRA or GTA assignment, but not materials for courses in which you are registered].

Financial Support

A detailed description of financial support available and procedures for applying are listed later in this handbook. In general, PhD students are given priority for support, and most PhD students receive three-year support guarantees as part of their admission offer. Many, but not all, MA students receive GTA or GRA support – the exact distribution varies as a function of resources available. Some MA students who initially accept admission without a support offer receive offers later as new grants arrive; all students seeking support should stay in touch with Dr. Mike Hurley, who administers GTA support and is knowledgeable about support available in

other offices/departments on campus, and with their advisors, who may be able to provide GRA support.

Student Resources

Information for students on University and Colleges policies, registration services, financial aid, supportive services, thesis/dissertation policy and graduation can be found on the Graduate Student Information webpage. Additionally, Program Handbooks, Programs of Study (POS), commonly used forms as well as other useful resources can be located here. Students are encouraged to bookmark this link and visit it often.

<http://mason.gmu.edu/~dwiggin3/GradPsychResources.html>

FAQs for Graduate Students:

How do I get a TA or RAship?

PhD students are usually guaranteed three years of support on admission, contingent on satisfactory progress through the program and satisfactory performance in assignments.

Assignments are done annually, and you must respond to emails in order to get an assignment and retain your support. MA students do not have guarantees of support, but may be appointed to a TA or RA position.

TA assignments are handled by the department administrator, Mike Hurley, who consults with faculty. RA assignments are handled directly by the person with the money for an RA position – typically the individual faculty member. Brand new faculty, and faculty with grants, are usually the only ones who have these positions available. You can also seek TA and RA positions in other departments by applying directly to them. More senior students, and Mike Hurley, are good sources of leads on these. *Support offers are always conveyed in writing from the person responsible for the account; do not rely on verbal reports from anyone.*

How do I get tuition remission and health insurance coverage?:

Tuition must be paid from some account. PhD students get a commitment of tuition coverage for three years in their award letter. It is rare for MA students to get tuition coverage for TA appointments, but grant-funded RAs often carry tuition for MA students. For health insurance, all graduate students with on-campus appointments carrying an academic year stipend of \$10,000 or more receive paid health insurance.

What happens if my interests change?

You can generally switch advisors, with assent of the new advisor, except that we expect all students to complete a project once that project has been started with a particular faculty member. With approval of the program director, advisors may be outside of the Biopsyc program [e.g., Molecular Neuroscience, Molecular/Microbiology, or Cognitive Neuroscience].

If your interests are closer to that of another program, you must apply for admission to that program and be considered with all other applicants.

How do I get money to attend a convention?

Generally, you need to present your research at a convention in order to be eligible for support. Most of our travel support comes through the Graduate Student Travel Fund and various grad student clubs, so join SIN [Students in Neuroscience] to maximize travel support.

How do I get money for research?

You may have to beat the bushes a bit. Most research is supported by grants. Start by talking to your advisor. If your advisor has grant money, that's your first source of support. For thesis and dissertation, the department has some support available on application, but that is generally not enough for Biopsyc work. We strongly encourage more senior students to apply for outside grants and the various internal GMU research support mechanisms. These change from time to time, so see your advisor, talk to more senior students, and see the program director.

Can I take time off?

Yes, with limits. MA students cannot go more than a year without registering, or you must apply for readmission. PhD students must apply for a leave of absence if they are not going to complete 15 or more credits within a given year, and are generally limited to no more than a year's absence during the entire program. All students have to abide by university time limits. In addition, students should pay attention to the expectations of their advisor for satisfactory progress. If an advisor is unhappy with a student's commitment to the program, the advisor is allowed to resign. While that's rare, a student cannot complete the program without an advisor, and the department does not compel a faculty member to advise a particular student – that's by mutual agreement, and partly dependent on the faculty member's perception of the student's motivation and progress. Consult your advisor regularly, even if you are taking time off.

Can I do thesis or dissertation work with an advisor not in the Biopsyc program?

Sure, if that's where your research interests lie. Thesis or dissertation research has to generally lie within the purview of Biopsychology [implications for both behavior and its mechanisms], but work can be done in other labs, even [rarely] outside of Mason. Consult your advisor and the program director.

How bad are comps?

PhD comprehensive exams are designed to allow the faculty to assess a doctoral student's broad knowledge of the methods and findings within his/her field, as well as your ability to address significant questions, and to approach research issues. Some of the questions will be designed to address your thinking about your dissertation topic, although you are not expected to have a specific proposal before taking comps. Comps are not supposed to be easy, and we give you a take-home exam with 30 days to complete it to allow you to show us how well you can think and integrate.

The oral portion of comps is basically to allow you to ‘fill in the gaps’ that faculty see in your written comps. Excellent written comps may result in a fairly short oral exam, but borderline written comps generally insure a longer series of oral questions.

What do students do after graduation?

I have the best information for students in my lab [BS]. Of the 8 PhD students I have graduated from my lab, 5 got good postdoctoral positions, 1 went immediately to work for a government contractor, 1 retained an existing government research position and has now moved to a stronger position, 1 took time off to raise kids and now heads a national foundation. Of the 5 who took postdocs, 3 are recent and still in them, 1 now chairs a Psychology department, and 1 spent years teaching part-time while raising kids and is now in a tenure-line faculty position.

More than half of my MA students have gone on to PhD programs, either at Mason or other universities. Several have gone on to senior technical positions in research in government or industry. One went into pharmaceutical sales, and a couple raised families and did not remain professionally active.

To a large extent, the future is determined by your performance in grad school. Motivated and able students [and that’s all we admit these days] have done well in finding employment after grad school.

IV. BIOPSYCHOLOGY MASTERS PROGRAM

Degree Requirements:

1. 32 Hours of Graduate Credit

2. Biopsychology Core Courses (8 hours)

PSYC 527 Introduction to Neurobiology

PSYC 558 Neuronal bases of Learning and Memory

3. One of the following (3 hours)

PSYC 559 Behavioral Chemistry

PSYC 556 Chemistry of the Brain

PSYC 5XX Biological Bases of Mental Illness and Drug Abuse*

4. Statistics (8 hours)

PSYC 611 Advanced Statistics

PSYC 612 Advanced Statistics

5. Thesis and Thesis Proposal (6 hours combined)**

PSYC 798 Thesis Proposal

PSYC 799 Thesis

PSYC 792 Practicum in Biopsychology may be substituted for thesis **only** with the approval of the advisor and the Biopsychology Coordinator.

6. PSYC 591 Professional Seminar, (1 hour)*

Should be taken in the first semester.

7. Electives (6 hours)

6 hours may be taken from other departments or within Psychology. Advisor approval is required for electives. Examples from within Psychology include:

PSYC 561 Behavioral Biology of Substance Abuse

PSYC 522 Histology and Histochemistry of the Brain

PSYC 702 Biological Bases of Human behavior

PSYC 704 Life- Span Development

*These courses have been submitted for approval to the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, which will assign a number. They are presently being taught as PSYC 592 Special Topics.

Students normally take 558, 527 and /or 611 in the first semester, in addition to the Professional Seminar.

Students intending to pursue the PhD are strongly advised to take Psyc 531.

Students in the MA program must maintain continuous registration until completion of the degree. Students must get approval from their advisor before registering for classes each semester. An e-mail to the advisor with a list of proposed courses for the semester is the most efficient way to request approval.

The curriculum will evolve from time to time as new courses and faculty are added. Students who have questions about melding different sets of requirements, or including courses not on our suggested lists, should consult their advisor and/or the program director.

Students are also responsible for insuring that they adhere to catalog requirements, and should remain familiar with requirements of the catalog under which they intend to graduate.

Masters Thesis

A thesis is required in the Biopsychology program; in unusual circumstances the student may petition to be allowed to substitute a practicum for a thesis. Students seeking this option should consult their advisor regarding procedures. Please note that advance approval of this option is required; in no case will approval be granted after the fact.

A thesis reflects the student's ability to conceptualize, design, carry out, analyze, and formally write up a research project appropriate to the student's interests. Students should begin discussion with their advisors about possible thesis topics early in their graduate career. Please bear in mind that most Biopsychology theses are costlier than the department guidelines for thesis support, and that your project must typically be close enough to your advisor's interests that your advisor can provide some financial support.

The following guidelines are to provide assistance in preparing for thesis deadlines. More specific guidelines may be found in the *Guide for Preparing Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Projects*. Copies may be obtained from the CHSS Graduate Student Coordinator in College Hall, room C112.

Students working on a thesis proposal enroll in PSYC 798. Students who have an approved proposal and are conducting the research enroll in PSYC 799. Credits earned for Directed Readings will not be converted to thesis credits. Contact Darby Wiggins at dwiggin3@gmu.edu for enrollment procedures.

Thesis Advisor and Committee

The thesis advisor works closely with the student in developing and focusing the research problem or question; writing the thesis proposal; collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data; and writing the final version of the thesis. The thesis advisor will help to choose the members of the Thesis Committee. The list of faculty interests at the end of this handbook may be of assistance in identifying an advisor and/or thesis advisor.

The Thesis Committee consists of three persons, including the thesis advisor. The thesis advisor must be a full-time faculty member in the Department of Psychology. At least one of the other two members must also be full-time faculty in the Department of Psychology. The task of

this group is to provide advice and consultation at all stages of the thesis, particularly in the development of the proposal. The point at which this committee is formed is left to the discretion of the thesis advisor. It is the student's responsibility to request faculty to participate on the committee. An approval to pursue Master's Thesis Form is available in at:

<http://psychology.gmu.edu/Graduate%20Student%20Resources/index.htm>

Thesis Proposal

The thesis proposal consists of the following:

1. Cover sheet—format is found at <http://thesis.gmu.edu/>
2. A substantial, critical review of the literature as background to the problem you are investigating, a statement of specific hypotheses, a detailed methods section, and a plan for statistical analysis.

The thesis proposal must be approved by the thesis committee, the Program Coordinator, and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies. It must then be submitted to the Dean of the College Humanities and Social Sciences (CHSS) ***before*** registration for thesis credit (PSYC 799). Six copies of the typewritten thesis proposal should be submitted to the major thesis advisor. These will be forwarded to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies and the Dean via the Graduate Programs Office (2014F DKH).

Thesis Proposal Presentation

The thesis proposal must be presented to the thesis committee for approval. This presentation is open to anyone who wishes to attend and should therefore be announced to the department. The student should discuss the procedure for this presentation with his/her thesis advisor.

Writing the Thesis

The thesis is to be written to conform to the standards of the American Psychological Association as published in the third edition of the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association*. Before a draft is submitted to the thesis committee, the student and his/her advisor should have perfected the paper as much as possible in terms of content, grammar, and format. The members of the Thesis Oral Examination Committee should receive a draft in sufficient time for them to read and critique the paper, and for the student to make any necessary revisions prior to the submission deadline. The final draft must be approved by the Thesis Oral Examination Committee, the Program Coordinator, and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies, with an original and one approved copy submitted to the Dean (via the Graduate Program Office) by the date announced on the CHSS website. Deadlines are strictly adhered to and students should be certain to visit the following CHSS site for deadline details. <http://chss.gmu.edu/chss/forgraduates/index.cfm>

Manuscript-Style MA thesis

This style is an alternative to a traditional thesis style. The faculty encourage students to use this style, as it expedites publication of the thesis work. The thesis proposal provides a focused literature review, well-developed rationale, a research design, and a data analysis plan.

The deliverables are an Introduction in the form of a Psych Review-style paper that synthesizes previous research and theory and leads to the specific question(s) to be addressed, and a detailed Methods and Analysis Plan

The final form of the thesis should be a journal-length manuscript. This should include a sharply focused literature review, well-grounded hypotheses, a clear description of the method and relevant results, and a discussion of theoretical and practical implications of the research. In order to be acceptable, the committee must judge the manuscript to be of publishable quality. The thesis proposal (which represented a broader presentation of relevant theory and research) as well as any additional results not directly relevant to the journal manuscript, or discussion of implications beyond that which a journal would accept, should be included as an appendix. Manuscript-style theses are not intended to reduce the scope of question suitable for a thesis, knowledge of the literature and methods required of the candidate, or the expectations for data analysis and interpretation. They are intended to facilitate publication of the thesis work, as the thesis is essentially ready for submission without having to rewrite and reformat, as would be required in the traditional format.

Thesis Oral Examination

An oral defense of the final thesis to the Thesis Committee is required. The defense is concerned with the problem, design, method, interpretation, and knowledge in the general area of the thesis. The defense is conducted by the thesis advisor. Successful completion of the defense is reflected by approval of the thesis committee. The defense may be attended by any interested persons; thus, the date should be provided to the Graduate Programs Assistant at least two weeks in advance.

The defense should be conducted no later than three weeks prior to the date specified in the calendar published in the University Catalog for receipt of the final thesis in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences Dean's office. Such scheduling will help assure adequate time for making revisions in the final draft. Scheduling of the date for the exam is the responsibility of both the student and thesis advisor.

Applying for Graduation

The deadlines for submission of MA degree applications to Student Records typically (but not always): September 30 for January graduation; January 31 for May graduation; May 30 for August graduation. **These dates may change, so please consult the University Catalog.** Steps in completing a graduation application for the MA degree can be found at: <http://chss.gmu.edu/chss/forgraduates/index.cfm>

Accelerated MA program.

This program allows strong undergraduates to take some graduate coursework [typically 6 hours] during their senior year, and potentially to complete the MA in one additional year of work after award of the BA/BS. The requirements of the program are the same as those of the regular MA program.

Admission to the accelerated MA.

Admission is limited to Mason undergraduates. Generally, interested students should begin working in a faculty lab before applying, and let their advisor know of their interest in the accelerated program - students in Biopsyc graduate programs are admitted to work with a particular faculty member, although changing advisors is possible. Students should apply in early Spring of their junior year - form are available from Darby Wiggins, our graduate support staff person. There is no formal deadline, but once faculty have filled their labs with incoming students for the succeeding Fall, no more students will be considered, so application near the regular MA deadline [Feb 1] is strongly encouraged. GREs are not required for the accelerated program. For MA programs, we receive many more applicants than we can accept. Students most likely to be accepted are those with a strong academic record, a strong record of research with the intended advisor, and some idea of what they would like to do for a thesis project.

V. BIOPSYCHOLOGY DOCTORAL PROGRAM

Degree Requirements

General Core Requirements (14 hours)

Biological (11 hours)

PSYC 527 Introduction to Neurobiology
PSYC 531 Mammalian Neurobiology
PSYC 558 Neuronal bases of Learning and Memory

One of the following:

PSYC 592 Biological Bases of Mental Illness and Drug Abuse
PSYC 556 Chemistry of the Brain
PSYC 559 Behavioral Chemistry

Distribution Requirements (6 hours)

A total of 6 hours must be taken from the following areas:

Cognitive (maximum 3 hours)

701 Cognitive and Affective Bases of Behavior
766 Advanced Topics in Sensation and Perception
768 Advanced Topics in Cognitive Sciences

Developmental (maximum 3 hours)

666 Cognitive and Perceptual Development
669 Social and Personality Development
704 Life-Span Development

Social (maximum 3 hours)

703 Social Bases of Behavior
667 Behavior in Small Group and Teams
668 Personality: Theoretical and Empirical Approaches

History and Systems (maximum 3 hours)

705 History and Systems in Psychology

Research (3 hours)

897 Directed Reading and Research (1 hour/semester for 1st 3 semesters)

Statistics Requirements (8 hours)

611 Advanced Statistics

612 Advanced Statistics

Quantitative Methods and Research Methods (6 hours) *

At least one of the following:

652 Analysis of Variance *This course is strongly advised.*

754 Psychological Applications of Regression Techniques

755 Statistical Packages for Psychology

756 Multivariate Techniques

3rd Year Research Project

A minimum of 3 hours from either of the following:

798, 799 MA Thesis (minimum 6 hours)

897 Directed Readings and Research

Specialized Content (15 hours)

Choose from relevant courses with approval of your advisor. Examples include:

PSYC 592 Developmental Psychobiology †

PSYC 552 Histology and Histochemistry of the Brain

PSYC 561 Behavioral Biology of Substance Abuse

PSYC 702 Biological Bases of Human Behavior

BIOL 583 General Biochemistry

BIOL 572 Human Genetics

CSI 734 Computational Neurobiology

CSI 739 Topics in Bioinformatics

NEUR 601 Intro to Neurobiology

NEUR 602 Cellular Neuroscience

NEUR 603 Mammalian Neurobiology

NEUR 604 Ethics in Scientific Research

NEUR 701 Neurophysiology Lab

NEUR 702 Research Methods

NEUR 703 Rotations and Readings

NEUR 709 Neuroscience@GMU

NEUR 689 Topics in Neuroscience

NEUR 710 Special topics in Neuroscience

NEUR 734 Computational Neurobiology

NEUR 735 Computational Neuroscience Systems

NEUR 741 Introduction to Neuroimaging

NEUR 742 Cognitive Neuroscience

NEUR 751 Applied Dynamics in Neuroscience

NEUR 851 Advanced Computation and Brain Dynamics

Dissertation (12 hours)

998 Doctoral Dissertation Proposal (at least 3 hours)

999 Doctoral Dissertation (at least 3 hours)

Professional Seminar (2 hours)

890 Seminar in Professional Psychology

Electives (6 hours)

Students choosing the thesis option (recommended) will take 9 hours from this category and fewer electives. Students who select the thesis option are required to register for a minimum of 1 credit of 798/799 each semester until the thesis is completed.

Ph.D. students must get approval from their advisor before registering for classes each semester. An e-mail to the advisor with a list of proposed courses for the semester is the most efficient way to request approval.

Suggested Examples of Non-Psychology Electives

BIOL 532	Animal Behavior
BIOL 538	Mammalogy
BIOL 553	Advanced Topics in Immunology
BIOL 573	Developmental Genetics
BIOL 583	General Biochemistry
BIOL 665	Environmental Hazards to Human Health
CHEM 502	General Biochemistry
CHEM 663	Biochemistry
CHEM 664	Biochemistry
ENGL 613	Technical and Scientific Writing
NEUR 601	Intro to Neurobiology
NEUR 602	Cellular Neuroscience
NEUR 603	Mammalian Neurobiology
NEUR 604	Ethics in Scientific Research
NEUR 701	Neurophysiology Lab
NEUR 702	Research Methods
NEUR 703	Rotations and Readings
NEUR 709	Neuroscience@GMU
NEUR 689	Topics in Neuroscience
NEUR 710	Special topics in Neuroscience
NEUR 734	Computational Neurobiology
NEUR 735	Computational Neuroscience Systems
NEUR 741	Introduction to Neuroimaging
NEUR 742	Cognitive Neuroscience
NEUR 751	Applied Dynamics in Neuroscience
NEUR 851	Advanced Computation and Brain Dynamics

Program of Study (POS)

The POS should be developed during a student's first year in the program in consultation with the major advisor. The POS and a semester-by-semester listing of courses should be submitted to the Program Coordinator for approval by the Faculty. Subsequent changes are possible, but any changes to the POS must be approved by the Faculty. You are strongly

encouraged to save an electronic copy of this document for future updating. Additionally, prior to obtaining Faculty and Program Coordinator signatures, students should email a copy of their POS to Darby Wiggins (dwiggin3@gmu.edu) for editing.

The Doctoral of Philosophy in Biopsychology Program of Study

(Last updated July 2009)

Name: _____ **Phone:** _____

Address: _____ **G#:** _____

Email: _____ **Term Admitted:** _____

Proposed Date of Comprehensive Examination: _____

PSYCHOLOGY CORE COURSES (12 Hours)

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
PSYC 527			3	
PSYC 531			3	
PSYC 558			3	
Biochemical Core – Choose One: (552, 556 or 559)*			3	
Total Hours:			12	

SPECIALIZED CORE CONTENT COURSES (6 Hours)

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
Cognitive Core – Choose One: (701, 766 or 768)				
Social Core – Choose one: (667, 668 or 701)				
Developmental Core – Choose One: (666, 669 or 704)				
History & Systems Core (705)				

Total Hours:	6
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CORE QUANTITATIVE & METHODS COURSES (8 Hours)

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
PSYC 611			4	
PSYC 612			4	
Total Hours:				8

ADVANCED QUANTITATIVE & RESEARCH METHODS (Minimum 6 hours)

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
Choose a minimum of 3 hours from the following				
PSYC 652				
PSYC 754				
PSYC 755				
PSYC 756				
Total Hours:				
Other Advanced Quantitative & Research Methods				
Total Hours:				

3rd YEAR RESEARCH PROJECT (3 Hours Min.)

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
PSYC 798	MA Thesis Proposal *			
PSYC 799	MA Thesis *			
PSYC 897	Directed Readings and Research			
* A min. of 6 hours is required for the Thesis option				

Total Hours:

SPECIALIZED CONTENT (15 hours)

Choose courses with the approval of your Advisor

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
Total Hours:				

PROFESSIONAL SEMINAR/ETHICS (2 Hours)

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
PSYC 890			2	
Total Hours:				2

RESEARCH/PRACTICUM (3 Hours)

1 hour for the 1st three semesters

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
PSYC 897	Directed Readings and Research		1	
PSYC 897	Directed Readings and Research		1	
PSYC 897	Directed Readings and Research		1	
Total Hours:				3

DISSERTATION PROPOSAL & DISSERTATION
(Minimum 3 hours in each w/min. 12 hours total)

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
PSYC 998	Dissertation Proposal			
PSYC 999	Dissertation			
Total Hours:				

ELECTIVES

Course #	Title as it appears on your transcript	Term/Year	Hours	Grade
Total Hours:				
Grand Total Hours:				

TOTAL HOURS

Applied to MA	Post MA	Dissertation	GRAND TOAL

Student

Date

Advisor

Date

Program Director

Date

Associate Chair for Graduate Studies

Date

VI. BIOPSYCHOLOGY PHD COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION

Goal

The goals of comprehensive examinations in are three-fold:

- 1) *Educational* – To provide doctoral students with an opportunity to learn, review, and synthesize the current knowledge base in the field of developmental/Biopsychology.
- 2) *Programmatic* – To assist students as they progress toward the process of writing their dissertation proposal, and
- 3) *Evaluative* – To assess whether students possess sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge and skill in their field to hold the degree they are pursuing.

Eligibility and Registration

Students normally complete all coursework for the doctoral degree (except dissertation credits), before taking comprehensives. Occasionally, a student who trails only one course from the general psychology core or the methods (not statistics) area may be approved to take comps. Such cases are reviewed by faculty individually. Comprehensive exams are offered twice a year; once in January and once in July (see timeline below). Students must register their desire to take comprehensive exams and form their comprehensive examinations committee by the November before Summer comps or by the May before Winter comps. This is done by filling out the form below and turning it in to both your advisor and program coordinator. This form is then taken to the next faculty meeting for approval. The composition of the comprehensive exam committee may be changed up to the date that the specialized reading list is finalized. No change to a committee will be permitted in the case that a retake of the exam is necessary because the student has failed the exam.

Shortly after students are approved to take comprehensives, they will receive more information about the examination, including a sample rating form used by faculty to evaluate student's written performance, and sample written comments on answers from faculty. Students will also receive at this time the standard core reading list for comprehensive exams which is developed and updated at least every other year by faculty.

Procedure

Comprehensive examinations consist of two components:

- a take-home exam
- an oral exam

Take-Home

1) For the take-home component, students will receive 5 questions according to the following structure:

***General* (All students within track will receive the same 3 questions)**

- Two (2) questions will be on general Biopsychology content
- One (1) question will be on general research methods/statistics

Specialized

- One (1) Specialized question will be on the content area of the student's area of specialization
 - One (1) Specialized question will be on methods in the student's area of specialization.
- 2) In collaboration with their advisor/comps committee chair, students will create an additional, specialized reading list for distribution to their comps committee. This specialized reading list will be revised and finalized by the student and his/her comps committee members.
- 3) Students will prepare three (3) hypothetical comp questions (1 core content, 1 specialized content, and 1 specialized methods) for consideration by the comps committee members. The extent to which the student-submitted questions resemble the student's final exam questions will vary and be determined by the committee.
- 4) Three months before questions are given; a meeting of the student's comps committee takes place in which the group discusses the topics represented on the student's reading list(s), the student's hypothetical questions, and the student's strategies/progress on studying for comps. After the student leaves this meeting, committee members will form a game plan for who writes which questions, covering which areas.
- 5) Students are encouraged to study together for comps up until the time when they get the questions, at which point there will be no discussion on comps between students.
- 6) After questions are distributed, students can consult only with their comps committee chair to get clarification/assistance with the comps questions. They may not seek assistance from anyone else after questions are passed out, unless this is approved by the comps committee chair. All communication between the student and comps committee chair concerning clarification/assistance on the questions must be in written form (email is fine).
- 7) Students must submit two (2) hard copies of each answer and a disk copy of each of the answers (in a format readable by the staff person) to the staff person responsible for processing comprehensive exams. Questions distribution, answer collection, and answer evaluation will all be conducted anonymously, so students, instead of identifying themselves on their answers, need to follow the instructions given to them for coding answers only by code number and/or color.

- (8) Answers must be turned in by the student before the deadline given below (see timetable). Late submission of answers will result in automatic failure of all questions turned in late. Early submission of answers is not only OK, but strongly encouraged in order to avoid disruption from unforeseen/uncontrollable events just before the deadline.

Oral

- 1) Students take the oral exam only after they have passed all take-home questions.
- 2) The oral examination will consist of a meeting involving the student, the comprehensive exam committee, and any other graders of the student's answers who wish to attend. Questions will be based on the student's answers to the take-home questions and the student's reading lists. This meeting takes place within six (6) weeks of notification of passing the written questions. Scheduling of the oral must be completed within three (3) weeks of notification of passing the written questions. Comps committee members will rate the student's performance during the oral on a pass/fail basis.
- 3) These procedures also apply to any retake of the oral; i.e. the retake must be taken within 6 weeks of the first oral.
- 4) Students who fail the oral examination will be allowed to retake the oral exam component only one additional time at an appropriate and convenient time for the comps committee and the student.
- 5) Students must pass both the take-home and the oral component of the exam in order to officially pass comprehensive examinations and advance to candidacy.

Evaluation of Take-Home Answers

- 1) Answers must be word-processed and written in APA style (4th edition). Each answer is strictly limited to 15, double-spaced pages (not including references), with one-inch margins on all sides and 12-point font. Readers will stop reading after 15 pages and evaluate answers only on the basis of material in the first 15 pages.
- 2) Students can use any written source (i.e., journal articles, textbooks, course notes, books) to help them answer the questions. Students are expected to rely heavily on and their reading lists and the current, relevant research literature to answer the questions. Additional sources outside of the student's reading lists can be used (and may be needed) depending on the question. Students are required to give appropriate references to the sources they use and to include a reference section in their papers. Plagiarism on the exam will be considered academic misconduct, resulting in automatic failure of the entire examination and possible termination from the program. Students who are unclear on what constitutes plagiarism or the improper paraphrasing of others' work are advised to ask for guidance from their comps committee chair.

3) Answers to exam questions will be assessed along the following 7 dimensions:

- Comprehensiveness or breadth of diverse material covered
- Original Integration/Synthesis of material
- Accuracy – extent to which statements made are factual/correct
- Scholarly Depth of answer
- Clarity/Organization of the response
- Quality of writing – Syntax, spelling, coherence, punctuation...
- APA style and other Formatting Requirements listed in #1 above

Student answers to each take-home question should be free-standing. That is, for each question, the student should not refer to information included in his/her answers to other take-home questions.

- 4) Exam answers will be independently evaluated on a 12-point scale by two faculty readers. Each general take-home question will be graded by the same set of faculty for all students taking the exam at a particular time. An average rating across the two readers of 8 or higher is required in order to pass the question. If the ratings of the two graders for a question differ by more than 2 points, the raters should try to resolve the discrepancy through discussion. In the rare case that discussion does not lead to a resolution, a third reader should be asked to grade the answer, and the mean of the three graders should be used as the score for that question.
- 5) Students receive feedback on the results of their written exam through written comments made by faculty grading the exam and, in some cases, through individual meetings with graders. There are three possible outcomes: 1) Pass – student passed all 5 written questions, 2) Rewrite – Student must rewrite one or two failed written questions, or 3) fail – student failed 3 or more questions.
- 6) Failure on the written comprehensive examinations is defined by failing any three or more questions, or, in the case where a student fails one (1) or two (2) questions, by failing to earn a “B” or better (i.e., an average score of “8” or better) across all five (5) questions, or by failing any re-write question. In all cases, the student must retake the entire comprehensive examination again and this would take place during the next regularly scheduled time for comps. Ordinarily, the questions asked at the time of retake will be new, although the faculty reserves the right to draft questions that, in their judgment, best fit the interests and development of the student. Students who fail comps will only receive one retake opportunity. Students can re-write up to two (2) failed comps questions only if the average score across all questions is an “8” or better. The same up-to-two rewrite policy will be effective the second time if a student must retake the entire exam.

A student who fails the exam the second time will be terminated from the program.

Comprehensive Exam Timeline		
Deadline* (Spring comps)	Action(s)	Deadline* (Summer comps)
<i>May 15</i>	Student's intent to take comps is registered and student's comps committee is formed	<i>November 15</i>
<i>June 1</i>	Student's intent to take comps is approved by faculty Student is notified of comps approval and is sent to sample rating form, the core reading list, and a handout describing the procedures and guidelines for comps Student begins to construct specialized reading list with advisor	<i>December 1</i>
<i>July 1</i>	Student submits draft of specialized reading list of advisor Student reads and prepares	<i>January 1</i>
<i>September 1</i>	Specialized reading list needs to be finalized and approved by advisor Student reads and prepares	<i>March 1</i>
<i>October 1</i>	Meeting of student's comps committee Student submits (at meeting) 3 hypothetical comp questions to committee members Student reads and prepares	<i>April 1</i>
<i>January 1</i>	Comprehensive exam questions given to student	<i>July 1</i>
<i>February 1</i>	Comprehensive exam answers due	<i>August 1</i>
<i>March 1</i>	Comprehensive exam questions graded Meeting of student's comps committee to determine pass/failure	<i>September 1</i>
<i>March 15</i>	Results are communicated to the student (including re-write requirements)	<i>September 15</i>
<i>April 15</i>	Re-writes due to advisor, if student was asked to re-write one or two questions	<i>October 15</i>
Oral exam must take place within one month after all written questions are passed.		

*Note: All deadlines above refer to the first university working day after the date listed if the posted date falls on a weekend or on a day when the university is closed (i.e., Jan. 1).

Application for Approval to Take Comprehensive Exams

Name _____

Expected date of comprehensive exam: _____

Courses completed by expected date of exam:

	<u>Course #</u>	<u>Semester Taken</u>
1. General Core Requirements		
a. Cognitive	_____	_____
b. Biological	_____	_____
c. Social	_____	_____
d. Developmental	_____	_____
e. Historical	_____	_____
2. Quantitative and Research Methods (Advanced)	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____
3. Developmental/Biopsychology Foundations	_____	_____
	_____	_____
	_____	_____

Date of completion of MA thesis (if applicable): _____

Approved _____ Not Approved _____

Signature

Date

Advisor _____

Program Director _____

Biopsychology Program

Approval of Ph.D. Comprehensive Exam Committee

Student's Name _____

Proposed date of Comprehensive Exam _____

Members of the committee _____ **(Chair)**

Approval

Date

Program Director _____

Department Chair _____

Note: Approval must be obtained by 5/15 for January comps and by 11/15 for July comps.

Biopsychology Program
Comprehensive Examination Question Grading Form

Student Code:

Date of Exam:

Current Date:

Reader's Name _____

General

____ Developmental/Physiological 1

____ Developmental/Physiological 2

____ Research Methods/Statistics

Specialized

____ Content

____ Methods

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Other Comments:

12=A+ 11=A 10=A- 9=B+ 8=B 7=B- 6=C+ 5=C 4=C-

In order to pass a question a student must have an average of 8.

Biopsychology Program

Grading Sheet for Comprehensive Examination Answers

A) **Comprehensiveness** or breadth of diverse material covered

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>OK</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

B) **Original Integration/Synthesis** of material

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>OK</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

C) **Accuracy** – extent of which statements made are factual/correct

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>OK</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

D) **Scholarly Depth** of answer

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>OK</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

E) **Clarity/Organization** of the response

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>OK</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

F) **Quality** of writing – Syntax, spelling, coherence, punctuation...

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>OK</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

G) **APA style and other Formatting Requirements**

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>OK</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

H) Extent to which the question was answered completely – directions followed etc...

1	2	3	4	5
<i>Poor</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>OK</i>	<i>Good</i>	<i>Excellent</i>

VII. BIOPSYCHOLOGY PH.D. POLICY ON SATISFACTORY PROGRESS AND EXCEPTIONS

Satisfactory progress denotes that a student has (1) satisfactorily completed at least 15 semester hours of graduate coursework during the academic year, (2) satisfactorily met research and teaching obligations, (3) demonstrated professional behavior (e.g., interpersonal skills and adherence to ethical standards) satisfactory in the judgment of the faculty, and (4) satisfactorily met requirements for timely submission of program documents (such as program of study, plan for remediation, etc) and major written work (such as dissertation).

A student, who, in the judgment of the faculty, fails to make satisfactory progress for a given academic year, will be notified of that. In addition, where feasible, the student will be directed as to what steps are necessary to make satisfactory progress in the coming year; this may include development of a remediation plan by the student. A first finding of unsatisfactory progress normally does not result in dismissal from the program, although a student not making satisfactory progress is not normally eligible for financial support until this is remedied. In serious cases, such as clear violation of professional ethics or clear disregard of program obligations, a first finding of unsatisfactory progress may result in dismissal from the program.

A second finding of unsatisfactory progress normally results in dismissal from the program. An exception to this may be made if the student demonstrates, to the satisfaction of the faculty, that the unsatisfactory progress was caused by factors beyond the student's control, that those factors have changed and are highly unlikely to interfere with satisfactory progress again and that there is a clear plan for timely completion of the degree. An exception cannot normally be granted without the recommendation of the student's advisor.

A student who anticipates being unable to make satisfactory progress may petition for a reduction of the minimum hours, or a leave of absence from the program. Reasons which may be acceptable include (1) personal (financial, family, etc) or (2) medical. In either case, the student must demonstrate that the reasons are temporary, that they are likely to be resolved by the end of the proposed leave/waiver period, and that they are unlikely to prevent satisfactory progress after the end of the proposed leave/waiver period. The student must demonstrate a clear commitment to return to the program after the end of any leave period. A waiver or leave of absence cannot normally be granted without the recommendation of the student's advisor.

Students may not receive more than one year of leave/waiver during their entire program. Students who anticipate that personal or medical problems will prevent satisfactory progress for more than one year should resign from the program. If their circumstances change in the future, they will be considered without prejudice in future admissions decisions. However, they will be evaluated with respect to the applicant pool in the year they reapply, and must submit all normal documentation as part of the application.

Students who are dismissed from the program are ineligible to apply for admission in the future.

VIII. POLICIES ON COURSE EXEMPTION

For Previous Experiences, Including Credit Reduction for MA/MS Degrees

Graduate coursework completed elsewhere and other experiences (e.g. work, practica, teaching) completed prior to admission to the doctoral program may be used to meet up to 30 hours of doctoral degree requirements. Credit hours for previous coursework are not transferred. Instead, the number of hours required for the Ph.D. is reduced, usually through exemptions for specific required courses.

Students must file an application for approval to reduce graduate credits earned prior to admission to the Developmental doctoral program. This process is normally carried out during consultation with the faculty advisor about the student's Program of Study. **Students with GMU MA's will work out course equivalencies through consultation with their advisors when they complete the Program of Study.**

Min. Requirements:

- Previous credits must have been earned within 5 years of admission to the doctoral program.
- A grade of B or higher must have been earned in previous coursework to be used for course exemptions.
- Requests for course exemptions must be made by the end of the spring semester of the student's first year in the program.

Exemption requests must be submitted along with the Application for Course Exemption/Equivalency (<http://chss.gmu.edu/gradpolicies>). The request is made to the student's advisor, who then is responsible for bringing the request to the Program Coordinator for his/her approval. The Program Coordinator will usually consult with his/her program faculty and with instructors who teach the courses for which the exemptions are sought. If approved, the Program Coordinator is responsible for forwarding the request to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies for his/her approval. Upon approval, the Associate Chair forwards the requests to the Office of the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

It is the student's responsibility to provide evidence that the previous courses and/or experiences are the equivalent of the GMU doctoral program requirements. This evidence must consist of at least:

1. A transcript showing the previous coursework.
2. A copy of the catalogue description(s) of the previous course(s).
3. A syllabus for the course(s).

The student is encouraged to provide any additional information about the course or experience that he/she thinks will help the faculty to make a decision, including a copy of the textbook, exams, and papers written for the course.

A student who is attempting to use previous non-course experience to earn exemptions should work with his/her advisor in constructing evidence for the equivalency of that experience to program requirements.

In addition to the above documentation, program faculty may require a student to take a written or oral examination to earn an exemption from a required course or experience.

Transfer of Credit vs. Reduction of Credit

Transfer of Credit

Transferring credit allows the student to use previously earned credit to count towards current degree requirements. Students are still required to earn at minimum, 51% of their degree program in residency.

1. The credit must be graduate credit earned at another accredited university, earned at another institution and recommended for graduate credit in the American Council on Education guidebook, or earned at Mason while in non-degree status;
2. The credit must have been earned within six years prior to first enrollment as an admitted student in the specific certificate or degree program. A minimum grade of B (3.00) must have been earned;
3. The course must be applicable toward a degree at the institution offering the course. Extension and in-service courses that are not intended by the institution offering the courses to be applied to a degree program are not eligible for transfer credit to Mason;
4. **The credits cannot have been previously applied toward a degree at another institution or Mason.**

Reduction of Credit

Reduction of credit reduces the overall credits required of the student to earn a specified degree. Students are still required to earn at minimum, 51% of their degree program in residency.

1. The credit must be graduate credit earned at another accredited university, earned at another institution and recommended for graduate credit in the American Council on Education guidebook;
2. The credit must have been earned within six years prior to first enrollment as an admitted student in the specific certificate or degree program. A minimum grade of B (3.00) must have been earned;
3. The course must be applicable toward a degree at the institution offering the course. Extension and in-service courses that are not intended by the institution offering the courses to be applied to a degree program are not eligible for transfer credit to Mason;
4. **The credits must have been used to earn a degree at another institution or Mason.**

IX. THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL

The dissertation proposal is developed in consultation with the advisor before submission to the committee. Please note that selection of the topic requires a junction of the student's interests, the advisor's interests, and financial considerations – typically, a Biopsychology dissertation requires more resources than the department maximum, and either the advisor's funding or the student's personal resources are required to cover some of the costs. After a draft proposal is developed, the student must submit a dissertation proposal to his/her Doctoral Supervisory Committee.

Doctoral students may take 1 to 3 credits of dissertation proposal during the semester prior to sitting for comprehensive exams if they have met the following conditions: (a) the advisor has given approval, (b) the student's request to take comprehensive exams the following semester has been approved by faculty, and (c) the comprehensive exam committee has been approved by faculty.

The doctoral dissertation proposal provides a focused literature review, well developed rationale, a research design, and a data analysis plan. A 1020 page literature review is a rough guideline, although relevance of coverage is the primary criterion for length. During the period that the Doctoral Supervisory Committee is reviewing a dissertation proposal, the student is required to enroll in a minimum of three (3) hours of PSYC 998 - Dissertation Proposal. Normally the student will make an oral presentation of the dissertation proposal to the entire committee. After this committee approves the dissertation proposal, it is forwarded by the student to the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies for approval. After the Graduate Dean has approved the dissertation proposal, the student is ready to enroll in PSYC 999 - Dissertation.

The following are required in order to register for PSYC 999:

1. An approved Program of Study
2. Advancement to candidacy
3. An approved dissertation committee
4. An approved dissertation proposal

The University does not require continuous registration in Dissertation Proposal (PSYC 998) however, you should consult your advisor to outline your Proposal and Dissertation plans. The University will only certify you as having Part-Time status if you are enrolled in 4.5 credits. Full-time status is awarded when a student is registered for 9 credits or 6 credits with a 20-hour teaching assistantship.

Advancement to Candidacy

Before doctoral students may be advanced to candidacy by the dean, they should have completed all course work required by the program faculty, have been certified in all doctoral research skills required, have passed the candidacy examination, and have been recommended by the doctoral program coordinator. "All coursework required by the program faculty" is viewed by the Dean's Office to refer to all non-elective courses. When a student's record is reviewed, if

the student has completed all courses (besides 998/999) except one listed under the Electives section of the Program of Study, they are still allowed to advance (with notation made in their letter that they still have to complete the remaining course before their degree will be conferred. If the student has not completed a course under a non-elective section, they are not allowed to advance until the remaining course has been completed.

Dissertation Proposal Approval Process

1. An approved proposal signifies the following:

The proposal contains a clear, focused literature review germane to the dissertation. The committee approves the experimental design, choice of variables investigated, procedures, and the rationale behind the proposal. There is a clear set of hypotheses, and enough detail on planned statistical analysis for the committee to be clear on the planned procedures; the committee is satisfied that the procedures are appropriate to the design, hypotheses, and variables investigated.

- a. After proposal approval, the committee may NOT require: additional dependent measures and a significant modification to the design
- b. The committee MAY require: a few additional statistical analyses if outcomes of planned analyses, upon reflection, indicate this would be appropriate; updated literature review when the dissertation is final; and extended discussion based upon data and analysis

2. The Proposal Approval Process

- a. The student selects a dissertation advisor with assent of the faculty member.
- b. Student and advisor select a general area for the dissertation.
- c. Student, in consultation with advisor, develops and revises rough drafts of proposal.
- d. In consultation with advisor, student selects a dissertation committee. The committee must consist of at least three members. At least two members must be faculty in the Department of Psychology (the advisor and one other member), one of whom must be a member of the program Faculty. A third member must be chosen from among the graduate faculty within the university outside the Department of Psychology. [Note: assent of faculty members to participate in a dissertation is voluntary. The department expects that all faculty will be willing to participate as advisor or committee member on some dissertations; participation on a particular dissertation is completely voluntary. If a student cannot obtain the voluntary consent of a committee, the dissertation cannot proceed.]
- e. When advisor agrees that the rough draft proposal is far enough along, the draft is distributed to the committee at least 2 weeks before initial committee meeting. At the initial meeting the committee gives approval or directs changes in the scope

and design of the dissertation, with feedback on what changes are required before final approval is given.

- f. The number of meetings of the committee will depend upon the progress of the student. Committee goodwill can be maximized by working individually with the advisor between meetings, and making substantial progress before calling another meeting.
- g. When the committee determines that the proposal is ready to proceed to an oral defense, a courtesy draft is submitted to the department chair, at least two weeks before the meeting at which approval is anticipated. At this time, a review copy will be made available for faculty in the department office, and faculty will be notified of the date and time of the meeting at which approval is anticipated. This meeting is open.
- h. Committee signature on the proposal signifies that the committee agrees that the design, hypotheses, statistical analysis, and literature review are appropriate for a dissertation, and the document is well written. Signature of the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies indicates concurrence
- g. A hard-copy of the proposal should accompany the signature sheet to the Graduate Program Office for the Associate Chair for Graduate Programs to sign.

3. During the dissertation

Normally, frequent committee meetings are unnecessary and burdensome. Frequent consultation with the advisor is essential. Occasional brief progress reports to the committee are often appreciated. Committee consultation is usually necessary only when substantial changes must be made to the approved proposal.

4. Writing up the dissertation

Although committee members may have special expertise (e.g., statistics) requiring consultation during analysis, normally, the analysis, interpretation, and write-up are done by the student in close consultation with the advisor. The dissertation should be submitted to the full committee only when the student and advisor believe that the dissertation is nearly in final form.

The committee, however, is not bound to accept the draft presented. The committee can require some additional changes in writing to clarify the document, etc., or can require a reorganization of major portions of the dissertation.

When the committee requires revision of the dissertation, the student should work closely with the advisor to address all of the issues before calling another committee meeting. After final approval, the proposal must then be approved by the Program Coordinator and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies.

There may be situations where one member of a committee disagrees with the majority of the committee as to whether a draft is appropriate for defense. If the disagreement cannot be reconciled after extensive discussion, and the faculty member strongly disagrees over

the quality of the dissertation, it is appropriate for the faculty member to resign from the committee. The dissertation cannot then proceed to orals unless and until the student secures agreement of another faculty member to join the committee. This situation is highly unusual, and results from a decision of the faculty – it is never appropriate for a student to ask a committee member to resign. Appointing additional committee members follows the same procedures as original appointment of the committee.

5. In preparation for the defense

The student must provide a copy of the dissertation to the library and the Associate Chair for Graduate Studies to make available to the faculty to read before the oral defense. These copies should be available at least two weeks before the scheduled oral defense.

The oral defense should be scheduled through the Graduate Programs Assistant who informs the Graduate Dean of the student's name, the title of the dissertation, the date and location of the oral defense ***at least three weeks before the projected defense date.*** When scheduling the defense, contact Stacey Sexton (ssexton@gmu.edu) for a room reservation. Once a room reservation has been secured, forward the following information onto the Graduate Programs Assistant, Darby Wiggins (dwiggin3@gmu.edu) for scheduling:

1. Your full name
2. Date of defense
3. Location – Building and room number
4. Beginning and end time of defense
5. Dissertation committee members names – please indicate who is Chair.
6. Dissertation title
7. Abstract

Do not ask your Dissertation Committee Chair to schedule orals until the committee has seen and approved your last draft. It is very common for several drafts of the dissertation to be required prior to scheduling your defense and, if all goes well, at least one revision after orals. The dissertation represents the culmination of your program and an important contribution to the body of psychological knowledge. It is the faculty's responsibility to the field and to you that the final product meets a high standard.

X. THE DISSERTATION

The Doctoral Supervisory Committee guides the student in the preparation of the dissertation. Specific guidelines may be found in the *Guide for Preparing Graduate Theses, Dissertations, and Projects*. This publication may be found on the Dissertation and Thesis

Webpage (<http://thesis.gmu.edu>). A total of twelve (12) hours of PSYC 998 and 999 are required for the doctoral degree (at least 3 hours each of 998 and 999).

Once a student begins enrolling in 998, he/she is **not** required to maintain continuous enrollment during the fall and spring semesters until he/she has defended the dissertation. Once a student begins taking 999, he/she **is** required to maintain continuous enrollment until he/she has graduated.

Students are required to enroll in 3 credits of dissertation in the term immediately preceding the one in which they submitted their Dissertation Proposal Cover Sheet to the Dean's Office. In each subsequent semester thereafter, students are required to enroll in at least 3 credits of dissertation until they have completed the minimum 12 hours combined. Only after completing the minimum combined 12 hours of dissertation, may a student enroll in 1 credit of dissertation per term. During this period, the University will only certify you as having part-time enrollment status if you are enrolled in 4.5 credits. Full-time status is awarded when a student is registered for 9 credits or 6 credits with a 20-hour teaching assistantship. **You are strongly encouraged to discuss your proposal and dissertation credit plans with your advisor.**

Students at the ABD stage are strongly advised **not** to seek full-time off-campus employment. This often jeopardizes attainment of the degree and, at the very least, disrupts its timely completion. Please discuss with your dissertation advisor these issues prior to seeking full-time employment.

Oral Defense of the Dissertation

Summary: The dissertation and its oral defense represent the final demonstration that a doctoral candidate has sufficiently mastered the methods and content of the discipline that he/she can plan a substantive research project, collect, analyze, and interpret the data, and fit the findings into literature in the area. Students must demonstrate a sufficient mastery of the discipline that they can accomplish this task, report the dissertation work in clear technical writing in appropriate format, and defend orally what they have done in each phase of the work.

Prior to the defense: No dissertation can proceed to a defense until each member of the committee and the department chair have signed the Approval to Defend Dissertation form, signifying that each has individually read the dissertation draft and has concluded that it is in final form except for minor changes. This does NOT preclude the committee from stipulating changes (possibly major ones) as a result of the issues raised in the oral examination.

Procedure for the oral defense: The candidate and the examining committee must be present at the defense. An observer from the Dean's office is normally present. Other members of the university community are welcome to attend the defense as observers. Attendance by persons who are not members of the university community (e.g., family members) is not normally allowed.

The defense is chaired by the dissertation advisor, who is responsible for maintaining appropriate professional decorum. The advisor will open the meeting by reviewing procedures to be followed. Although exact procedures will vary depending upon the wishes of the dissertation committee, the procedure will normally open with a presentation of the dissertation work by the candidate. During and following this presentation, the candidate is examined for thorough mastery of the methods, analysis, and interpretation of the data, and its context in the literature; only members of the examining committee may participate in this examination. If other persons present at the examination wish to question the candidate, they must submit questions in writing to the chairman of the dissertation committee in advance of the oral examination.

After conclusion of the examination, the chairman will ask others present if they wish to ask questions of the candidate. The candidate and others present are then asked to leave the room while the examining committee deliberates; the dean's representative is invited to observe the deliberations. After deliberations, a vote is taken, and the candidate is then brought back into the room and privately informed of the decision of the committee.

The following are appropriate requirements for the oral defense:

1. The student is expected to have mastered the research process as it relates to his/her dissertation, and to have command of the subject matter of the dissertation. The student should be able to answer procedural questions concerning data collection or statistical analysis procedures. For the latter, it is not expected that the student have each formula at his/her fingertips, but that the data analysis be explained conceptually, that it is clear that the student understands the analysis, and that the student be able to demonstrate that the assumptions of the analysis performed were reasonably valid.
2. If the data analysis has been altered since proposal approval, the student should be able to justify changes. If faculty feels that alterations should have been made, the student should be able to explain why no alteration was made. This must be kept reasonable. A student who has conducted a two-group study with a single dependent measure is not liable to questions concerning multivariate analysis. However, completion of the mechanics of data analysis is not a substitute for thoughtful data analysis, and an understanding of the limitations of analysis.
3. The student must be able to explain how interpretations were derived from the analysis of the data, and how his/her findings fit into and contribute to the existing body of literature in the area.
4. The student must be able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of his/her own work, and to project logical extensions of that work.

The dissertation committee is the ultimate judge of whether the student satisfactorily performs the requirements of the oral defense. Decisions of the committee may be either (1) pass, with no changes: the student has completely satisfied the committee, and no changes are required to the dissertation, (2) pass, with changes: the student has satisfied the committee, but

stipulated changes must be made to the dissertation before submission*, or (3) fail: the committee is not satisfied with the student's ability to perform the above, and/or such major changes are required in the written dissertation that another exam must be scheduled. In order to pass the exam, all members of the dissertation committee must vote to pass the candidate. All decision of the committee on whether the candidate passes or not, and what changes are required to the written dissertation, are made in a closed meeting of the examining committee immediately following the oral exam; other persons present at the examination may not be present at or take part in the discussion leading to the vote (except that the dean's representative is invited to observe the deliberations).

If a candidate does not pass the oral examination, he/she is allowed a maximum of one additional oral examination to be scheduled only after the committee is satisfied that stipulated changes in the written dissertation have been made.

*The committee may either sign the cover sheet and entrust the advisor to revise the changes before submission of the dissertation, or may require that the candidate circulate the final draft to the committee before signature.

Format Review

The library conducts the review for formatting of all dissertations. Students will submit completed dissertations directly to the library and hand all the requisite paperwork (for University Microfilms International and the National Opinion Research Center). For additional information contact Sarah Patton, University Dissertations and Theses Coordinator. She can be reached at (703) 993-2222, udts@gmu.edu, or <http://thesis.gmu.edu>

Manuscript-Style Dissertations: An Alternative Format for Dissertations

Faculty encourage students to use this new format, as it expedites publication of the dissertation work. The following summarize the differences from a traditional dissertation style. The doctoral dissertation proposal provides a broad literature review, well-developed rationale, a research design, and a data analysis plan. The deliverables are an Introduction in the form of a Psych Review-style paper that synthesizes previous research and theory and leads to the specific question(s) to be addressed, and a detailed Methods and Analysis Plan.

The final form of the dissertation should be one or more journal-length manuscripts. These should each include a focused literature review, well-grounded hypotheses, a clear description of the method and relevant results, and a discussion of theoretical and practical implications of the research. In order to be acceptable, the committee must judge the manuscript(s) to be of publishable quality. The dissertation proposal (which represented a broader presentation of relevant theory and research) as well as any additional results not directly relevant to the journal manuscripts, or discussion of implications beyond that which a journal would accept, should be included as an appendix.

Manuscript-style dissertations are not intended to reduce the scope of question suitable for a dissertation, knowledge of the literature and methods required of the candidate, or the expectations for data analysis and interpretation. They are intended to facilitate publication of

the dissertation work, as the dissertation is essentially ready for submission without having to rewrite and reformat, as would be required in the traditional format.

XI. FACULTY RESEARCH INTERESTS

APPLIED DEVELOPMENTAL

Tim Curby	993-2457 / DK 2048	Classrooms as a context for students' behavior and development; Teacher-child interactions; Classroom quality; Development of classroom observational measures; Quantitative methods.
Susanne Denham Director, Applied Developmental Program	993-1378 / DK 1024A	Preschoolers' social-emotional development and its assessment and promotion; Peer competence in preschool and elementary school; Developmental psychopathology; Parenting: Its impact on the above
Kimberly Eby	993-8671 / JC 241	Violence and gender; faculty roles in interdisciplinary collaborative work; collaborative learning; teaching and learning strategies across the disciplines.
Elyse Lehman		<i>Faculty Emeritus.</i> Memory, attention, and problem solving in children and older adults; Educational applications-Learning disabilities, gifted children, attention deficit disorder; Everyday cognition-Children's art, soft object attachments; Eyewitness testimony
Robert Pasnak	993-1354 / DK 2049	Cognitive and socioemotional development in preschool, elementary school, and special education children
Koraly Perez-Edgar	993-9366 / DK 2050	Attentional Control and Attentional Biases, Anxiety, Social Reticence/Shyness, Temperament, Biological substrates (EEG, ERP, fMRI)
Johannes Rojahn	993-4241 / DEM 202	Intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism (Socio-emotional competence, mental health/illness, psychopathology, self-injurious, stereotypic and aggressive

behaviors; applied behavior analysis; assessment)

Adam Winsler 993-1881 / DK 2023

Development of self-regulation; Private speech; Bilingualism; ADHD; Early childhood education; School readiness among low-income, ethnically diverse children

BIOPYSCHOLOGY PROGRAM

Linda Chrosniak 993-4139 / DK 2045
Director, Honors Program in Psychology

Research interests include implicit and explicit memory processes, and relationships between stress, cognition and health. In addition, in collaboration with Dr. Flinn, she has investigated effects of trace metals (zinc, copper and iron) on memory processes.

Jane Flinn 993-4107 / DK 2022

The role of metals in learning and memory and in Alzheimer's disease

Craig G. McDonald 993-2277 / DK 2018

Psychophysiology of visual perception and cognition; nicotine-induced changes in executive functioning

Robert F. Smith 993-4339 / DK 2044
Director, Biopsychology Program

Developmental neuroscience, esp. effects of drugs [currently, nicotine] on adolescent neurobehavioral development. Activity-dependent dendritic growth. Animal models of addiction.

CLINICAL

Lauren Cattaneo 993-4728 / DK 2021

Community and institutional responses to intimate partner violence, helpseeking, risk assessment and empowerment.

Christy Esposito-Smythers
993-2039 / DK 2061

Assessment, prevention, and treatment of adolescent suicide, depression, and substance abuse.

Todd Kashdan 993-9486 / DK 2047

Emotional disturbances, social anxiety, self-regulation, personality, interpersonal

		processes, positive emotions, well-being, character strengths.
James Maddux	993-3590 / DK 2019	Social-clinical interface; Health psychology; Self-efficacy theory.
Patrick E. McKnight	993-8292 / DK 2065	Health services research, research methods, statistics, measurement, and program evaluation.
Robyn Mehlenbeck	993-1371 / DEM 202	<i>Director of Center for Psychological Services.</i> Adolescent weight management; Eating disorders in children and adolescents. Clinical specialty in pediatric psychology.
Keith D. Renshaw	993-5128 / DK 2052	Relationships of adults with anxiety and depression; Adjustment of military service members and their spouses after deployment; Combat-related posttraumatic stress disorder.
John Riskind	993-4094 / DK 2043	Anxiety disorders, Generalized Anxiety and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder, Cognitive Vulnerability factors and processes, Cognitive behavioral theories and treatment, anxiety and suicide ideation, cognitive vulnerability and stress-generation
Jerome Short Director of Clinical Training	993-1368 / DK 2057	Family stress and coping; Prevention programs; Mental health promotion.
June Tangney	993-1365 / DK 2007A	Personality and social psychology, Moral emotions (shame, guilt, and empathy), Criminal behavior and rehabilitation, Substance abuse and HIV risk, Research ethics.

HUMAN FACTORS/APPLIED COGNITION

Carryl Baldwin	993-4653 / DK 2062	Auditory cognition, auditory and multi-modal displays, cognitive aging, speech processing, transportation (highway and air) safety, mental workload, adaptive automation, individual differences, training, spatial navigation and neuroergonomics.
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Deborah Boehm-Davis 993-1398 / DK 2003

Department Chairperson

Applied cognition; understanding interruptions and cognitive workload; transportation (Aviation and highway)

C. Alan Boneau

Faculty Emeritus. Recognition memory and memory; Structure of psychology; Psychophysics

Robert Holt

Faculty Emeritus. Social cognition; Pilot cognition; Programmer cognition; Artificial intelligence; Computer assisted instruction; Computer adaptive testing; Relation of physiological measures to cognition

Raja Parasuraman 993-1357 / DK 2055

Director, Human Factors/Applied Cognition Program

Human factors and cognitive neuroscience, human performance in human-machine systems, influence of automation and computer technology on attention, memory and vigilance. Cognitive neuroscience of attention using information-processing tasks, neuroimaging (ERPs and fMRI) molecular genetics of cognition.

Matt Peterson 993-4255 / DK 2058

Cognitive neuroscience of attention, memory, and perception. Visual attention, visual search, and eye movements. Attentional control and multitasking

James Sanford 993-1351 / DK 2046
Associate Chair for Undergraduate Studies

Human memory and cognition, false memory, testing effect

Tyler Shaw 993-5187 / DK 2059

Neurophysiological underpinnings and individual differences in human sustained attention, automation, team collaboration and coordination dynamics

Jim Thompson	993-1342 / DK 2056	Cognitive neuroscience, including fMRI and ERPs; biological motion; social cognition; robotics.
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INDUSTRIAL/ORGANIZATIONAL

Louis Buffardi	993-1363 / DK 3072	
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Coordinator, Industrial/Organizational M.A. Program

Employee attitudes; Quality of work life
organizational surveys; Work and family
issues; Human error

Jose Cortina	993-1347 / DK 3074	
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Statistical interaction; Philosophy of
quantitative analysis; Personality testing

Reeshad Dalal	993-9487 / DK 3077	
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Employee performance, and its links with
mood/emotions, job attitudes and individual
differences, and advice-giving and advice-
taking from a decision-making perspective.

Theodore Gessner		
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Faculty Emeritus. Evaluation research;
Survey research; Person perception; Humor

Seth Kaplan	993-8475 / DK 3073	
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Personality, emotions, and well-being at
work. Understanding the meaning and the
psychological experience of work.
Psychometric and statistical issues.

Eden King	993-1620 / DK 3076	
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Effective and equitable management of
diversity in organizations, discrimination,
social stigma in the context of work

Lois Tetrick	993-1372 / DK 3066A	
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Director, Industrial/Organizational Program

Occupational health psychology including
stress, work-family, and safety;
psychological contracts and the employment
relationship; cross-cultural aspects of
industrial organizational psychology;
innovation; motivation, and compensation.

Stephen Zaccaro	993-1355 / DK 3066B	
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Leadership, executive assessment and
development, team dynamics and

effectiveness, shared leadership, multiteam systems.

SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY PROGRAM

John Blaha

Faculty Emeritus. Assessment, learning disabilities

Grover Foehlinger 993-5127 / DKH 2063
Director, School Psychology M.A./CAGS

Program evaluation.

Johannes Rojahn 993-4241 / DEM 202

Intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism (Socio-emotional competence, mental health/illness, psychopathology, self-injurious, stereotypic and aggressive behaviors; applied behavior analysis; assessment)

Ellen Rowe 993-4266 / DEM 202C

Assessment and remediation of social, emotional, and behavioral problems among children and adolescents and developmental psychopathology.

APPENDICES

Guidelines for Graduate Student Grievances Against Faculty

February 7, 1996

During the course of graduate study, disagreement and conflict may arise between students and faculty either during formal classroom instruction or in the more informal individual instruction that takes place during the supervision of research and practical experiences. Indeed, the nature of the close working relationships inherent in graduate education in psychology, especially in a program with an applied focus, almost guarantees that conflict will arise on occasion.

When such conflict does arise, the Department expects that both the student(s) and faculty involved will conduct themselves in a professional manner. In addition, the Department is committed to ensuring that students and faculty are treated fairly when such disagreements arise. To this end, the Department endorses the following principles and guidelines for resolving disagreements and conflicts between students and faculty regarding instruction, training, and student-faculty relationships. (NOTE: Student concerns about faculty behavior that involves sexual harassment or racial/ethnic/gender discrimination should be handled according to the University guidelines provided in this manual.) The resolution of disagreement and grievances will be resolved more effectively if the following principles are kept in mind.

Faculty

1. The professional performance and behavior of faculty is subject to continual evaluation and review, including evaluation and review by students. Student evaluation may, on occasion, involve the resolution of a complaint by a student concerning faculty performance.
2. The Department expects faculty to treat a student's concerns with dignity and respect. Essential to this is listening to a student's concern attentively and nondefensively. Although defensiveness is difficult to avoid when one believes one is being unfairly criticized or challenged, nondefensive listening is the first step toward a successful resolution of a conflict. Nondefensive listening may be facilitated by recognition of the apprehension and anxiety a subordinate (the student) usually feels when confronting a person of power and authority.

Students

1. Faculty and students enter into an educational alliance whose objective is the imparting to students knowledge and skill. As part of this alliance, faculty are responsible for setting

standards for mastery of this knowledge and skill and for evaluating students' progress toward meeting these standards. Students in professional psychology programs provide services to various types of clients (individuals and organizations), and faculty are ultimately responsible for the quality of these services. Thus, faculty evaluation of student performance and progress provides assurance of the quality of these services.

2. Graduate education is, by nature, difficult, demanding, and stressful (If it wasn't, anyone could get a Ph.D). Thus, subjective distress alone is not a valid indicator that a course is inappropriately demanding or that a student is being treated unfairly by a faculty member.
3. In trying to fulfill their responsibility in setting standards and evaluating students' progress, faculty will, on occasion, make errors in judgment that are usually unintentional. Even for faculty, to err is human, and most student grievances concern faculty behavior that is nonmalevolent in intent. Nonetheless, when such errors create problems or hardships for students, they have the right to address their concerns with the faculty in question.
4. The ability to effectively address and resolve disagreement and conflict in a mature manner is essential for the effective functioning of a professional psychologist in any setting. Thus, disagreement and conflict with faculty offers an opportunity for personal and professional development.
5. Faculty also deserve to be treated with respect and dignity. Complaining about faculty behavior to one's Program Coordinator or the Department Chairperson is a serious matter and should not be done with malicious intent or simply to seek retribution for a perceived wrong or slight. Also, approaching a faculty member in an angry or hostile manner or complaining to others about the behavior of the faculty member is not an effective strategy for resolving conflict. Students also should be prepared to listen nondefensively to a faculty member's explanation of his/her side of the conflict.
6. The Department cannot guarantee that resolution of a complaint or conflict will be favorable to the student. Nor should faculty expect that the issue will be resolved in their favor simply based on their position as faculty. The Department does guarantee, however, that students and faculty will be fully heard, that their concerns will be treated with dignity, and that an honest attempt will be made to reach a reasonable solution.
7. A student who, in good faith and in keeping with the above principles and with the procedures outlined below, complains about faculty behavior will be protected from retribution by the faculty member in question and by other faculty to the extent that the university has control over faculty behavior. Retributive or vengeful behavior by faculty toward a student complainee will not be tolerated. The Department has no control, however, over a faculty member's emotions, and a faculty member may decide to sever a working relationship (e.g., dissertation supervision, collaborative research or writing project) with a student following a complaint that the faculty member views as frivolous, unfounded, or malicious. Faculty who do so will not necessarily be viewed as engaging

in retributive behavior. If a faculty advisor terminates a working relationship with a student following a complaint by that student against that advisor, the Department will make a good faith effort to secure another advisor for that student. The Department cannot, however, force a faculty member to work with a student.

Grievance Procedures

With these caveats in mind, the Department recommends that a graduate student who has concerns about the professional behavior of a faculty member take the following steps in the following order. Following these procedures will better ensure that the grievance will be resolved expeditiously and fairly.

1. Discuss the problem with the faculty member in question. Many disagreements, disputes, and conflicts between faculty and students are the result of miscommunication or misinformation and can be resolved informally between the concerned parties.

Consultation with the academic advisor usually will be helpful in determining whether or not a grievance is legitimate and in developing an effective strategy for presenting the concern to the faculty member in question. If a student cannot discuss the concern with his/her advisor, the student should consult another faculty member. The goal of such a consultation is to seek advice, not to spread rumor or simply complain.

The faculty with whom the student consults concerning the grievance incurs certain responsibilities by agreeing to serve in this capacity: (1) To review with the student the Departmental policy and procedures described here. (2) To assist the student in determining the legitimacy of his/her concern and in developing a plan for discussing the concern with the faculty in question. In addition, the advisor may also choose a more active role in the resolution of the grievance by serving as the student's advocate or as a mediator. If the advisor/advocate believes that the faculty member in questions has committed an illegal act or ethical violation, he/she should consult the Ethical Guidelines of the American Psychological Association for further consultation.

2. If the discussion with the faculty member with whom the student has a concern does not produce a fair resolution, the student should consult with his/her advisor (or other advising faculty) about the feasibility of bringing the matter to the attention of the student's Program Coordinator.
3. If consultation with the Program Coordinator does not produce a fair resolution, the student should consult with his/her advisor (or other advising faculty) about the feasibility of bringing the matter to the attention of the Associate Chairperson for Graduate Studies. The Associate Chairperson may appoint an ad hoc committee charged with working with the student and faculty member in resolving the grievance. This committee may include a graduate student as a member.
4. If consultation with the Associate Chairperson for Graduate Studies does not produce a satisfactory resolution, the student has the option of bringing the matter to the attention of the Department Chairperson.

5. If consultation with the Department Chairperson does not produce a satisfactory resolution, the student should consult with his/her advisor (or other advising faculty) about the feasibility of bringing the matter to the attention of the office of the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences.

Outside Dissertation Source Support

<p style="text-align: center;">Need Help financing your dissertation research?</p> <p>This chart provides a sampling of funding possibilities for psychology doctoral students. Many other federal agencies and private foundations offer grants and fellowships as well. Students should also explore grants at their university, use graduate funding resource books or search for dissertation funds on the World Wide Web.</p>				
Sponsor	Program	Type of grant	Annual Deadline	Contact
American Association for University Women	American Fellowships Program	For women in their final year of dissertation writing.	Request application between July 15 and Nov. 1. Application due Nov 1.	Phone: (319) 337-1716 Website: www.aauw.org
APA's Div. 12 Section III (Society for a Science of Clinical Psychology – SSCP	SSCP Mesh Honorary Scholarship for Research in Psychology	For dissertation research	Jan. 31	APAGS Scholarship Program, at the APA address. Phone: (202) 336-6014
APA's Science Directorate	Dissertation awards	Assists science-oriented students with dissertation research costs	Sept. 17	Website: www.apa.org/Science/dissinfo
American Psychological Foundation/APA Science Directorate	Todd E. Husted Memorial Award	For science-oriented students investigating the improvement of services for the severely mentally ill.	Sept. 17	Website: www.apa.org/Science/dissinfo
Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation	Dissertation Fellowships	For dissertation research on violence, aggression and crime	Feb. 1	Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation 527 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022 Website: hfg.org

Health Care Financing Administration Office of Research and Demonstrations	Dissertation Fellowship Grants Program	For dissertation research on the delivery of financing of health-care services.	To be announced	Phone: (410) 786-5181
Murray Research Center	Jeanne Humphrey Block Dissertation Award	For women investigating female psychological development	April 1	Phone: (617) 495-8140 Website: www.radcliffe.edu/murray
Murray Research Center	Henry A. Murray Dissertation Award	For research in the social and behavioral sciences	April 1	Phone: (617) 495-8140 Website: www.radcliff.edu/murray
National Foundation for Jewish Culture	Maurice and Marilyn Cohen Fund for Doctoral Dissertation Fellowships in Jewish Studies	For doctoral research. Application must have proficiency in a Jewish language.	Early January	Phone: (212) 629-0500, Ext. 205 Website: www.jewishculture.org
National Institute of Justice	Graduate Research Fellowship Program	For criminal justice research, including dissertation research	To be announced	Phone: (202) 307-2942 Website: www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij
National Research Council	Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowships for Minorities	For minorities pursuing a career in teaching and research	Nov. 15	Phone: (202) 334-2872
National Science Foundation (Social, Behavioral and Economic	Linguistic Program-Grants for Improving Doctoral Dissertation Research	For scientific research on natural human language.	Application accepted year round.	Phone: (703) 306-1731 Website: www.nsf.gov
Spencer Foundation	Dissertation Fellowship Program	For research on the improvement of education	Application available June 1.	Phone: (312) 337-7000 Website: www.spencer.org

Social Science Research Council	The Sexuality Research Fellowship Program	For social and behavioral dissertation research on sexuality	Dec. 15	Phone: (212) 377-2700 Website: www.ssrc.org
Social Science Research Council	International Dissertation Field Research Fellowship Program	Support for field research in all regions of the world	Early November	Phone: (212) 377-2700 Website: www.ssrc.org
U.S. Department of Education	Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Program	For dissertation research abroad	Late October	Phone: (202) 401-9774
United States Institute of Peace	Peach Scholar Dissertation Fellowship Competition	For research that explores strategies to end international conflict and sustain peace	Early November	Phone: (202) 429-3886 Website: www.usip.org
Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation	Charlotte W. Newcombe Dissertation Fellowships	For research on religious or ethical values	Early December	Phone: (609) 452-7007 Website: www.woodrow.org
Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation	Women's Studies Doctoral Dissertation Grants	For research on women's issues. (A special grant is available for dissertation research on women's health)	Early November	Phone: (609) 452-7007 Website: www.woodrow.org

Petition for Equivalency Examination

The following information must be provided in order to determine if a petition to take an equivalency examination is to be granted.

Date:

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Core Course:

Documentation:

Course Title:

Attach

Transcript

Catalog description of course

Syllabus

Texts or copies of tables of contents

Examinations

Papers

Justification:

Student "G" Cards

After registering, each student is required to obtain a university photo identification card. It must be presented to use the library and is required for admission to university events, when using university facilities and can be used as a debit-card at various food concessions and copy machines. Questions may be directed to the Photo ID Office at (703) 993-1004. You can obtain your G-Card in SUB II, Lower Level (near the mailroom). For more information, visit the [University All Card Office](#).

GMU E-Mail

Students are required to activate and use their GMU E-Mail account to obtain Psychology Department list-serve messages and to access the university mainframe computer and library. Only GMU E-Mail accounts will be used for official university communication with students. For more information regarding access your E-Mail visit the [ITU Support Center](#).

Parking

Parking decals may be purchased in person in the Parking Services Office located in the [Sandy Creek Parking Deck](#), or via [Patriot Web](#). You will need a G-Card to purchase parking passes in person. Handicapped parking permits are available in the Parking Services Office. Parking registration information is also mailed to students several weeks before the start of the fall semester. For more information contact [Parking Services](#).

Health Insurance/Student Health Services

George Mason provides a variety of health insurance options for graduate students. For students who meet specific qualifications, premiums for the Aetna Student Health Insurance Plan will be subsidized by the University. Students who do not qualify for the subsidy, may elect to purchase the policy and should contact [Student Health Services](#) regarding enrollment. [The Student Health Services Office](#) is available to all students at no or reduced fees. To determine eligibility for subsidized insurance, please click [here](#).

Student Wage/Hourly Employees

All student wage/hourly employees are required to use Direct Deposit and must submit a time sheet online in order to be paid. To set up Direct Deposit and record your hours, please visit [Patriot Web](#) and click on "Employee Services", "Time sheets" (to enter your hours) and/or "Pay Information" (to enroll in direct deposit).

Mailboxes

Each student is assigned a mailbox. Doctoral student mailboxes are located in the hallway next to the Psychology Graduate Office in David King Hall. Faculty and Staff boxes are located in the copy room (DK 2001). MA mailboxes are located in the Physio Lab for Biopsychology, alongside the doctoral mailboxes for Developmental, The ARCH Lab for Human Factors, The Clinic for School Psychology and Robinson 211C for Industrial Organizational. Be sure to

check the mailboxes periodically for any messages that might be left for you by faculty, staff, or students. Please be aware that student mailboxes are not secured, so use caution in what you place in them.