

# Psychology Department Handbook for Graduate Students

Effective August 2021



# Psychology Graduate Program Administration: 2021-22

## **Advisory Committee**

Michael Ragozzino, PhD (Head)  
Linda Skitka, PhD (Associate Head and Chair, Social and Personality Psychology)  
Mitchell Roitman, PhD (Chair, Behavioral Neuroscience)  
Ellen Herbener, PhD (Chair, Clinical Psychology)  
Susan R. Goldman, PhD (Chair, Cognitive Psychology)  
Amanda Roy, PhD (Chair, Community and Prevention Research)  
Jamie Roitman, PhD (Director of Graduate Studies)  
Ed Sargis, PhD (Director of Undergraduate Studies)

**Director of Graduate Studies (DGS):** Jamie Roitman, PhD

**Graduate Program Coordinator:** Demetria Ward

## **Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS)**

Jenna Rowen, PhD	Rebecca Easter, student rep
Kate Zinsser, PhD	Christen Park, student rep

## **Diversity Advancement Committee (DAC)**

Eric Leshikar, PhD	Nellie Shippen, DAC-SAB
Kimberly Schonert-Reichl, PhD	Taylor Strickland, DAC-SAB

## **Program TA's**

Rachel Schroeder, BN  
Fini Chang, Clinical  
Tricia Guerrero, Cognitive  
Teresa Borowski, CPR  
Lindsay Keeran, Social

**Black Scholar Speaker Series TA:** Kyla Ford

**Statistics TA:** Zach Melton

**Special Topics Minor Advisor:** Linda Skitka

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## 1. Overview

Welcome to the University of Illinois at Chicago Department of Psychology! We are delighted that you have enrolled in our graduate program, and are committed to supporting your efforts to achieve your PhD. The Department's goal is to produce scholars and researchers who will contribute to the growth of psychological knowledge whether they work in academic or applied settings.

The Department has five Major Programs:

Behavioral Neuroscience  
Clinical Psychology  
Cognitive Psychology  
Community and Prevention Research  
Social and Personality Psychology

Graduate students major in one of our five Programs. To attain the PhD in Psychology, students must satisfy requirements of the Graduate College, the Department, and their major Program.

Graduate students are governed by the policies of the University, the Graduate College, the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, the Psychology Department, and a major Program. It is critical that you seek guidance from personnel who are keenly familiar with policies and requirements **at every stage** of your progress through the program. As you make decisions about your graduate education:

- refer to this [handbook](#), available on the [Department's website](#).
- consult with your Academic Advisor, Program Chair, Graduate Program Coordinator, and Director of Graduate Studies.
- consult the [Graduate College website](#) – it is a wealth of important information about the requirements for advancing through graduate school, and the personnel there are available to answer questions and assist you.

Graduate College and Department policies and requirements change periodically and may not be immediately reflected in campus publications. New degree requirements, however, are not imposed retroactively on continuing graduate students. If degree requirements are changed, students may complete their degree programs under the requirements in effect at the time of their initial enrollment (readmission, if they have discontinued degree status) in the Graduate College. They have the option, however, of electing to be governed by the new requirements if they so desire provided that all requirements in one catalog are met<sup>1</sup>.

In addition, UIC offers comprehensive [student support services](#).

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<sup>1</sup> Note: In May 2020, Major and Minor coursework requirements changed from the [August 2019 Handbook](#). Students only need to fulfill one set of requirements, but they do need to entirely fulfill the chosen set of requirements.

## 2. Admissions

### A. Application Procedures

The Department accepts only candidates seeking a PhD. Applicants are not admitted as candidates for the MA as a terminal degree, but students will obtain a Master of Arts (MA) degree in progress towards the PhD. The program is only for full-time students that enter the PhD program in the fall semester.

For application procedures, please visit the [application](#) page of the Psychology Department website.

### B. Admission for Transfer Students or Students with a Master's Degree

Occasionally, the Department admits a student with a Master's degree from an MA degree-granting program or as a transfer from another PhD program.

**Coursework.** Credit for coursework completed prior to admission to the Psychology PhD program may be granted in accordance with [the policies of the Graduate College](#). The decision as to whether courses taken at another university or in a unit other than the Department of Psychology may be considered in lieu of UIC Department of Psychology requirements is a Department decision made after the student has entered the program. Students should submit a written request of requirements they would like to have waived to their major Program Chair, with a copy to the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS). Such requests are to be submitted by September 16<sup>th</sup> of the student's first year in the program.

For each requested waiver, a description of the prior work that might be equivalent (course number, titles, descriptions, textbooks, and any other pertinent information) must be included. Students may be required to re-take courses at UIC even if they have already had courses with similar titles if the content of such courses differs substantially. Final approval regarding Program requirements will be made by the DGS based on the recommendation of the Chair of the student's major program and after consultation with faculty who teach such courses. The Department does not accept transfer credits earned through independent study.

**Thesis.** Students who have completed an experimental Master's Thesis in Psychology may request a waiver of the Department's requirement to complete a Master's thesis at UIC. They should submit a copy of the thesis to the DGS by September 16<sup>th</sup> of the student's first year in the program. The DGS will appoint a reading committee consisting of the student's Advisor, Program Chair, and one additional Program member. The reading committee will recommend whether to accept the Thesis as written, accept the Thesis with the condition of requiring additional work related to the Thesis, or reject the Thesis. In the last case, the student would be required to do a Master's Thesis at UIC. If the Committee accepts the Thesis, it is common for students to still enroll in Psychology 591 (Research Apprenticeship) for the entire first year to launch a new program of research with the mentorship of an Advisor at UIC.

### C. Readmission

Applicants interested in readmission after a separation from the program must apply through standard procedures and compete with applicants for regular admission. Applicants for readmission are reviewed by the faculty members of the Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS), who will make a recommendation that includes any conditions attached to the admissions decision. Applicants for readmission who (a) had obtained Committee approval of the PhD Dissertation Prospectus prior to the separation from the program, (b) had been separated from the program for less than one year, and (c) have the clear support of the Dissertation Advisor are an exception to regular admission procedures and may be considered for readmission at any time during the academic year.



## 3. Advising

### A. Academic and Research Advisors

Throughout their graduate careers, students are required to have an Academic Advisor on record with the DGS. The Academic Advisor is a member of the Psychology department and assists in planning a program of study that fits the needs of the student and satisfies Program, Department, and Graduate College requirements. All steps in completing the graduate program are the ultimate responsibility of the student, although the student's Advisor provides guidance and, in this sense, shares responsibility. A student's Academic Advisor must be a member of the student's major Program.

Students may have their research supervised by an affiliate of the department or faculty member outside of Psychology. In this case, the student maintains a Research Advisor in addition to their Academic Advisor. To establish the Research and Academic Advising team, the student must complete the **Change of Advisor** form indicating both the Academic and Research Advisor's information and support for the arrangement from the Program Chair and DGS. If a student has separate Research and Academic Advisors, the *Academic Advisor* serves as Chair of the student's committees and signs paperwork for the department and University in the role of 'Advisor'.

If a student has both Academic and Research Advisors, the advisors should consult with each other during the planning of milestone completion, at formal committee meetings, and in providing feedback to the program for the student's annual review. As Research Advisors are not members of the Psychology department, it is the Academic Advisor's role to monitor the student's progress in keeping with departmental expectations and norms regarding the timeliness and quality of work.

### B. Change of Advisor

The initial advisory assignment is made when the student is offered admission. Once graduate studies have begun, the student is free to file a request with the DGS to change Advisors. A student-advisor pairing officially exists when (a) the student asks a particular graduate faculty member to serve as their Advisor, (b) the current *and* future Advisors agree, and (c) an approved **Change of Advisor** form is filed with the Graduate Program Coordinator's Office.

If, for any reason, a student no longer has an Advisor to supervise their research, the student should seek a new Advisor immediately and file a Change of Advisor form with the Graduate Program Coordinator's Office. If there is an unavoidable delay in finding a new Advisor, the DGS will temporarily fill that post for up to one academic term until a new Advisor is found. At the end of that term the student must have found a permanent Advisor in order to continue in the graduate program. If the loss of an Advisor is out of the control of the student (e.g., the Advisor leaves UIC), the Program will help the student find a new Advisor.

Retired, emeritus, or relocating faculty members cannot serve as Academic Advisors. They usually can, however, retain membership on established Master's Thesis, Preliminary Exam, or Dissertation committees as long as their contact with the student is maintained. In such cases,

the student should ask the department to request from the Graduate College approval of the retention of the faculty committee membership.

### C. Change of Program

When students are admitted to the Graduate Program in Psychology, they are admitted to one of the five Programs. The Academic Advisor must be a member of that Program. A change of major Program represents a significant choice regarding a student's professional direction. Students who are considering proposing such a change should discuss the implications of such changes with their current Advisor, proposed Advisor, current major Program Chair, proposed Program Chair, and the DGS. Following these discussions, the student must complete a **Change of Program** form. In addition to the form, a complete petition should include (a) a statement explaining the rationale for the proposed change, (b) a curriculum vitae

The student should submit these materials to the Graduate Program Coordinator who will distribute to the Chair of the proposed Program. The Program faculty will meet to determine whether to admit the student to their Program. Following these deliberations, the Program Chair will inform the student and DGS of the outcome and return the completed petition to the Graduate Program Coordinator. A change of Program may also necessitate a change of Advisor. In such cases, the student should also complete the **Change of Advisor** form.

### D. Guidelines for the Advisor-Advisee Relationship

#### Guidelines for Advisors

The Academic Advisor has the primary responsibility for guiding the student through the graduate program, and if the student has a Research Advisor, they have the primary responsibility for supervising research. As such, Advisor(s) provide ongoing feedback about the student's *quality and timeliness* of work. Collaboration, mutual respect, adherence to ethical principles, and sensitivity to diverse viewpoints and cultural backgrounds mark the advisor-advisee relationship.

#### Expectations for Advising Students

- When the student applicant is interviewed, the potential advisors are explicit about their research interests, future research plans, and preferences about work style.
- Advisors meet regularly with their advisees and take into consideration the developmental phase of the student in establishing expectations for collaboration.
- Advisors are explicit about expectations for required projects and timelines for progress toward timely completion.
- Advisors assist students in selecting courses and defining a minor area of specialization.
- Advisors discuss with students their policies on joint authorships.

#### Ongoing Feedback

- Advisors provide informal feedback frequently, not just at the end of each year.
- Corrective feedback is specific and is accompanied by helpful recommendations for improvement.

- Advisors meet face-to-face with students at the end of each academic year to discuss the student's annual progress report and year-end evaluation. If applicable, Research Advisors should participate in the annual program meeting to discuss students' progress, and letters summarizing the feedback to students should include input from both Advisors.
- Specific progress, both satisfactory and unsatisfactory, in multiple areas is reviewed.
- Mutually agreed-upon goals and expectations for the upcoming semester and year are discussed.
- Barring unexpected circumstances, Advisors should return drafts or portions of student-submitted work in a negotiated timely manner. Note: For many faculty members, the academic year is from August to May.
- Emails are answered in a timely manner.

### **Professional development**

- Advisors encourage and provide guidance in submitting manuscripts for publication, conference presentations, grant and award applications, and means for financial support.
- Advisors help the student transition to a career in psychology by fostering contact with colleagues outside of the Department and University, encouraging broad exposure to the work of other faculty, providing feedback on presentations (e.g., conference presentations, job talks), discussing the application process, and apprising the student of career options outside of academia.

### **Other**

- When planning a sabbatical, advisors arrange for supervision during their absence.
- When terminating employment at the University, advisors assist the student in transitioning to a new advisor.

### **Guidelines for Students**

Mentoring is a collaborative process (see Guidelines for Advisors above), and students must be active in shaping their progress through the program.

### **At the beginning of graduate school**

- Ask your advisor to be explicit about her/his research interests, future research plans, and preferences about work style.
- Discuss mutual expectations with your advisor(s) regarding timelines, milestones and goals.
- Make specific rather than general requests of your advisor (e.g., if you are someone who works better with frequent meetings and concrete deadlines, ask for them!)

### **Be proactive**

- Initiate contact with your advisor; don't wait for your advisor to come to you.
- Inform your advisor of when you will provide a work product for review and comment.
- Be mindful of summer breaks and 9-month appointments of professors; plan ahead to complete milestones at a time when the Advisor and committee members are available.

- *Rely on the Graduate Handbook for answers to questions, policies, and procedures, and ask your advisor for clarification when necessary.*

### **Conduct yourself professionally and ethically**

- Learn and follow ethical codes for research and teaching.
- Discuss with your advisor how you would like to receive feedback and respond to feedback in a professional manner.

### **Take your career seriously**

- Start thinking of yourself as a future colleague, by attending departmental symposia, joining professional associations, and by attending conferences to network and present your own research.

### **Be responsible**

- Show up for scheduled meetings on time with an agenda of what you want to accomplish.
- Inform your advisor (ahead of time) if you cannot make a meeting.
- Respond to emails promptly.
- Be upfront about difficulties that could influence your work.
- Discuss with your advisor all time commitments, including TA/RA responsibilities, academic work, other research, practica, vacations, conferences, as well as life decisions that will influence your progress in the program.
- Treat common resources, such as computers, lab equipment, etc., with care.
- Be respectful of fellow students' workspaces and conduct yourself with appropriate decorum so as not to disturb fellow students.

## 4. Personnel and Resources

There are many personnel and resources to support graduate students' progress through the PhD program:

### A. Director of Graduate Studies (DGS)

The DGS tracks student progress through the PhD program, chairs the Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS), and coordinates issues related to student grievances, academic probation, graduate petitions, leaves of absence, and university withdrawal.

### B. Graduate Program Coordinator

The Graduate Program Coordinator works closely with the DGS to coordinate the daily running of the graduate program. The Graduate Program Coordinator is **the key contact** person with information about procedures and forms that students must follow and complete as they move through graduate school. The Graduate Program Coordinator:

- Works with the DGS to prepare fellowship application materials for students nominated by the Department for University, state, or national awards
- Helps to process forms required for completion of the MA Prospectus, Minor, MA Thesis Defense, MA Degree, Preliminary Examination, PhD Dissertation Prospectus and Defense, and PhD Degree
- Maintains records of graduate student progress as well as a database of student accomplishments, and communicating that information to students, faculty Advisors, and Program Chairs
- Checks that students have completed all of their requirements to certify that they are eligible to receive their MA and PhD

### C. Special Topics Minor Advisor

Students may elect to do a Special Topics (ST) Minor – in Statistics, Methods, & Measurement or in Diversity Science. The ST Minor Advisor guides and approves the selection of courses towards the ST Minor.

### D. Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS)

The Committee on Graduate Studies (COGS) consists of three faculty appointed by the Department Head and two graduate students nominated and elected by the graduate students for two-year terms. The committee works with the DGS in reviewing the graduate program, considering suggestions for changes, and developing proposals to be presented to the faculty for possible action. The faculty on the committee participate in decision making concerning students' status in the program and readmission to the program.

### E. Diversity Advancement Committee (DAC)

The [Diversity Advancement Committee](#) (DAC) consists of three faculty members appointed by the Department Head and the DAC Student Advisory Board (DAC-SAB) who are recruited to serve by the DAC. Established in 1971 as the Graduate Educational Opportunities Committee (GEOC), the committee was renamed DAC in 2011. The central mission of the DAC is to support

an environment in the Department that enhances diversity of ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual orientation, social and economic status, and physical ability.

#### F. [Office of Applied Psychological Services \(OAPS\) and Counseling Center](#)

The [Office of Applied Psychological Services](#) (OAPS) is a psychological and behavioral health clinic in the Psychology Department. OAPS offers psychotherapy and psychological testing using approaches that are based on scientific theory and supported by scientific evidence, with an emphasis on cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) techniques. OAPS serves the UIC community, including faculty, staff, and students, as well as those living or working in the greater Chicago area. The Director and Co-Directors of OAPS are responsible for all aspects of its operation.

Students also have access to services at the [UIC Counseling Center](#), which is supported by the Health Service Fee and provides mental health services to students at no additional cost.

#### G. [Institutional Review Board \(IRB\)](#)

All research conducted by Department members that involves human subjects requires approval by the University-wide [Institutional Review Board](#) (IRB). Students must consult with their advisors to coordinate IRB approval before initiating any research with human subjects.

#### H. [Subject Pool and Mass Testing Coordinator](#)

The Subject Pool and Mass Testing Coordinator works collaboratively with the Department's Undergraduate Advisors. The Psychology Department Subject Pool consists of all students enrolled in Psychology 100. The students in the course typically participate in experiments for credit that contributes to their final course grade. Students must abide by the [policies that govern use of the department's Subject Pool](#).

#### I. [Animal Care Committee \(ACC\)](#)

The UIC [Animal Care Committee](#) (ACC) reviews all research involving animal subjects to ensure that the Department complies with University, state, and federal regulations. Students who conduct research with Animal Subjects are required to take GC 470 (Essentials for Animal Research). Students must consult with their advisors to coordinate ACC approval before initiating any research with non-human animal subjects.

## 5. Courses

### A. Required Coursework

The Department requires that graduate students from all Programs complete coursework in their Major area, Master's Thesis, Preliminary Examination, and Dissertation. Students have the option to add breadth to their area of expertise with coursework in a Minor area. In addition, the Department requires that all graduate students complete the following courses:

- PSCH 507 Emerging Research Issues (1 hour – Year 1 fall and spring)
- PSCH 508 Colloquium on Teaching Psychology (1 hour, Year 1 fall, year 1 fall and spring if TAing PSCH 100)
- PSCH 543 Research Design and Analysis (4 hours – Year 1 fall)
- PSCH 541 Introduction to Computing in Psychology (1 hour – Year 1 spring)
- PSCH 545 Multivariate Analysis (3 hours – Year 1 spring)
- PSCH 591 Research Apprenticeship (2 hours -Year 1 fall)
- PSCH 591 Research Apprenticeship (2 hours -Year 1 spring)
- PSCH 598 Thesis Research (at least 3 hours-Year 2 fall)
- PSCH 598 Thesis Research (at least 3 hours-Year 2 spring)
- PSCH 599 Dissertation Research (12 hours)

Students must complete 32 semester hours of course work for the MA – including PSCH 541, 543, 545, 4 hours of 591, from 6 to 12 hours of 598, and 9 hours from their major program (with at least 9 hours of non-independent study 500-level courses).

Students must complete 96 semester hours of course work for the PhD.

Students must accept the equivalent of at least two 50% TA assignments in their first 4 years (see 11. Teaching in Psychology).

Beyond these Department-wide requirements, each Program requires specific courses and electives for their students, as well as a Preliminary Examination to assess competence in the major Program. Details of course requirements, Preliminary Exam requirements, and checklists for each Program are available in [APPENDICES A1-A5](#).

Each year of graduate school has a different character. The general structure typically follows the following sequence:



## B. Statistics Requirement

Competency with statistical methods and analyses are critical for all fields within Psychology. Our core statistics sequence is designed to provide students with a strong foundation as follows:

**Semester 1: PSCH 543 Research Design and Analysis (4 credits).** The goal is for students to learn the conceptual and theoretical basis for doing parametric frequentists statistics for classical experimental designs (such as ANOVA). Students will learn to use *R* as the language of statistics.

**Semester 2: PSCH 545 Multivariate Analyses (3 credits) + PSCH 541 Introduction to Computing in Psychology (1 credit).** The goal is for students to learn the conceptual and theoretical basis for doing parametric (and some non-parametric) regression. Use of *R* is integrated in the material.

**Semester 3: PSCH 548 Seminar in Methods and Measurement (Optional, 4 credits; can be taken in any year).** The goal is to build on topics introduced in 543 and 545 to familiarize students with more modern and complex topics, such as mixed-effect models or SEM. Material is covered at a level to provide an overview of possible questions modern methods can address and sufficient resources for students to continue learning these methods subsequently for full mastery.

**Semester 4: PSCH 594 Advanced Special Topics (Optional, 1-4 credits; can be taken in any year).** The semester will consist of shorter ‘workshops’ (e.g. 5 to 8 weeks long) focused on more advanced topics such as SEM, HLM, MATLAB, Mixed-Models or Time Series. Each workshop is



structured with the first half of the unit covering content in class and the other half conducting a project analysis independently with support from instructors.

**MA Thesis support.** A departmental Statistics TA will be available for students outside of the core statistics sequence for student meetings, supervising refresher sessions, etc. and for faculty who want to learn *R* or interpret *R* output so they can better assist students. Note: faculty expectations for 1<sup>st</sup> year and MA Thesis projects should focus on questions that can be analyzed with the material covered in the first-year sequence courses. If the MA Thesis will require more complex questions, faculty should be able to provide statistics support or students should seek outside training.

**Placement.** Students should be placed according to prior coursework/experience/familiarity and should not take PSCH 543 if they do not have sufficient background for its pace/content. Options include:

- 1) For students with little prior coursework, take PSCH 343 and 443 in first year and enroll in 543 in second year.
- 2) For students with some background, take PSCH 343 concurrently with 543, if other requirements can be moved to a later semester.

### C. Minor Coursework

Students have the option to complete a Minor to gain exposure to bodies of knowledge and skills outside their major area, and to improve the quality of their scholarship and research.<sup>2</sup> Although this exposure is not as extensive as the training a student receives in the major Program, the Minor educates a student about the core literatures, theories, and research methods of that area. There are three types of Minors that students have the option of completing: (a) Program Minors; (b) Special Topics Minors; and (c) Student Designed Curriculum Minors. Courses contributing to each of these types of minors are found in [APPENDIX B](#).

The standard requirement for the Minor is the successful completion of three courses. Two of these must be approved graduate seminars. The third may be a Program or Special Topics Brown Bag (i.e., a Current Topics Course) or a third approved graduate seminar. Students must earn at least a B, or Satisfactory in these three courses. Students who complete a Student Designed Curriculum Minor are encouraged to attend two semesters of a Brown Bag in an area outside their major Program to gain exposure to the latest advances in knowledge, theory, research, and skills in an area. Courses may not fulfill requirements for both the Major and the Minor. In addition, Independent Study courses may not be used to fulfill the Minor.

### Declaring the Minor

Students who are completing a minor should submit a **Minor Approval Form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Students who propose a Program Minor should discuss their plans with their Advisor and Program Chair, as well as the appropriate Minor Program Chair before submitting the Minor Approval Form to the DGS for final signature. Students who propose a Special Topics Minor or a Student Designed Curriculum Minor must write a justification that must

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<sup>2</sup> Note: In May 2020, Major and Minor coursework requirements changed from the [August 2019 Handbook](#). Students only need to fulfill one set of requirements, but they do need to entirely fulfill the chosen set of requirements.

be approved by their Advisor, Program Chair, and the Special Topics Minor Advisor before final signature by the DGS. Students who apply for a Student Designed Curriculum Minor must develop a justification that is approved by their Advisor, the Program Chair, and the DGS. Should it become necessary to change one of the courses to fulfill the minor, students can submit an updated Minor Approval Form, which requires only approval by their Advisor and the DGS. Students who wish to make substantial changes in their Minor should seek approval, once again, from their Advisor, major Program Chair, and DGS.

### **Completing the Minor**

If completing a Minor, all courses must be completed before a student is permitted to defend the dissertation. The Graduate Program Coordinator will audit the students' records to certify its completion.

#### **D. Concentrations**

The Psychology Department participates in interdisciplinary concentrations in: [Neuroscience](#), [Gender and Women's Studies](#), and [Latin American and Latino Studies](#)

#### **E. Grading**

Course grades are given in accordance with [Graduate College grading guidelines](#).

The Department of Psychology reaffirms the principle that a grade assigned to a student represents the professional judgment of an instructor concerning the level of proficiency achieved by that student in regard to educational goals set by the faculty member. The faculty believes that a uniform policy for the Department is essential in this area and has adopted the following policy and procedures:

- Consistent with the educational goals of the course, it is recommended that an instructor inform as precisely as possible the way in which grades will be assigned in the written syllabus for each course. Failure of the instructor to announce a formal grading mechanism shall not be deemed sufficient cause for a change of a student's grade.
- The criteria by which grades are assigned shall be appropriate to the subject matter and level of instruction in the course. If it is deemed in reasonable likelihood that this provision has not been met, the grades of all students in the class shall be reviewed automatically.
- A set of uniform grading criteria shall apply to all students in a particular class. If an instructor wishes to apply different grading criteria to a subset of students in a course (e.g., undergraduates enrolled in a 400-level course), the instructor should ask students to enroll formally for a course with a different number.
- When an instructor assigns a grade of an Incomplete, it shall be assumed that the student will be held to the same standards of proficiency as other members of the class unless special criteria are specified to the student and are described in writing and provided to the Associate Head of the Department.
- If the instructor is not available to review or to remove a Deferred or an Incomplete grade, then the Department Head will establish an ad hoc mechanism for reviewing or removing the grade.

- The only individuals authorized to change a student's grade are the faculty member who taught the course and the Head of the Department, but the latter may do so only after consultation with the Advisory Committee.

The faculty seeks to insure that in the case that a student has a legitimate objection to his or her grade, the student shall be provided recourse through an appeal process. Any appeal of a grade by a student is submitted directly to the Associate Head. If the appeal is directed toward the Associate Head as the instructor, the appeal will be directed to the DGS. The appeal must be in writing and it must detail specific charges related to one or more of the provisions of this policy. The appeal must indicate the efforts the student has undertaken with the instructor to seek relief prior to appeal. After consulting with the student and with the instructor, the Associate Head (or DGS) shall make a ruling. If the decision is to change a grade and the instructor disagrees, the case will be advanced to the Advisory Committee for review. In the case of appeals that allege unreasonable or inappropriate grading criteria, the Associate Head shall consult first with the instructor and then refer the case to the Advisory Committee.

## 6. First Year Research Apprenticeship

First-year students are required to enroll for 4 hours of Psychology 591 (2 hours each in fall and spring). Psychology 591 (Research Apprenticeship) is a 2-semester, individualized, independent study training experience - between a graduate student and Advisor designed to introduce incoming students to empirical research and help them prepare a Master's Thesis Prospectus.

At the start of the fall term, first year graduate students meet with their Advisor(s) to clarify their Research Apprenticeship training plan and expected timeline for making satisfactory progress conducting research during the first year. At the conclusion of PSCH 591, students produce a report (see below), which is submitted to their advisor by the last day of finals in the second semester.

The Research Apprenticeship is satisfied, according to each program's requirements, by:

- 1) completion of a first-year project that is separate from, or preliminary to, Master's thesis work, concluding with an APA-formatted research report that includes plans for moving to the MA Thesis Prospectus in a Conclusion section, *or*
- 2) conduct of research leading to the MA Thesis, concluding with an APA-formatted report that highlights the study's rationale, hypotheses, subjects, design, measures, and expected analyses and results. The report requirement is waived if the student has completed the Committee-approved MA Thesis Prospectus (see 7. Master's Research and Thesis).

The student's annual review letter includes an evaluation of *timeliness* and *quality* of the work completed during the Research Apprenticeship.

Students who have completed an MA thesis elsewhere may be exempt from the second semester of Psychology 591 if: (a) their Thesis has been evaluated by a 3-member Review Committee (comprised of the Advisor, Program Chair, and one other faculty member) and satisfies the requirements for a Master's at UIC, and (b) their Advisor, Program Chair, and the DGS approve a request for exemption.

## 7. Master's Research and Thesis

### A. Purpose, Scope, and Format

**Purpose.** Students complete an MA Thesis to demonstrate that they can use theory, empirical findings, and research methods to design and carry out a study where the final product could support a conference presentation or a journal article. The research itself is expected to clearly be the student's project, although it is expected that students will receive guidance from their Advisor and members of the Thesis Committee. However, the student should meet the criteria for being the senior author of any presented or published report of the research. Note however, that the acceptability of the MA Thesis is not dependent on finding significant results as long as the proposed study is judged to be well-designed and poses a scientifically interesting question; nor is publishing the final paper required for an acceptable MA Thesis.

**Scope and Format.** The thesis is designed, analyzed and written up in the form of an APA-style report of research. The scope, design, and statistical analysis of the thesis project should allow it to be completed reasonably within the first two-years of graduate training.

Typically, the MA Thesis should be the length of an article that would be submitted for journal publication -- i.e., the text should be approximately 25 manuscript pages. Reviews of relevant literature should be limited to that which is directly relevant to the proposed project. Extended reviews of relevant literature may be included as an appendix to the thesis.

The research methods should suit the nature of the research question(s). In some cases, the use of an existing data set is acceptable when the Advisor and Thesis Committee believe that the final quality of the study and the student's learning experience would be enhanced by using existing data rather than collecting new data.

### B. Forming the MA Committee - Composition and Appointment of the Committee Members

The Thesis Committee consists of at least three (3) persons. The Committee Chair must be the student's Academic Advisor, holding more than a 0% appointment as a faculty member in the Psychology Department. At least one (1) member must be a full member of the Graduate College and at least one (1) member must be tenured. At least two (2) committee members must be faculty or affiliate faculty of the Psychology Department. One (1) member of the Committee may be from outside the Department, academic unit, or university. Retired, emeritus, or relocating faculty members can usually retain membership on established MA Thesis committees as long as their contact with the student is maintained. In such cases, the student should ask the department to request Graduate College approval of the retention of the faculty as a member of the committee.

Students, in consultation with their Advisors, initiate the identification of committee members as the Thesis Project takes shape. This often occurs during the 2nd or 3rd semester of graduate study. Conversations with prospective committee members about the project are useful for shaping the project as well as getting their commitment to serve on the Thesis Committee. At least one week prior to the Thesis Prospectus meeting (see section C, below), the student completes the Departmental **Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form** and secures DGS approval of the Thesis Committee members.

### C. Obtaining Approval of the Thesis Prospectus

**Preparing the Prospectus.** The Thesis Prospectus is prepared to communicate the Thesis Project to the Thesis Committee. It is a written description of the proposed study describing the study's rationale, hypotheses, participants, design, measures, and expected analyses and results. Typically, students and their Advisors iterate on the Thesis Prospectus. When the Advisor and student agree that the Prospectus is ready for Committee input, the Thesis Prospectus should be distributed to the Thesis Committee. The Thesis Committee members evaluate whether the Prospectus is sufficiently well-developed for the student to defend the project in a Thesis Committee meeting. Programs differ with respect to the details, including timing, of this process and students should consult the appendices for program specifics. In general, it is in the student's best interest to meet with the Thesis Committee for feedback and approval of the project prior to embarking upon the project.

**The Thesis Committee Meeting: Defending the Prospectus.** The candidate schedules the time and location of the Prospectus meeting and informs the Graduate Program Coordinator of when the meeting will take place. The Prospectus meeting is typically a collaborative effort where Committee members consult with the candidate about the proposed thesis research and suggest modifications where appropriate. At the end of the meeting, the candidate is excused and the Committee votes on whether the Prospectus should be approved as is and, if not, what course of action should be taken. The Advisor immediately informs the candidate of the committee's decision.

There are several possible outcomes of the Prospectus meeting: The committee may approve the Prospectus as is, may approve it conditionally subject to certain revisions, or may request another Prospectus meeting. Final approval of a Prospectus should be unanimous as the Prospectus represents what the student must do to satisfy the Committee. If one or more committee members cannot approve a Prospectus even after revisions or one or more wish to withdraw from the committee, the DGS should be informed by the Advisor. The DGS in consultation with COGS will adjudicate the matter. If there is a change to the committee composition, a new **Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form** is completed.

It is common practice for the student and Advisor to take minutes during the meeting and send a follow-up memo of understanding immediately after the Prospectus meeting in which the candidate outlines his/her understanding of any changes recommended by the Committee for the Thesis plan. Once Committee members approve the follow-up memo, the Prospectus and memo may serve as a reminder of what the candidate must carry out to complete the Thesis successfully. If a candidate's Thesis design deviates from the approved Prospectus, the students should inform Committee members of significant changes as they occur rather than waiting until the final Defense.

**Prospectus Approval.** The student should bring a copy of the DGS-approved **Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form** to the Prospectus meeting so that the outcome can be recorded. After the meeting, the student turns in the completed **Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form** and a copy of the prospectus to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who maintains the form to record the outcome of the meeting.

#### D. Completing the Thesis Project

**Subject Approval and Data Collection.** Students may not begin their research until they obtain formal approval for their use of either human or animal subjects. The procedures for obtaining such approval are outlined at the [UIC IRB website](#). If the Thesis uses human subjects, students are required to include the official University IRB notification of approval in the final copy of their MA Thesis. The [Animal Care Committee](#) must provide approval for non-human animal research.

**Thesis-Related Course Requirements.** In addition to the Thesis Project, students must complete 32 credit hours of courses to earn the MA degree. Second-year students must register in PSCH 598 (Thesis Research) for a minimum of 3 hours per semester. Some Programs also require first- and second-year students to enroll in additional, thesis-related courses. The Graduate College will not accept the Thesis manuscript without the required PSCH 598 hours.

#### E. Defending the Master's Thesis

**Semester of Defense.** The student must electronically declare their [Intent to Graduate](#) **early in the term** in which they expect to defend the MA Thesis (by the end of Week 3 for Fall/Spring, end of Week 2 for Summer).

**Three weeks prior to Defense.** Students must complete the Graduate College **Committee Recommendation Form**, signed by the student's Advisor and the DGS. The student turns the form in to the Graduate Program Coordinator who sends it to the Graduate College. *It must be sent to the Graduate College 3 weeks in advance of the MA Thesis defense date.* The Dean of the Graduate College officially approves and appoints the Thesis Committee. For committee members from outside UIC, the form must be accompanied by the outside member's CV and credentials that demonstrate academic standards equivalent to those of UIC members. The Graduate College indicates approval of the committee by delivery of the **Examination Report Form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who keeps it until the MA Thesis defense.

**Scheduling the Oral Defense of the Thesis paper.** The student consults with the Advisor throughout data collection, analyses, and iterative drafts of the MA Thesis paper. When student and Advisor agree that the draft is ready for Thesis Committee review, the student distributes it to the Thesis Committee. The Thesis Committee reviews the draft and provides feedback to the Advisor as well as an indication of whether the draft can move forward to an oral defense of the Thesis paper. If so, and if the student is in good academic standing and has completed all other MA requirements (or be on schedule to do so), the meeting is scheduled. The Graduate Program Coordinator must be informed in advance of when the MA Thesis defense will be held. The Graduate Program Coordinator will provide the student with the **Examination Report Form** to bring to the Thesis Defense.

**The Oral Defense Meeting.** The Committee examines the candidate on the Thesis research and relevant substantive and methodological matters. When the defense is completed, the candidate is excused and the Committee considers its decision regarding the Thesis. All Committee members must be present at the oral defense. If all members cannot attend the oral defense, the examination must be rescheduled. Each committee member votes pass or fail. A majority of

the Committee must approve the Thesis. A candidate may not be passed if more than one vote of "fail" is reported. The Advisor will immediately convey to the candidate the Committee's decision.

**Reporting the Outcome of the Defense.** The Thesis Committee recommendation is reported on the **Examination Report Form**, which the Graduate Program Coordinator subsequently sends to the Graduate College. The Committee may require that specific conditions be met before the passing recommendation becomes effective. In such cases, when it is sufficient for the candidate's Advisor to monitor and approve final changes, Committee members typically sign the form. If the Committee members wish to approve final changes individually or in a follow-up meeting, they typically do not sign the form until they offer their final approval. It is important to have a written summary of the conditions that must be met before the passing becomes effective - especially if required changes are substantial and/or a second meeting is required with the possibility that the candidate may not pass the MA Thesis defense. It is permissible to include these conditions on a separate piece of paper rather than listing them on the **Examination Report Form**. In such instances, the Advisor should return the **Examination Report Form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator; the student can pick it up again once the conditions are effectively met and Committee members are ready to sign them.

#### F. Submitting the Final Copy of the Master's Thesis

The MA Thesis format should follow the requirements of the Graduate College. The Student should consult the [Graduate College guidelines](#). Students must also validate the originality of the thesis using [iThenticate](#). Once the final Thesis is approved by the Master's Thesis Committee, it can be submitted to the Graduate College for approval via the [ETD \(Electronic Thesis/Dissertation\) system](#).

#### G. Filing for the MA Degree

Students should complete the **Graduate Transfer of Credit Form** by including courses required for the MA such as (a) their early Major Program courses (at least 9 hours), (b) PSCH 541, 543 and 545, (c) PSCH 591 (4 hours), (d) PSCH 598 (at least 6 hours), plus (e) additional courses of their choice from their major to total 32 hours. There must be 9 hours of 500-level non-independent study courses on the form. Partial credit cannot be transferred, so only full courses may be used; thus there are sometimes more than 32 credits on the form. When completing this form, students are advised to review their academic history which is available online.

Once approved, the form must be copied for the student's Department file. The student may submit the form to the Graduate College when they submit their final copies of their Thesis. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that these forms get to the Graduate College - with copies to the Graduate Program Coordinator - by the established deadlines noted in the Graduate College website.



#### H. Timeline

Students are expected to defend and attain Committee approval of the MA Thesis by the end of finals week of their 4<sup>th</sup> semester. The student must electronically declare their [Intent to Graduate](#) early in the term in which they expect to defend the dissertation.

Students whose MA Theses are not passed by this deadline must submit an **Extension for Milestone** form signed by the student, their Advisor, Program Chair, and DGS to the Graduate Program Coordinator. The student will then be given a one-year grace period to meet milestone deadline. If the MA Thesis is not completed by the end of the grace period, the timeliness of the student's progress is considered to be 'not meeting expectations', which must be stated in the student's annual written evaluation.

## 8. Preliminary Examination and Advancement to Candidacy

### A. Purpose, Scope, and Format

**Purpose.** The Preliminary Exam serves to determine the student's readiness to undertake Dissertation research. Passing the Preliminary Examination constitutes formal Advancement to Candidacy. There are two phases to the Preliminary Examination: completion and evaluation of the actual exam (written/oral components) *and* an evaluation of the student's overall record in the PhD program including the results of the exam. *Both phases determine readiness to advance to candidacy.*

**Scope and Format.** Programs in the department vary in terms of their implementation of the Preliminary Exam so students should refer to the relevant program for details ([APPENDICES A1-A5](#)).

### B. Forming the Preliminary Exam Committee – Composition and Appointment of Committee Members

**Preliminary Exam Committee.** The Preliminary Exam Committee consists of at least five (5) members. The Committee Chair must be the student's Academic Advisor, hold more than a 0% appointment as a faculty member in the Psychology Department, and be a full faculty member of the Graduate School. At least three (3) members must be full members of the Graduate College and at least two (2) members must be tenured. At least three (3) committee members must be faculty or affiliate faculty of the Psychology Department. An outside member is recommended but not required. The major Program Chair appoints a Chair and members of the Preliminary Examination Committee with the endorsement of the DGS.

**Reading Committee.** The Program Chair must appoint a minimum of two (2) faculty to serve on the committee that administers the written/oral portions of the Preliminary Examination, referred to here as the *Reading Committee* (note: this may be referred to by different names in different programs). Individual programs determine the role of a student's Advisor in relation to the Reading Committee. The Program may also determine whether the Reading Committee is limited to faculty in the student's program. Following the written/oral portions of the exam, the Reading Committee reports the results to the full five-member Preliminary Exam committee.

*The full five-member Preliminary Exam committee considers the candidate's overall record, including the results of the written/oral exam, to determine whether the student should advance to candidacy.*

**Ex Officio Committee Members.** If a Program does not have as many as five members (or if it is for some other reason impractical to appoint five Program members to the committee), the Department Head, DGS, or Program Chair may serve as ex officio members to certify advancement to candidacy in accordance with the unanimous votes of the Program members who administer the Preliminary Examination. The Preliminary Examination Committee is officially appointed by the Dean of the Graduate College upon the recommendation of the Department.

### C. Preliminary Examination Process and Procedures

Many Programs require that students propose their Preliminary Exam; however, the specific content, structure, and feedback mechanisms regarding these proposals differ for each Program (see [APPENDICES A1-A5](#)). In this section the general process is described.

**Proposing.** Students consult with their Advisor regarding their readiness for the Preliminary Exam and potential members of the Preliminary Exam Committee. The Advisor notifies the Program Chair of a student's readiness to propose and may recommend faculty to constitute the Reading Committee that will evaluate the proposal and the written and oral components of the exam. The Program Chair then invites the designated faculty to serve on the Reading Committee and designates one member to serve as chair.

**Accepted Proposals.** When the proposal is accepted, the Program Chair notifies the student that they may begin the written portion of the Preliminary Exam and specifies the due date for the written product. As well, the Program Chair informs the Graduate Program Coordinator of the time frame of the written Preliminary Exam, the members of the Reading Committee, and the members of the five-member Preliminary Exam Committee. The five-member committee is indicated on the Graduate College **Committee Recommendation Form**, which must be approved by the Advisor and DGS and sent to the Graduate College for approval. *This form must be sent to the Graduate College at least 3 weeks before the oral exam.* When the Graduate College returns the **Examination Report Form** to the department, the Graduate Program Coordinator keeps it until the oral defense of the written preliminary exam.

**Completion and Evaluation of the Written and Oral Preliminary Exam.** Students submit their written exam to the Reading Committee no later than the agreed upon due date. The members of this committee read and evaluate the written exam and provide the Chair of the full Preliminary Exam Committee with their feedback and assessment of whether the written exam is of sufficient quality to schedule the oral exam. If it is, the oral exam is scheduled within two-weeks.

If the written paper is unacceptable, the Reading Committee reports this to the full Preliminary Exam Committee along one of three possible recommendations: to allow a second attempt with no revision to the proposal, to allow a second attempt with a revised/new proposal, or to not allow a second attempt. The Preliminary Exam Committee can accept or revise the recommendation of the Reading Committee.

If the written paper is acceptable and the Reading Committee evaluates the oral exam as a "pass", the Reading Committee submits a report to the Preliminary Exam Committee to indicate the "pass" or "fail" votes of each member on the written and oral portions of the exam. The Reading Committee provides their recommendation along with a report on the exam to the Program Chair and/or to the other members of the Preliminary Exam Committee. The details of this process vary between programs.

**Evaluating the Preliminary Exam and Advancement to Candidacy.** The Preliminary Exam Committee convenes to consider the report of the Reading Committee and the student's overall record in the PhD program. Each member of the committee indicates a "pass" or "fail" vote on

the Graduate College **Examination Report Form**. A “pass” is a vote to advance the student to candidacy. The committee may require that specific conditions be met before on either the written or oral exam before an advancement recommendation becomes effective. A student cannot be advanced to candidacy with more than one “fail” vote.

Students who fail their first Preliminary Examination may request that the Program permit them to take a second Examination. In considering the request, the Program faculty review both the student's exam performance as well as his/her performance in all aspects of graduate school. Based on this review, the Program Chair or Chair of the Examination Committee provides written feedback about the reason for failing the exam, whether or not a second exam will be permitted, and if permitted, what must be done to prepare for a second exam. If not permitted, the Program Chair would recommend dismissal from the graduate program to COGS. In such cases, the COGS will assess the situation by gathering input from the student, Advisor, and Program Chair before making a final Department recommendation to the student, Program, and Graduate College. A third examination is not permitted.

**Reporting the Results of the Preliminary Exam Process.** Once the Preliminary Exam Committee advances the student to candidacy, the completed and signed **Examination Report Form**, written examination or paper, and written comments of committee members are submitted to the Graduate Program Coordinator. Upon receipt, the Graduate Program Coordinator submits the **Examination Report Form** to the Graduate College within two weeks of the completion of the Exam. Once the student has passed the Examination and the required paper work has been submitted, the Dean of the Graduate College will write a letter notifying the student that s/he has been admitted to Candidacy.

#### D. Timeline

The Preliminary Examination is usually administered when the student has completed most, though not necessarily all, of their course work, but has not made a major investment of time and effort towards the Dissertation research project. The Preliminary Examination may not be taken until completion of the MA Thesis has been approved. The deadline for completing the Preliminary Examination is the end of the finals week of the student's 6<sup>th</sup> semester or one-year from the end of the semester in which the MA Thesis was successfully defended. Students who fail to meet this deadline must submit an **Extension for Milestone** form signed by the student, Advisor, Program Chair, and DGS to the Graduate Program Coordinator. The student will then be given a one-year grace period to complete both phases of the Preliminary Exam. If the Preliminary Exam is not completed by the end of the grace period, the timeliness of the student's progress is considered to be ‘not meeting expectations’, which must be stated in the student's annual written evaluation.

Note that a *minimum of one year* has to elapse after passing the Preliminary Examination before the defense of the Dissertation. Only students in good academic standing are permitted to take the Examination. Students who do not complete the PhD degree requirements within five (5) years of passing the Preliminary Examination must retake the examination. Students must be registered the term in which they are taking the Preliminary Examination.

## 9. Doctoral Research and Dissertation

### A. Purpose, Scope, and Format

**Purpose.** The Doctoral Dissertation is the traditional academic finale for graduate work. Successful completion of it is the final step in the process of earning the Doctor of Philosophy degree. Accordingly, students must advance to candidacy prior to undertaking the Dissertation. The Dissertation emphasizes the advancement of knowledge through independent research and demonstrates scholarship and research skills applied to a specific problem in the student's major area of expertise.

**Scope and Format.** The Doctoral Dissertation is designed, analyzed, and written in the form of an APA-style research report, with one exception: it must include a comprehensive review of the literature relevant to the chosen topic as well as the proposed research. This review may appear as either an extended introduction to the Dissertation or as an appendix to the final draft of the Dissertation. The research methods should suit the nature of the research question(s). Prior to conducting the doctoral research, a student's Doctoral Dissertation Prospectus must be approved by the student's Doctoral Committee.

### B. Forming the Dissertation Committee - Composition and Appointment of the Committee Members

The Dissertation Committee consists of at least five (5) persons, one of whom must be from outside the Psychology Department. The Committee Chair must be the student's Academic Advisor, hold more than a 0% appointment as a faculty member in the Psychology Department, and be a full faculty member of the Graduate School. At least two (2) members must be full members of the Graduate College and at least two (2) members must be tenured. At least three (3) committee members must be faculty or affiliate faculty of the Psychology Department. At least one (1) must be from outside the Psychology Department, which may include graduate faculty from other UIC Departments or Colleges, or from outside of UIC. Retired, emeritus, or relocating faculty members can usually retain membership on established PhD committees as long as their contact with the student is maintained. In such cases, the student should ask the department to request Graduate College approval of the retention of the faculty as a member of the committee.

The student in consultation with the Advisor typically selects potential committee members based on their expertise relative to the dissertation topic and project. The student should discuss the prospectus with potential committee members as the prospectus is being developed. Once the committee is identified, the student completes the Department's **Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form** and submits it to the DGS for approval of the proposed committee. **The DGS must approve Committee members before the Committee meets formally for the first time.** The form should be submitted *at least one week prior* to the Prospectus Meeting. The DGS notifies the student and the Advisor when the committee has been approved. The Advisor, in turn, notifies the other members of the committee.

### C. Obtaining Approval of the Dissertation Prospectus

**Preparing the Prospectus.** The Prospectus provides a theoretical and empirical rationale for the dissertation research. The Prospectus should include a review of the relevant literature, a statement of the purpose of the research and hypotheses, a detailed description of the proposed design, subjects, measures, procedures, proposed analyses, references, and appendices containing any special details. The comprehensive literature review, which is required in the final version of the Dissertation, may not need to be included in the Prospectus, depending on Program requirements (see [APPENDICES A1-A5](#)).

To develop the Prospectus, students often discuss their ideas with their Advisor, potential committee members, and other students. Many students find the feedback that comes from such discussions extremely helpful in formulating and refining their ideas. When the student and Advisor think the Prospectus is sufficiently well-developed for committee review, the student submits the Dissertation Prospectus to the committee members who provide feedback on whether they are ready to proceed to an oral defense or require revisions/further development prior to an oral defense. The Prospectus should be distributed to the committee at least two weeks prior to an anticipated oral defense.

**The Dissertation Committee Meeting: Defending the Prospectus.** There are three possible outcomes for the oral defense of the Prospectus: pass with minimal or no revisions, major revisions required, or major revisions required with another oral defense. If revisions are required, the Committee provides written feedback specifying the revisions and the process that will be used to approve a revised Prospectus, including who is responsible for approving a revised Prospectus. This may range from all members of the committee to just the Chair. Final approval of a Prospectus should be unanimous as the Prospectus represents what the student must do to satisfy the Committee. If one or more committee members cannot approve a Prospectus even after revisions or one or more wish to withdraw from the committee, the DGS should be informed by the Advisor. The DGS in consultation with the Committee on Graduate Studies will adjudicate the matter. If there is a change in the composition of the committee, and new **Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form** must be completed.

**Prospectus Approval.** Upon approval of the Prospectus, the committee members complete the Departmental **Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form**. The student turns in the completed **Committee Members and Prospectus Approval Form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who maintains the form to record the outcome of the meeting. At this time, students should review their progress through the program with the Graduate Program Coordinator to make sure they have completed all Department, Major Program, and Minor requirements for the PhD Degree or are on the way to completing all of them.

### D. Completing the Dissertation Project

**Subject Approval and Data Collection.** Students may not begin their research until they obtain formal approval for their use of either human or animal subjects. The procedures for obtaining such approval are outlined at the [UIC IRB website](#). If the dissertation uses human subjects, students are required to include the official University IRB notification of approval in the final

copy of their Dissertation. The [Animal Care Committee](#) must provide approval for non-human animal research.

**Dissertation-Related Course Requirements.** Students are required to complete at least 12 hours of Psychology 599 (Dissertation Research). This may be accomplished by registering for 3 to 6 semester hours per term during the 4th and/or 5th year of graduate school.

*Registration.* The Graduate College requires that students be registered the term that they defend their dissertation. Registration for Zero Hours is only available to students who have completed all course work, examinations, and all degree requirements except the Dissertation, and have been registered for two semesters following Prospectus approval. Students wishing to register for Zero Hours must submit a Graduate College petition and receive permission from the Graduate College and Department prior to registration. It is essential that all petitions for Zero Hours arrive in the Graduate College prior to the effective term. Students must be within the time frame for degree completion to continue on Zero Hour registration. There are two options (A and B) for students who qualify for Zero Hour Registration.

*Zero Hours – Option A.* This option is for students who are on campus, and/or using UIC facilities such as the library, computers, computer accounts, etc., and who have completed all requirements except the dissertation, but who must maintain registration due to Department, University, or immigration requirements. Students requesting Option A must petition the Department and Graduate College only for the initial term for which zero hours is requested. The Graduate Program Coordinator does a graduation check, and if all requirements are completed, the Advisor and DGS approve the petition and forward it to the Graduate College. The College then reviews for graduation requirements, and either approves or denies, based on the Department and Graduate College review. The student registers for Psychology 599 (Dissertation Research), for each term by the registration deadline. The student is billed the appropriate Zero Hours (Range IV) tuition and fees.

*Zero Hours – Option B.* This option is only for doctoral students who are not on campus or using UIC facilities. Typically, the student is out-of-state. The student completes a petition requesting Option B and the two consecutive terms for which the request is being made. Once approved, the Graduate College notifies the Registration Office and a special billing process is initiated so that the student is billed the appropriate Zero Hours (Range IV) tuition and fees. With Option B, the student still registers under the appropriate call number for Psychology 599 using the Advisor name listed on the petition for two terms. The Option B student must re-petition for renewal each year until the defense is passed. The student will receive a normal bill, less the fees each term approved. The Graduate College will not approve late Zero Hour Option B petitions. Late petitioners will be billed at Option A rates.

#### E. Defending the Dissertation

**Semester of Defense.** The student must electronically declare their [Intent to Graduate](#) **early in the term** in which they expect to defend the Dissertation (by the end of Week 3 for Fall/Spring, end of Week 2 for Summer). *\*Note: Clinical students on internship wishing to walk in Spring graduation must declare their Intent to Graduate in the Spring to be included in the commencement program. They must then declare their Intent to Graduate again in Summer, so*

*that completion of the degree requirements can be certified - and diploma issued - after the internship is completed.*

**Three weeks prior to Defense.** Students must complete the Graduate College **Committee Recommendation Form**, signed by the student's Advisor and the DGS. The student turns the form in to the Graduate Program Coordinator. At this time, the Graduate Program Coordinator does a certification check to assure that the candidate is in good standing and has completed all Department, Major Program, and Minor requirements for the PhD Degree or is on the way to completing all of them. If any requirements have not been fulfilled, the Graduate Program Coordinator notifies the student and retains the form in the student's file until such time as the certification check is complete.

When the certification check is complete, the Graduate Program Coordinator sends the **Committee Recommendation Form** to the Graduate College so that the Dean of the Graduate College can officially appoint the committee. *It must be sent to the Graduate College 3 weeks in advance of the Dissertation Defense date.* The Dean of the Graduate College officially approves and appoints the Thesis Committee. For committee members from outside UIC, the form must be accompanied by the outside member's CV and credentials that demonstrate academic standards equivalent to those of UIC members. The Graduate College indicates approval of the committee by the delivery of the **Examination Report Form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator, who keeps it until the Dissertation Defense.

**Scheduling the Oral Defense of the Written Dissertation.** Following approval of the PhD Prospectus, students are encouraged to update their committee members regularly (e.g. at the completion of individual components of the project, once per semester, etc.). If changes need to be made to the research plan, the student should schedule a committee meeting to gather consensus on how to proceed. As dissertation research is nearing completion, and when all of the other requirements are met, the student should prepare for the oral defense and graduation.

The student in consultation with the Advisor determines when the Dissertation document is ready for distribution to the full committee. The committee has two weeks in which to read and evaluate whether the document is ready to be defended. Each member communicates their evaluation to the Chair of the committee along with an indication of whether or not they believe the oral defense can be scheduled. The defense cannot be scheduled if more than one committee member does not approve. Before the Dissertation defense, *it is the student's responsibility to obtain the Examination Report Form from the Graduate Program Coordinator and bring it to the dissertation defense.*

**Oral Defense of the Dissertation.** The Dissertation Defense must be open to the academic community of the University and be publicly announced one week prior to its occurrence. The Psychology Department publicly announces all Defenses. Accordingly, two weeks prior to the Defense students are required to submit (via e-mail) the following information to the Graduate Program Coordinator: Dissertation Title and Abstract; Dissertation Chair and Committee Members; time, date, and location of the Defense; and future professional plans.



**Reporting the Outcome of the Defense.** At the completion of the Defense, the Dissertation Committee recommendation is recorded on the **Examination Report Form** that is signed by each committee member. Each Committee Member records a grade of "pass" or "fail." A candidate cannot be passed if more than one vote of "fail" is reported. If the Dissertation Committee votes to "pass" the student at the Dissertation Defense, the Committee Chair should immediately return the signed **Examination Report Form** to the Graduate Program Coordinator who holds them until the dissertation is ready to be submitted to the Graduate College. The Defense results are posted to the student's record in the Graduate College.

A committee may recommend "pass-with specified conditions." If this occurs, the conditions must be specified on the **Examination Report Form** along with the Committee member who will monitor the fulfillment of any such conditions. This named person must then report to the Graduate College in a memo when conditions have been satisfied.

If the vote is "fail," the Committee should share this result with the Program Chair, the Program faculty, and the DGS. Following a review, the Committee and DGS may recommend that the Dean permit a second exam. This second examination must be initiated by submission of a new **Committee Recommendation Form**, even if there is no change in membership. A third exam will not be permitted.

#### F. Submitting the Final Copy of the Doctoral Dissertation

The dissertation format should follow the requirements of the Graduate College. The Student should consult the [Graduate College guidelines](#). The Student must also validate the originality of the thesis using [iThenticate](#). Once the final Dissertation is approved by the Dissertation Committee, it can be submitted to the Graduate College for approval via the [ETD \(Electronic Thesis/Dissertation\) system](#).

The final electronic Dissertation should be sent to the Graduate Program Coordinator to be bound – with copies made for the Advisor, the department library, and the student.

#### G. After you graduate!

1. **Keys.** All keys must be returned.
2. **Office.** Please remove all personal items from your office.
3. **Course Materials.** Exams, papers, quizzes, etc. that are in your possession as a past teaching assistant or instructor should not be left in your office.
  - a. Materials more than **2 years** old can be shredded.
  - b. If less than **2 years** old: bring to 1066 for storage if you were the instructor; bring to the instructor if you were the teaching assistant.
4. **Informed Consent Forms.** Paper informed consent forms must be kept for **3 years** after the completion of research. Communicate with your research advisor about their storage. Older consent forms should be shredded.

5. **IRB protocols.** Make sure all current IRB protocols for which you are the PI are closed or transferred. Please let the PI know to remove you as key personnel on any IRBs (submit an amended Appendix P).
6. **Data.** Communicate with your research advisor about any data is that you collected during your time at UIC; all parties involved in the research should have access to data and scripts.
7. **Financial Accounts.** Make sure all financial accounts are closed prior to leaving UIC, i.e. program advances.
8. **Email address.** Please provide a non-UIC email address to the Graduate Program Coordinator so we can contact you if needed.
9. **Listservs and Directories.** Send email to [IT@psch.uic.edu](mailto:IT@psch.uic.edu) and notify them that you have graduated and can be removed from psychology directories.
10. **Legacy:** Sign the PhD Pillar in 1009!

#### H. Timeline

Students should form their Dissertation Committee during the 7th or 8th semester and complete their approved PhD Prospectus by the end of finals week of the 8<sup>th</sup> semester or one year from having advanced to candidacy. Students who fail to meet this deadline must submit an **Extension for Milestone** form that is signed by the student, their advisor, Program Chair, and DGS to the Graduate Program Coordinator. The student will then be given a one-year grace period in which to accomplish an approved Prospectus. If an approved PhD Prospectus is not completed by the end of the grace period, the timeliness of the student's progress is considered to be 'not meeting expectations', which must be stated in the student's annual written evaluation.

The Prospectus must be approved at least 5 months prior to the Dissertation Defense. If the Dissertation has not been approved within 3 years of Prospectus approval, the student must meet with the Dissertation Committee to request additional time. The Committee may require an updated literature review, a progress report, as well as modification of the project, including additional research. The Committee may grant a 1-year extension to complete the Dissertation. This procedure must be repeated annually until the Dissertation is approved or the Committee decides not to grant an extension. Students who do not complete degree requirements within 5 years of passing the Preliminary Examination/Advancement to candidacy must retake the Preliminary Examination.

Students who enter the Graduate College with a Master's degree must complete all PhD requirements within 7 years of program entry. Students who enter without a Master's degree must complete the PhD requirements within 9 years of program entry. Students who exceed the time limit to complete the PhD must complete a Graduate College Petition to request additional time to complete the remaining requirements; this form should be given to the Graduate Program Coordinator after the student obtains the approval from their Program. The Graduate Program Coordinator will forward the Graduate College Petition to COGS faculty for approval.

## Finances

### A. Tuition, Fees, and Other Charges

All students are assessed tuition and fees. The amount varies with the number of credit hours for which the student registers and according to status as a resident or nonresident of Illinois. There are also semester charges for [fees and assessments](#).

### B. Financial Aid

UIC offers six basic types of financial aid for graduate students: assistantships, fellowships, tuition and service fee waivers, traineeships, loans, and employment. Applicants for these types of aid must be admitted to a graduate degree program or have a completed application pending. The Office of Student Financial Aid determines eligibility for loans. The Office of Personnel Services determines eligibility for employment. Applications for loans and employment should be sent directly to these offices. In the administration of these programs and in selecting students for participation in them, the UIC adheres to the policy of nondiscrimination printed in the University Regulations. Additional information about University Financial Aid can be found in the [Graduate College Catalog](#). The [Office of Student Financial Aid](#) can also provide information on student loans and other types of financial aid.

### C. Pay Schedules and Fees

Departmental assistantships are divided into three basic categories: Teaching Assistants (TA's), Research Assistants (RA's), and Clinical Assistants (CA's). Graduate students employed by the University between 25% and 67% time during the academic year automatically receive a waiver of tuition, tuition differential, and [some, but not all, fees](#). According to University regulations, the upper limit for international students is a 50% appointment. In addition, graduate students holding fellowships (e.g., University, Diversity, and Access (formerly Abraham Lincoln)) may take assistantships for a maximum of 50% time during the academic year. Pay schedules are determined by the [agreement](#) between the UI Board of Trustees and the Graduate Employees' Organization.

### D. Financial Commitment to Graduate Students

The Department endeavors to provide support for graduate students. Within budgetary limitations, the Department of Psychology aims to offer 50%-time research or teaching assistantships to all students in good standing during their graduate study. Additional assistantships may be available during the summer months.

Students who fail to complete major program requirements in a timely manner or assistantship duties adequately will have lowest priority for financial support. Please see the department's [Teaching Assistantship Appointment Guidelines](#) for more details.

### E. Required effort

The weekly clock hours of service required of Teaching, Research, and Clinical Assistants are 20.00 for a 50% appointment, and the proportional fraction of time for other appointments

(Graduate College Guidelines). Absences during any term or between the fall and spring terms should be approved in advance by the Assistant's supervisor.

#### F. Waivers

Tuition and some fees are [waived](#) for assistants if the appointment is between 25% and 67% for at least three-quarters of the term (91 calendar days in the fall and spring semester and 41 days during the summer session). Graduate students who hold academic appointments as assistants for the spring semester and for whom tuition and service fees were waived in the spring are entitled to a waiver for the summer term immediately following if they do not hold a summer assistantship, provided they are registered for at least three hours during that summer term. Under these conditions, no request for a tuition and fees waiver is required.

#### **Board of Trustees (BOT) Waivers**

The Department receives a *limited number* of Graduate College Board of Trustees (BOT) Waivers (not associated with TA's or RA's) which are made available to graduate students. Students must apply for waivers through the DGS. A BOT Waiver provides a waiver from tuition and some, but not all, fees. The Department gives priority in assigning BOT Waivers to graduate students who cannot accept an assistantship because they have an off-site internship or are conducting research out of state. Students must be in good academic standing to receive a BOT Waiver.

To request a BOT Waiver, email the Graduate Coordinator and DGS [well in advance of each semester](#). If you are going to live at least 90 miles from campus and are committed to being off-campus for the entire term, please indicate this as well in your request. Students granted a BOT Waiver during one term should not assume they will automatically obtain another and should make a timely request for the additional term(s).

#### G. Summer Assistantships

Summer TA's are awarded on a competitive basis among those students requesting such support, taking into account the students' degree progress and previous TA performance, as well as the specific need for assistance dictated by the set of courses offered during the summer term. Students holding any kind of summer appointment between 25-67% must register for the required number of hours to maintain an assistantship.

#### H. Department Support for Research

If no other funds are available, a student may [request funds](#) to conduct research that supports the completion of a MA thesis or dissertation.

#### I. Department Support for Travel

Upon request, the department [supports graduate student travel](#) to professional meetings in which a student is presenting their research.

#### J. Graduate Student Council Travel Awards

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) [Travel Fund](#) is available to help support students actively participating in academic or professional meetings. The GSC award may be used for

reimbursement of transportation, lodging, food (per diem), and registration costs. Students may receive only one GSC Travel Award per fiscal year (July 1 through June 30).

## 10. Teaching in Psychology

### A. TA Training

TAs are assigned to a variety of Psychology courses including large lecture courses, small-group seminars and contact teaching, and laboratory courses. Although students often work as a TA for a core course in their own area, they may be assigned to courses in a different Program.

All graduate students, in their first four years, must accept the equivalent of at least two 50% Teaching Assistant (TA) assignments. Contact teaching is recommended, but not required. However, the assistantships must involve course-related tasks – i.e., working as a Colloquium TA or in some other non-course-related role will not count towards the requirement.

Students are required to enroll in whatever teaching orientation the department offers. Currently, this takes the form of a 1 hour/credit course on "Colloquium on the Teaching of Psychology" (PSCH 508). Students who are assigned as a TA to PSCH 101 during their first year are required to take PSCH 508 in both the fall and spring of their first year. During this course, students receive training in the basic skills needed to serve as a Psychology teaching assistant.

Some students elect to take the PSCH 587 class, "Practicum in Instruction in Psychology" (see below) during their third or fourth years and then teach their own classes. Taking the practicum and teaching a course will count as one 50% TA assignment towards the requirement.

There is a University-wide Teaching Assistant Orientation Program that takes place in August prior to the fall semester that incoming students are required to attend.

### B. TA Responsibilities

TA's are part of the Department's instructional staff and work under the supervision of faculty members to whom they are assigned. Assistants are expected to be available for performance of their duties from the week prior to the start of classes until final grades have been submitted. **Assistants and their supervisors should meet prior to the start of classes** to clarify the expectations for the roles of instructor and TA, and the responsibilities of each throughout the semester as these may vary week-to-week. Once a student accepts a TA assignment, it is the student's professional obligation to give priority to their teaching assistantship in the case of a scheduling conflict.

TA's are expected to work an average of 4.0 hrs per week per 10% appointment (20.00 hrs/wk for a 50% appointment). It is understood that TA duties fluctuate from week to week, so that assistants will work more or fewer than the average hours from time to time. Supervisors are asked to arrange TA duties so that fluctuation in hrs/wk is minimized insofar as possible. In some courses, the Department assigns a 50% TA and a 10-25% TA. These individuals are expected to carry out different responsibilities according to % effort expected.

TA's are expected to meet regularly during the term with their supervisors. TA duties may include the following:

- Prepare class materials; schedule media services
- Operate classroom equipment; assist in classroom demonstrations
- Coordinate library services, e.g., putting readings on reserve
- Attend lectures
- Hold office hours (2-3 hrs/wk is typical)
- Schedule and conduct review sessions
- Give 1 or 2 lectures, after instructor-aided preparation
- Respond to communications from students
- Prepare exams; proctor exams (or arrange for a substitute, if needed)
- Grade exams and papers
- Maintain course records; calculate and record final grades; post grades
- Plan and lead discussion sections
- Assist in other class-related activities as determined by supervisor

Faculty supervisors should determine which duties they want their TA's to perform within the maximum workload associated with a TA assignment. Supervisors and TA's should discuss the required duties prior to the start of the term and, if necessary, make adjustments during the term. Unsatisfactory completion of TA responsibilities will result in the student having lowest priority for future TA assignments.

The Department appoints teaching assistants for each semester with an effort to distribute different types of TA assignments equitably among students. TA's should not be assigned to regular classroom teaching assignments by their supervisors unless the Department Head has approved such an assignment. Exceptions to this are officially scheduled discussion sections and the occasional need for an assistant to cover a class in a professor's absence.

#### C. International Teaching Assistants

International students on an F-1 visa who have assistantship appointments must adhere to the following registration rules during the academic year:

50% appointments - 8 hours minimum registration

33% appointments - 10 hours minimum registration

25% appointments - 12 hours minimum registration

Illinois State law requires that the University attest to the English proficiency of all classroom instructors, including teaching assistants. The Office of Academic Affairs is responsible for monitoring English proficiency for teaching assistants.

#### D. Teaching Practicum

The Department offers PSCH 587, a year-long practicum in instruction, that allows post-MA (or for some Programs, post-Prelim) students to teach their own section of an undergraduate course, with responsibility for all aspects of the course (textbook selection, requirements, texts, etc.) The first semester focuses on planning and preparation of courses and includes a seminar on

instructional techniques. Students teach their courses during the second semester, which also includes a seminar in which issues related to instruction are discussed. This yearlong training culminates in students serving as an instructor for the course of their choice. The practicum provides students with the skills and experience that should make them more competitive for academic positions.

Following completion of the Teaching Practicum, students may have the opportunity to serve as an instructor for courses as the need arises in the Department. The Department occasionally hires advanced graduate students to teach undergraduate courses. Students who have completed PSCH 587 and received a "strong recommendation for future teaching" from the instructor are given first priority for these positions.



## 11. Progress Through the Program

### A. Leave of Absence

With the exception of the summer term for students who have been continuously enrolled during the preceding academic year (see above), students must register each semester unless they are on an approved leave of absence. Domestic students who have not yet advanced to candidacy may take a one semester leave of absence by completing a **Request for Leave of Absence in Psychology** form, signed by the DGS and the student's Advisor. Requests for leaves of absence in all other cases (all international students, all students requesting a leave longer than one semester, and all students who have advanced to candidacy) require a Graduate College **Petition for Leave of Absence** form. Requests must be made prior to the semester in which the leave will begin; the maximum length of leave that can be approved is one calendar year, and can only be approved for cases of documented illness, parental leave, or serious family emergencies. Leaves of absence require the approval of the student's Advisor, the DGS, and the Dean of the Graduate College. Leaves of absence cannot be approved for in the semester that a student is planning to graduate. Failure to register without a leave of absence may result in being dropped from the program. Readmission is not guaranteed in such cases. The Graduate College requires that students be registered during this time, except summers (unless students plan to take the preliminary exam or defend the dissertation during the summer).

### B. Annual Reviews

The faculty of each Program meet annually at the end of the spring semester (during April and May) to review the performance and progress of each student. During these meetings faculty share perspectives on the quality of student work in all phases of graduate study from research to course work to gain an overall picture of each student's academic and professional development. Programs should solicit input directly from students and both their Advisors as part of this assessment process. If a student has both a Research and Academic Advisor, both should be involved in the annual meeting to discuss the student's progress.

Following the review, the Program Chair ensures that timely written feedback is provided to each student. These written comments should recognize student achievements and identify areas for development. Program Chairs also submit annual reviews to the Graduate Program Coordinator to be reviewed by the DGS and placed in each student's file that indicate whether the **quality** and **timeliness** of work meet expectations.

### C. Probation and Dismissal

After students enroll in the Department and Graduate College, they may continue to register as long as they have a permanent Advisor (see end of this section) and remain in good standing. Good standing is determined by (1) academic progress and (2) conduct consistent with professional and academic norms.

Students are considered to be in good academic standing if they (a) have a minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) equivalent to a B grade and (b) are making satisfactory progress toward completing degree requirements, including completion of the Minor, Master's, Preliminary

Examination, and Dissertation requirements within the time limitations contained in the Department Handbook and the [Graduate College Catalog](#).

When the GPA falls below the minimal level, the Graduate College places students on probation and sends them a warning letter (with copies to the DGS) which notifies them that they have two additional terms (including summer, if registered) of registration after the warning term to raise the average to B. The Graduate Program Coordinator will forward the letter from the Graduate College to the Advisor and Program Chair. The progress of students on probation status is reviewed each term. Students who do not remove themselves from probation status in subsequent semesters are notified of their continuing grade point deficiencies until they reach the two-term deadline. Students who raise the GPA to B or above within the deadline will be removed from probation. Students who fail to raise the GPA to B or above within the deadline will be dismissed from the university; students who have the approval from their Advisor and Program Chair can submit a Graduate College Petition to request an additional semester to raise their GPA.

As noted above, good standing also involves appropriate conduct. A Departmental recommendation of dismissal could also result from academic dishonesty, including but not limited to plagiarism, grade-tampering, or giving or receiving unauthorized aid in any assignment or examination; giving false information on an application or other departmental, college or university form; violating university rules of conduct including but not limited to policies regarding discrimination and sexual harassment; and finally, from conduct that consistently or egregiously violates commonly recognized professional standards of behavior in classes, seminars, practica, student-faculty meetings, or any other context associated with one's graduate training. A Departmental recommendation of dismissal stemming from any such infractions, however, would be a prelude to the standard Student Disciplinary procedures and appeal processes described in the Graduate College Catalog.

The Department engages in a thorough review prior to recommending to the Graduate College that a student be dismissed. When there is concern about a student's performance or behavior that may lead to dismissal, the student's Advisor, Program, and faculty members of COGS will review the student's record, provide written comments about the deficits in performance or inappropriate behavior, and possibly outline steps that need to be taken according to specific time lines in order to receive a satisfactory evaluation.

Students also must have a permanent advisor in order to continue in the graduate program. The DGS will become the de facto advisor for one academic term if an enrolled student no longer has an advisor and needs time to find a new one. In addition, if the loss of advisor is out of control of the student (e.g., the advisor leaves UIC), the student's Program will help the student find a new advisor.

#### D. Conflict and Grievance Resolution

Students with complaints related to Programmatic issues should be discussed with the DGS first. Students with grievances concerning advising should first meet with the Advisor, Program Chair,

and the DGS. Matters that cannot be resolved by informal discussion will be referred to the Associate Head. Formal complaints will follow [Grievance Procedures](#) established by the Graduate College.

#### E. Counseling

Students are encouraged to contact the [UIC Counseling Center](#) for mental health issues such as anxiety, distress, depression, substance abuse, or other problems that impact on well-being and academic performance. The Counseling Center is located in Suite 2010, Student Services Building (SSB). In an emergency or crisis, outside normal business hours, call the InTouch Crisis Hotline at 312-996-5535.

## 12. Department and Graduate College Policies

### A. Department and Graduate College Petitions

If a student feels that he or she needs to have a specific rule waived, he or she should file a petition with the DGS. There are two types of petitions: those that are processed completely within the Department and those that must be approved by the Graduate College after Department approval. For example, requests to extend a Department deadline or to change an Advisor or a Program are generally handled entirely within the Department. On the other hand, petitions to register retroactively, to be granted a Leave of Absence, request additional time to complete the PhD or to register for Zero Hours require both Department and Graduate College approval. In either case, students should see the Graduate Program Coordinator or DGS for guidance about appropriate forms to file. Note that a petition is appropriate only for waiving a rule for a specific individual and situation and not for changing a rule.

### B. Confidentiality of Student Records

The Department upholds the University policy with respect to maintaining the confidentiality of student records. This policy has been published in the UIC News and copies are available from the Campus Office of Academic Affairs. In order to carry out this policy, the Department of Psychology adopts the following practices:

1. The DGS and Graduate Program Coordinator maintain the files on current and past (graduated and terminated) graduate students.
2. The Graduate Program Coordinator will follow these rules in releasing student records:
  - Information obtained in confidence (e.g., letters of recommendation) will be filed separately and access to this file will be restricted to Department faculty.
  - Currently enrolled or former students may examine their own files in the presence of the Graduate Program Coordinator.
  - Faculty members and the Business Manager may sign out files indicating the estimated time of return. Faculty may copy contents of files in order to respond to requests from the University administration for materials.
  - All other requests for files (with the exception of legal subpoenas) will be referred directly to the student whose records are requested. The student must provide written permission for the records to be released.

As custodian of student records, the Department of Psychology assumes an implicit trust. Student records will be released only to appropriate Department, College, or University authorities within the University, except for items of public information or where the student or former student has given his or her formal written consent to the release of records.

Requests for information on a student's personal records, beliefs, or associations will not be honored when the principle of confidentiality is challenged. The need for educational institutions to make information about students available for research purposes is recognized. In releasing data for research, however, the Department will take great care to protect the identity of individual students. Under no circumstances, will the Department abdicate the responsibility it bears to its students to keep their records confidential. Before submitting information from

student records to researchers from outside the Department, the Department will remove any identifying information on students whose records are involved unless the Department has obtained from each student a formal written consent to the release of his or her records with such identifying information attached. The primary concern is that students know what information departmental personnel may release about them. Aside from a minimum number of items that are considered public information (see 3, below), Departmental personnel will not release information without specific written authorization from the student indicating the kind of information to be released, and to whom it may be released.

**Guidelines.** The following are guidelines that relate to the interpretation of the above statements of policy:

1. Besides the student, the only people who will be allowed access to a student record without written permission of the student are the Department faculty and support staff. The student will have access to his or her complete file on request, with the exception of information, which the Department has obtained with the guarantee of confidentiality. This will normally include only letters of recommendation and evaluation.
2. The student's name, dates of attendance, degrees earned, field of study, honors earned, and any information available in a public directory, such as an address and telephone number, are considered public information and will be furnished to anyone who demonstrates a legitimate "need to know" without the written authorization of the student involved. Great care will be taken to identify originators of telephone requests for information about students. Whenever possible, these requests should be made in writing.
3. Except for information considered to be public information from student records, information will not be sent to prospective employers or to educational institutions without the formal written consent of the student involved. Written reports for prospective employers or educational institutions will normally be released only by the DGS and information of a derogatory nature will be handled with extreme care.
4. A government agency may routinely obtain only that information which is classified as public information, regardless of the purpose for which it is requested. Any other information must be obtained by subpoena or written release of the student. In such cases, the DGS will release information to government agencies.
5. Grades are considered confidential and are reported only to the student unless release is otherwise authorized under the terms stated above.
6. Questions requiring judgment about a student's academic achievement will not be answered except by a member of the faculty who has been named by the student as a personal reference. The individual or agency that requests academic information should ask the student to authorize release of his or her academic records.
7. No questions asked about a student by extra-university agencies or persons will be answered if they require personal judgments (such as judgments of a student's character, his or her adjustment to university life, and the like) except by a member of the faculty who has been specifically named by the student as a personal reference.

8. Class schedules will not be released to unauthorized persons within or outside the department. If a student must be located in an emergency, the Graduate Program Coordinator will take responsibility for contacting the student.
9. The Department's records are subject to subpoena, and the Department will respond to them. Upon issuance of a subpoena, the party at whose instance it is issued notifies the student. All subpoenas of student records served upon the Department will be referred immediately to the University legal counsel who will then instruct the Chair of the Department to respond accordingly. The Chair will attempt to notify the student that a subpoena has been served and that the Department is responding to it.
10. It is the responsibility of the DGS to make decisions about requests for release of student records not specifically covered in these guidelines.

#### C. Department Policy on Amorous Relationships

**Purpose.** The Psychology Faculty is interested in promoting a fair and productive academic environment for both students and faculty.

**Rationale.** To facilitate both fairness and the appearance of fairness, the faculty recognizes the need to be sensitive to the potential conflicts that arise from the asymmetrical nature of power in the student- faculty relationship. Students are dependent on faculty for approval, grades, supervision, and recommendations for jobs or awards. If a student is unfairly disadvantaged, the faculty is not meeting its obligation to that student; if a student is unfairly advantaged, the faculty is not meeting its obligation to other students. Amorous relationships between faculty members and students greatly increase the chances that the faculty member will misuse or appear to misuse his or her power to the disadvantage of the student or other students. Even when decisions are actually based on merit, they may appear unfair when such relationships exist.

**Policy on amorous relationship.** It is inconsistent with a faculty member's professional obligations to engage in amorous relations with a student who is currently enrolled in the faculty member's class or is subject to supervision or any other decision-making by the faculty member, even when both parties appear to have consented to the relationship.

**Definition.** For the purpose of this policy, faculty member is defined as anyone in the Department of Psychology with instructional or supervisory responsibility over students.

**Related university policy.** Sexual harassment is prohibited under University of Illinois policy and under federal and state discrimination laws and regulations of; the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. See University of Illinois "Statement on Sexual Harassment."

**Application and dissemination.** This policy shall apply, beginning September 1, 1989, to all faculty, including teaching assistants. This policy and accompanying purpose, definition, and rationale shall be distributed annually to all incoming graduate students and all faculty.

#### D. Grievance Procedures

**Informal discussions with advisors and faculty.** The Department believes that the student's Advisor should be the primary source of information and support about all Department and University matters. Advisors or other faculty may also take up the issues raised with the

appropriate decision makers or governance bodies. Further, graduate students are welcome at faculty meetings.

**Informal discussions with the DGS or the Head.** Both the Head and the DGS are always willing to discuss issues of concern with students. Students should discuss concerns and questions about policies or procedures with them. They are the most authoritative sources about most issues. The Head is also the person to see about specific personnel problems (see below). The formal grievance officer of the Department is the Associate Head.

**COGS representatives.** The student COGS representatives serve both as sources of information about Department policies and procedures and as representatives to make students' views known to faculty. Students should approach them with any concerns about policies or proposals for changes. The student representatives will raise the issues with the entire COGS that, in turn, can bring the issue to the appropriate governance body.

**Complaints about personnel.** Complaints about mistreatment by specific personnel (e.g., decisions, grades, teaching, and discrimination) should be discussed with the Associate Head or Head (or a member of the Advisory Committee if it concerns the Associate Head or Department Head). However, if the Head believes it is a serious personnel problem, e.g., an accusation of a serious violation of University rules on the part of a faculty or staff member, the Department Head may ask the student to follow more procedures in order to protect the rights of the parties involved (see grievance procedures below). Formal complaints cannot be made anonymously and in certain circumstances (e.g., accusations of sexual harassment, discrimination against minorities, or scientific fraud), the Department Head may be required by university regulations to initiate formal procedures to investigate an individual's complaint even if that is not the wish of the individual and even if the Department Head has only heard second hand of the individual's accusations. The intent of this policy is both to insure that all instances of unethical behavior are investigated and to insure that individuals are protected against unsubstantiated rumors and innuendo by providing them with procedures for confronting their accusers. However, University policy is that students should try to resolve disputes with faculty members informally through direct discussions with them before filing a complaint with higher authorities.

**Formal grievance procedures.** If a student believes that he or she has been personally harmed by a decision made in violation of University rules, he or she may file a formal grievance. University procedures are somewhat different for different types of grievances (e.g., grades, discrimination, etc.).

## 13. University Policies

### A. Academic Integrity

The University is dedicated to learning and research, and hence is committed to truth and accuracy. Integrity and intellectual honesty in scholarship and scientific investigation are, therefore, of paramount importance. These standards require intellectual honesty in conducting research, writing of research results and relations with colleagues. Graduate students may be faced with difficult choices regarding academic integrity in their various roles as student, teacher, and researcher. If this is the case, they should seek the advice and experience of their faculty Advisors and the Graduate College staff.

The University provides [specific definitions of misconduct](#) (such as plagiarism, falsification of data, etc.), procedures used for investigation of charges, and the consequences of that conduct. Students are governed by the Student Disciplinary Procedures (December 1985) and faculty are governed by the Policies and Procedures for Academic Integrity (June 1989).

### B. Accommodations for Persons with Disabilities

UIC is committed to equitable and equivalent treatment of persons with disabilities. Not only are there legal requirements to treat disabled individuals equitably (federal, state, and local statutes), but the campus commitment to inclusiveness requires actions that are consonant with the principles of access and equity.

Resources available for students and faculty can be found at UIC's [Disability Resource Center](#).

### C. Confidentiality of Records

As custodian of student records, the University assumes an implicit trust and, accordingly, uses extreme care and concern in recording and disseminating information about students. The University policy is in compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

The Office of Admissions and Records issues transcripts of official records only at the written request of the student and payment of the transcript fee. The same holds true for academic information needed for financial assistance or honor recognition. Class schedules are not released to unauthorized persons. Information considered public (available in a public directory such as names, dates of attendance, curriculum, and degrees and honors earned) is released but only after great care has been taken to identify the originator of such a request as one who demonstrates a legitimate need to know.

### D. Medical Immunization Requirements

University policy requires students to be up-to-date on [immunizations](#).



#### E. Nondiscrimination Policy

The commitment of the University to the most fundamental principles of academic freedom, equality of opportunity, and human dignity requires that decisions involving students and employees be based on individual merit and be free from invidious discrimination in all its forms, as detailed in the [nondiscrimination policy](#).

#### F. Participation in Class Exercises that Involve Use of Animals

The University offers certain courses in which live, euthanized, or preserved vertebrate animals are used as part of course requirements. Such animal courses are identified in the Timetable with the note "animals used in instruction." Students who have ethical concerns about the use of animals in teaching have the responsibility to contact the instructor, prior to enrollment in any course in which animals may be used as part of class instruction, to determine whether class exercises involving animals are optional or required, and what alternatives, if any, are available. If no alternatives are available, the refusal to participate in required activities involving animals may result in a failing grade in the course.

#### G. Research on Humans or Animals

The Office of Protection from Research Risks includes the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the Animal Care Committee (ACC), and the Institutional Biohazard Committee (IBC). These three groups are responsible for reviewing and approving all research conducted by UIC faculty, employees, and students that involve human subjects, animal subjects, or biohazardous materials.

Based on federal guidelines, the University requires that both graduate students and faculty obtain formal permission to conduct any research project involving humans or animals before the research is done. In particular:

1. The University will not appoint any Thesis or Dissertation Committee until the student has applied and been granted permission to conduct the research by the [IRB](#) for research with human subjects or the [ACC](#) for research with animals. Work that is completed without IRB approval cannot be published, even as a Thesis.
2. The University will not send out any grant application until the faculty member has applied and been granted permission from these committees.
3. At the Department level -- for research on humans -- students and faculty must follow the policies of the IRB and [Subject Pool Use](#). Students using human subjects in any research (this includes surveys, interviews, preexisting data and human tissue obtained for nonresearch purposes) must have approval from the IRB before they begin data collection.
4. For research with animals, follow the procedures outlined in the application distributed by the University Animal Care Committee. Students using animal subjects must take GC 470 (Essentials for Animal Research), a 1-credit hour course that reviews the factors

involved with assuring individual compliance with the regulations governing animal research and the responsibilities the researcher assumes when using animals. The Protocol for Animal Use forms can be obtained from the [Animal Care Committee](#).

#### H. Sexual Harassment Policy

Sexual harassment is defined by law and includes any unwanted sexual gesture, physical contact, or statement that is offensive, humiliating, or an interference with required tasks or career opportunities at the University. Sexual harassment is prohibited under federal and state discrimination laws and the regulations of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. The University will not tolerate sexual harassment of students or employees and will take action to provide remedies when such harassment is discovered. The University environment must be free of sexual harassment in work and study. In order to assure that the University is free of sexual harassment; appropriate sanctions will be imposed on offenders in a case-by-case manner. The University will respond to every complaint of sexual harassment reported. Information about the University's [approved procedures for dealing with cases of sexual harassment](#) may be obtained by phoning (without name given if desired), or writing, or by visiting the Office of Access and Equity, 717 Marshfield Building, 809 South Marshfield Avenue, Phone: (312) 996-8670.

#### I. Student Disciplinary Procedures

The Student Disciplinary Procedures (Revised October 1993) ensure a student's right to due process when he or she is charged with an infraction of the [disciplinary code](#). It describes just causes for disciplinary action, outlines the procedures for filing a complaint and responding to one, lists the possible sanctions, and describes the appeal process. This document is available in the Office of the Dean of Student Affairs, 3030 Student Services Building. In addition, the Department has a copy on file with the Graduate Program Coordinator.

## 14. Graduate Student Awards

Each spring, the Department holds a Graduate Awards Banquet to honor the achievements of our graduate students. The DGS, Graduate Program Coordinator, and COGS student representatives organize the banquet, which is a celebration for all students, staff, and faculty. At the Banquet, we announce winners of departmental awards (detailed below), honor students who have received a Master's or PhD degree, and recognize graduate students' achievements during the year. Every graduate student registered during the current academic year in the Department is eligible for consideration for the awards in that year including students who completed all of their requirements for the PhD since the date of the previous year's award.

### Leonard D. Eron Award for Outstanding Scholarly Accomplishment

Established on the occasion of Leonard Eron's retirement, the award is made annually to the graduate student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois at Chicago who best exemplifies the tradition of scholarship and scientific contributions made by Leonard Eron. The award will consist of a written citation and a cash prize of \$500.

The major criterion for the award is **accomplishment in scholarly research as evidenced by papers first-authored by the nominee that are judged to have the potential for a major impact on the field**. In exceptional circumstances the award may be based on as yet unpublished research that has been evaluated positively by an ad hoc panel of scholars from other universities. A single important and influential piece of work will be given more weight in the selection process than a number of publications, each of which are judged to be relatively unlikely to have an impact on their field. Apart from exceptional circumstances, graduate students will not be eligible if they have received the award before or if more than two years have passed between the date of their prospectus approval and the date of their dissertation approval. The 3-person Selection Committee appointed by the DGS is not required to make an award if it judges that there are no exceptionally qualified nominees.

#### Required documents:

- .CV
- .One letter of recommendation
- .Copy of the article accompanied by a statement explaining the research

### Harry S. Upshaw Award for Excellence in Teaching

Established on the occasion of Harry Upshaw's retirement, the award is made annually to the graduate student in the Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois at Chicago who best exemplifies Harry Upshaw's dedication to teaching excellence. The award consists of a written citation and a cash prize of \$500.

The major criterion for the award is **evidence of outstanding accomplishment in teaching**. The graduate student must have completed all of the requirements of the Practicum in Teaching and be committed to an academic career. Graduate students will not be eligible if they have received the award before. The Selection Committee (Department Head, DGS, and current instructor of 587) is not required to make an award if it judges that there are no exceptionally qualified nominees.

Required documents:

- .Nominations via letter of support
- .Evaluations by the teaching practicum instructor, course materials, and other pertinent evidence to support nomination

[Christopher B. Keys Award for Early Outstanding Research Achievement](#)

Established on the occasion of Christopher Keys' retirement, this award is made annually to a 1st through 3rd year graduate student who is in good standing in the Department of Psychology at the University of Illinois at Chicago whose work best exemplifies the tradition of innovative, adventuresome research conducted by Christopher Keys. The award will consist of a written certificate and a cash prize of \$500.

The major criterion for the award is a high-quality research project that is completed in substantial part at UIC. Special consideration is given to an **innovative research project that breaks new ground theoretically, methodologically, empirically, or practically**. The research has to be completed, so no works in progress, abstracts, etc. can be accepted, though it does not have to be defended or in press yet. The 3-person Selection Committee appointed by the DGS is not required to make an award if it judges that there are no exceptionally qualified nominees.

Required documents:

- .CV
- .Cover letter
- .Completed manuscript describing the research (e.g., thesis, journal article submission)
- .Two letters of recommendation that comment on the innovative quality and scholarly contribution of the manuscript, the student's performance in graduate school, and the student's promise for a career of conducting creative, high-quality scholarship.

[Michael J. Piorkowski Award](#)

In memory of their son, Michael J. Piorkowski, Dr. Geraldine and Mr. Frank Piorkowski have endowed an award to the University of Illinois at Chicago, Department of Psychology. The purpose of the award, in the words of his parents, is to "honor the memory of our son, Michael J. Piorkowski, and to encourage the pursuit of psychology to a graduate student who displays intellectual curiosity, creativity, strength of character, and love of people – characteristics that Michael had in abundance." Michael's graduate career in psychology was abruptly ended by a terminal illness. This award is given to a deserving student in the areas of Cognitive or Behavioral Neuroscience. The recipient will receive a \$500 award and be honored both at the University Honors Day Convocation and at the Annual Student Achievement Awards Banquet.

Required documents:

- .CV
- .Personal statement fewer than 3 pages, single spaced  
*The personal statement should describe your research, understandable by someone not in your field as evidence of "intellectual curiosity". Equal weight is given to "love of people", which includes service to the community, program, department, students, or peers. Service as a Teaching Assistant should not be included in the personal statement.*
- .Letters of recommendation are not required

### Jamie Carter Research Resource Award

UIC alum Jamie Carter, in appreciation of her education in the Psychology Department, established this award to further their graduate student training by purchasing a research tool, e.g. special software package or small piece of equipment, attend a training workshop or travel to a conference in which the student will present. The awardee must be in good academic standing and *demonstrate an active and productive research career*. Students may only win the award once.

#### Required documents:

.CV

.One-page proposal that includes a brief research plan and a budget (up to \$500 but may be considerably less)

.Letter of recommendation from the student's research mentor that indicates their advisor support of the endeavor but also the lack of funds to support it monetarily

### Award for Outstanding Teaching Assistance

The UIC Department of Psychology appreciates the significant work of its graduate students who serve as teaching assistants. Each year, this work will be recognized with the Award for Outstanding Teaching Assistance. Winners will receive \$500 and a plaque. There may be multiple winners in exceptional circumstances.

ELIGIBILITY: Nominees should be graduate students in the Department of Psychology who have shown excellence in the role of teaching assistant over the course of one or more semesters.

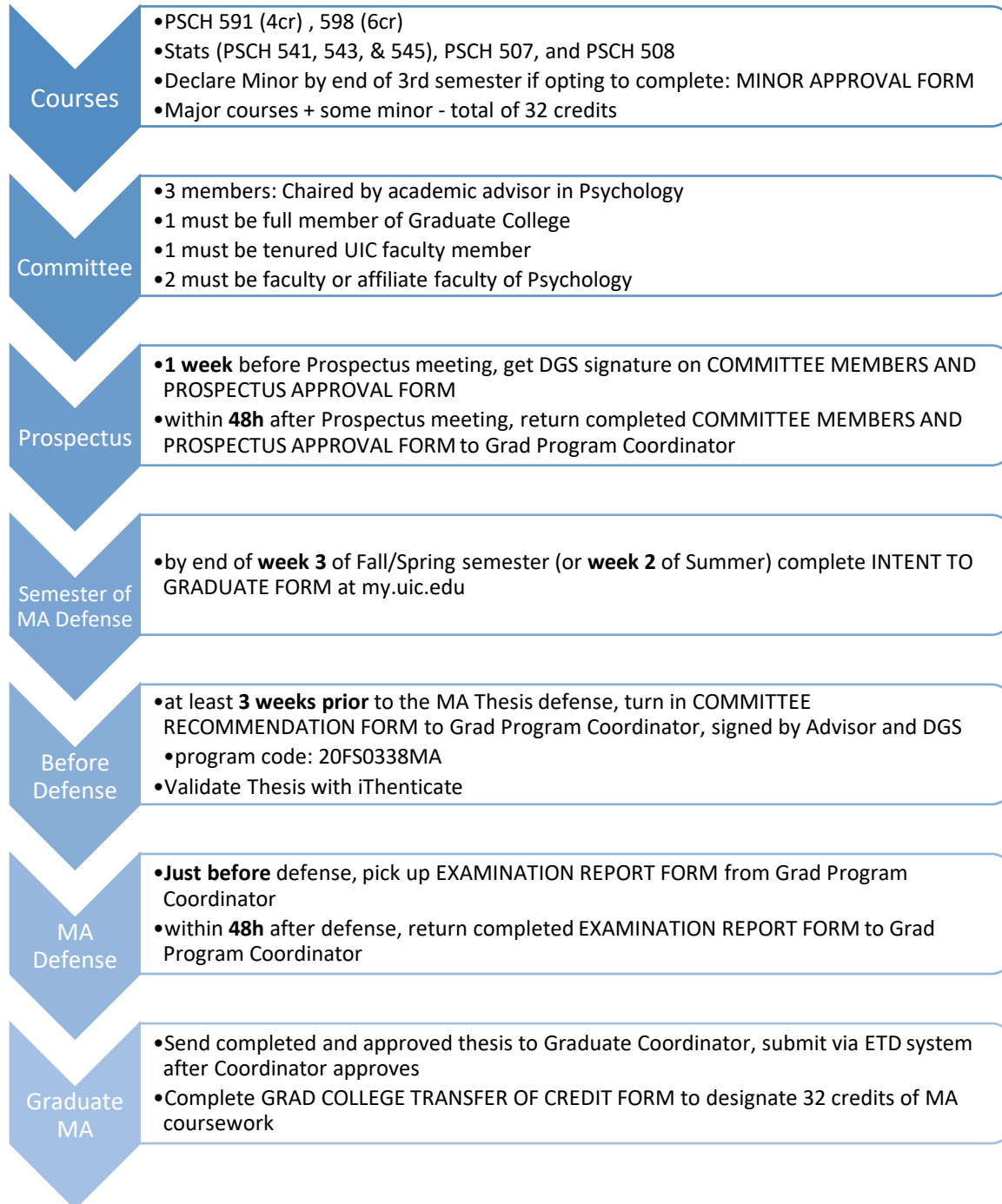
#### Required documents:

.Nomination letter (1-2 pages) submitted by an instructor who supervised the teaching assistant in one or more courses. The letter should detail what makes the teaching assistant's accomplishments extraordinary

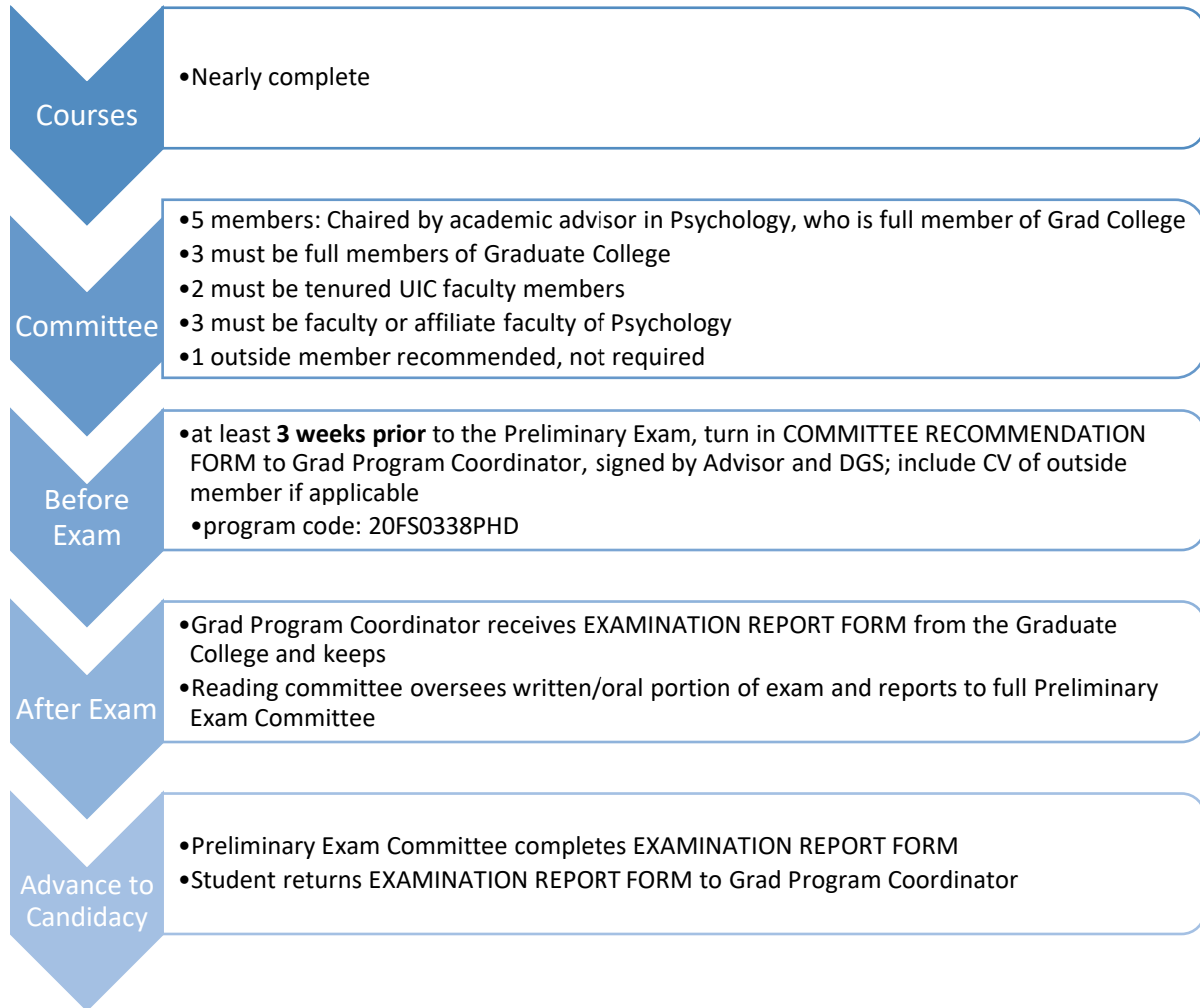
.Nominee's statement (1 page) detailing philosophy, goals, and accomplishments as a teaching assistant. Student evaluation data (standard university forms or other forms solicited by the student or instructor, if available; unsolicited notes/comments from students that might have been received)

## 15. Overview of Milestone Completion

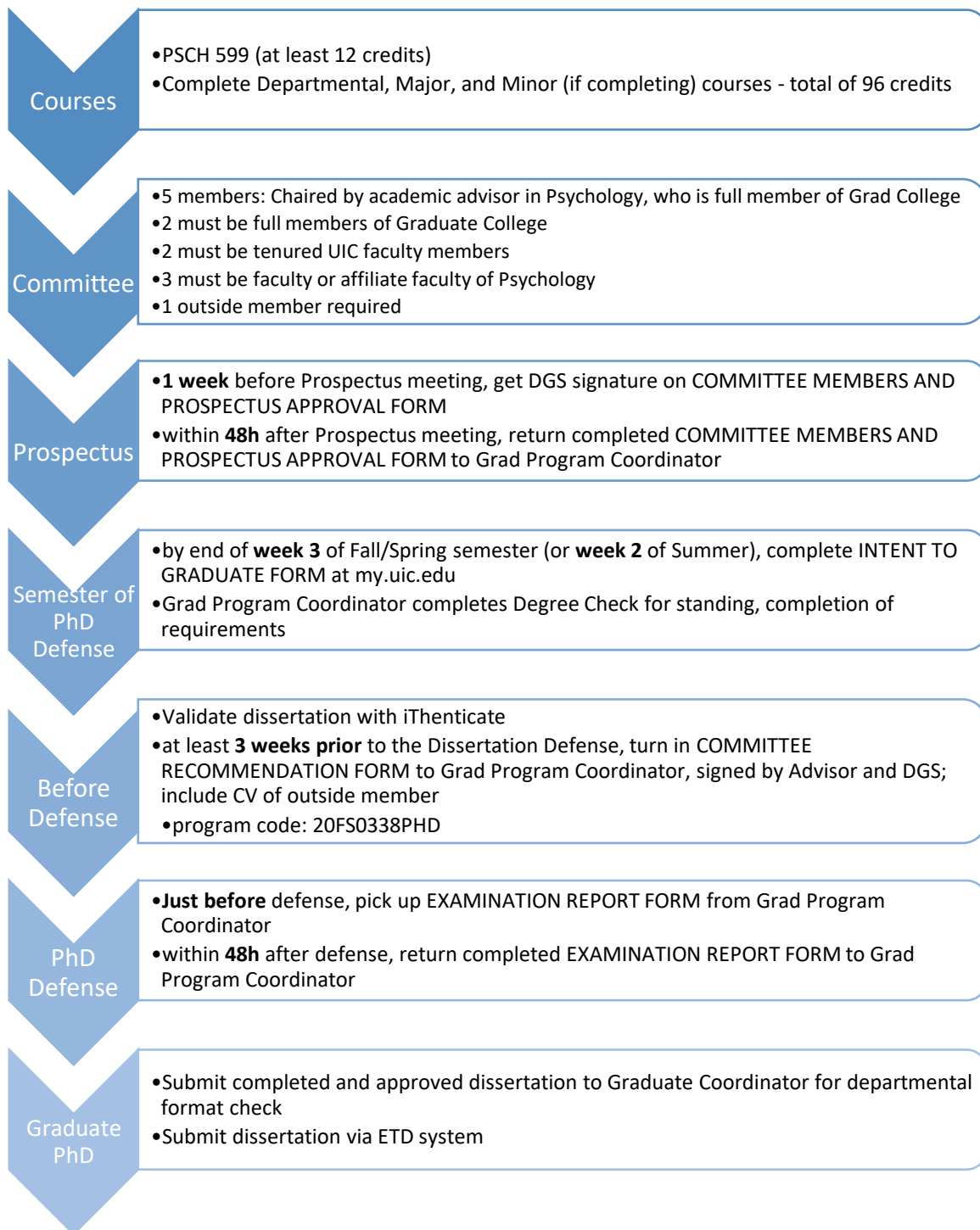
### A. Master's Thesis and Defense



## B. Preliminary Exam



## C. Dissertation and Defense





#### D. Forms to Petition Modifications in Program Progress

1-year extension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• EXTENSION FOR MILESTONE FORM</li></ul>
Transfer credits to Psychology Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• GRADUATE COLLEGE TRANSFER OF CREDIT FORM</li></ul>
Leave of absence (up to 1 year)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PETITION FOR LEAVE OF ABSENCE FORM</li></ul>
Change of advisor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PETITION FOR CHANGE OF <i>ACADEMIC</i> OR <i>RESEARCH</i> ADVISOR FORM</li></ul>
Change of program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• PETITION FOR CHANGE OF PROGRAM FORM</li></ul>