

INSTRUCTIONS TO GRADUATE STUDENTS

Doctoral Program in Experimental Psychology

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I. GENERAL INFORMATION

A. General Regulations

Students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the contents of these Instructions to Graduate Students (IGS), the graduate catalog, and the American Psychological Association's Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct (<https://www.apa.org/ethics/code>).

Graduate programs are permitted to have more stringent regulations and requirements than those stipulated by the Graduate School and the College of Arts and Sciences, but program requirements may not be less stringent than those established by the Graduate School or the College of Arts and Sciences. Therefore, for graduate students in the graduate programs of the Department of Psychological & Brain Sciences the following requirements in this document take precedence over any requirements from the Graduate School or the College of Arts and Sciences that are less stringent.

These instructions are revised periodically, and students are advised to consult each new version for changes. Students have the option of following either the instructions and catalog under which they enter or a later version, but once they follow any provision of a later catalog or set of instructions they must follow all the provisions of that chosen document.

B. Mentor

Before registration, each student must report to their academic mentor. First-year students in the Experimental Psychology Program are assigned a mentor when they are admitted to the program, based on their research interests and the available mentors. In accordance with the department bylaws, only tenured/tenure-track faculty in the Department and tenured/tenure-track faculty with joint appointments in the Department, who meet eligibility criteria as stated in the Minimum Guidelines for Graduate Education in the College of Arts and Sciences, may serve as mentors, chair Masters portfolio committees, and direct dissertations. Students considering a change of mentor should meet with the Experimental Program Director. If the Experimental Program Director is the student's current mentor, then the student should meet with the Department Chair. Students cannot change mentors without the consent of the new mentor. Students who change mentors must discuss the transition with the Experimental Program Director (or Chair) and current mentor.

The functions of the mentor include communicating any pertinent information regarding the student's status in the Department, including information that comes to light during the faculty review (described below) and to be generally available to the student as a personal resource. The Experimental Program Director and the Department Chair are also available for advice and consultation. Detailed feedback on course or assistantship performance should be obtained from faculty or supervisors who have responsibility for these activities.

C. Degree Status

Students engaged in graduate work in this Department occupy one of the following categories:

- 1. Good Standing:** A graduate student is in good academic standing when their cumulative graduate grade point average is 3.0 or higher on a 4-point scale and meets program-specific requirements for satisfactory performance and progress toward a degree as reviewed in the Student Review (Section VIII). A student must be in good standing in order to receive a degree.

2. **Academic Probation:** A student may be put on Academic Probation for any of the following reasons: (1) a student's cumulative GPA falls below 3.0, (2) a student does not meet program-specific requirements for satisfactory performance and progress toward a degree (Section VIII), or (3) a student meets the criteria for a discovery hearing (Section VIII.B.1). Students on probation must restore a 3.0 cumulative GPA and meet program-specific requirements during the succeeding semester or face dismissal from the program.

3. **Conditional:** Graduate work for students admitted "conditionally" is contingent upon meeting all Department and program requirements and making satisfactory progress in the program.

4. **Non-Degree Status:** Students who are not pursuing a degree. Such students may apply for admission in degree status after one or two semesters. Admission is not automatic and depends upon the program's evaluation of the student's credentials and performance.

D. Loss of Status

Students with fewer than 75 hours who have not taken courses for two successive semesters (summer excluded) must reapply for admission. A formally approved leave of absence by the Chair waives this regulation.

E. Transfer Between Programs

Students wishing to transfer between the Experimental Psychology and Clinical Psychology Programs should first discuss their intentions with the Experimental Program Director and the Director of Clinical Training. If these discussions indicate a transfer is appropriate, the student should request a transfer by writing to the Chair with copies to the Experimental Program Director and Director of Clinical Training. The approval of the Director and faculty of the program to which the student is transferring, and of Director of the program of origin, are required. The Chair must be notified.

F. Students with Disabilities

Students who have a disability or condition that may impair their ability to complete assignments or otherwise satisfy course criteria are encouraged to meet with the course instructor to identify, discuss, and document any feasible instructional modifications or accommodations. The student should notify the instructor no later than the end of the second week of the semester/term in which the course is offered or no later than the end of the second week after such a disability or condition is diagnosed, whichever occurs earliest. The student may contact the Disability Resource Center for information and auxiliary aid. Students with disabilities that may affect their performance on an assistantship assignment, their ability to take an assistantship assignment, or their progress through the program, may request that the Experimental Program Director provide assistance in working out alternative assignments or appropriate accommodations. Evidence supporting the student's claim of disability, which might include a letter from the Disabilities Resource Center confirming that the condition or disability falls under the Americans with Disabilities Act, may be required.

G. Department-Wide Activities

In addition to classes and research experiences, there are a number of important activities intended for every graduate student in residence. These activities include research presentations, colloquia, and meetings/lunches/receptions with visiting scientists. The Department expects students to attend all research talks and other pertinent Department activities.

H. Ethical and Professional Guidelines

The Department expects faculty and students to conduct educational, research, and service activities in a professional and ethically acceptable manner. University standards and policies for the faculty are stated in the University Redbook. Research Guidelines in the University are also identified in the Ethical Conduct and Reporting of Research (<https://louisville.edu/policies/policies-and-procedures/pageholder/pol-ethical-conduct-and-reporting-of-research>). The University's Code of Student Conduct specifies the rights and responsibilities of students. Any student who believes that they have been subjected to unfair, unprofessional, or unethical actions by a faculty member of the University is encouraged to seek redress through established procedures. As a first step the student should attempt to discuss their concerns with the person whose actions are the basis of the grievance. If that does not lead to a satisfactory resolution of the matter, the student should inform the Graduate Program Director or Department Chair of the problem. A formal grievance procedure has been established in the University for students. Information about this process may be obtained at the Graduate School (<https://catalog.louisville.edu/graduate/general-policies-procedures-requirements/graduate-student-academic-grievance-procedure/>).

I. Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

As stated in Section 5 of the University of Louisville Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities in the Graduate Catalog published by the Graduate School (<https://louisville.edu/dos/students/studentrightsandresponsibilities>): “Academic dishonesty is prohibited at the University of Louisville because it diminishes the quality of scholarship, prohibits independent thought that is essential to intellectual growth and development, makes accurate evaluation of student progress impossible, and defrauds those in society who must ultimately depend upon the knowledge and integrity of the institution and its students and faculty.” The normal penalty for academic dishonesty will be dismissal from the graduate program (see Section VIII.B.).

Section 5 defines the different forms of academic dishonesty. It is the responsibility of the student to know the various forms of academic dishonesty and to ensure that their actions do not violate that code. That code defines these forms of academic dishonesty: cheating, fabrication, falsification, multiple submission, plagiarism, and complicity in academic dishonesty. Plagiarism is defined in that code as the following:

“Representing the words or ideas of someone else as one’s own in any academic exercise, such as:

1. Submitting as one’s own a paper written by another person or “ghost writing” service.
2. Exactly reproducing someone else’s words without identifying the words with quotation marks or by appropriate indentation, or without properly citing the quotation in a footnote or reference.
3. Paraphrasing or summarizing someone else’s work without acknowledging the source with a footnote or reference.

4. Using facts, data, graphs, charts, or other information without acknowledging the source with a footnote or reference. Borrowed facts or information obtained in one's research or reading must be acknowledged unless they are "common knowledge." Clear examples of "common knowledge" include the names of leaders of prominent nations, basic scientific laws, and the meaning of fundamental concepts and principles in a discipline. The specific audience for which a paper is written may determine what can be viewed as "common knowledge:" for example, the facts commonly known by a group of chemists will differ radically from those known by a more general audience. Students should check with their instructors regarding what can be viewed as "common knowledge" within a specific field or assignment, but often the student will have to make the final judgment. When in doubt, footnotes or references should be used."

II. FINANCIAL AID

A. General Information

There are several types of financial aid available for graduate students: (1) Teaching Assistantships, (2) Research Assistantships, and (3) Fellowships. None of these types of financial aid is automatically renewed each year. Awards are made on the basis of students' performance in the program, level in the program, performance on previous assistantships, and needs of the teaching, research, and service programs. Assignments are made by the Department Chair in consultation with the Experimental Program Director and program faculty. The Department makes every attempt to fund students, but there is a limited availability of funds. The current annual stipend for each type of financial aid is available from the Department Office. Assistantships and Fellowships are paid monthly on a calendar year basis (12 payments).

Students are encouraged to talk to the Experimental Program Director if they encounter serious difficulties with their assignment or its time commitment. Students will be notified by June 15 of their assistantship assignment for the following academic year. Assignments are from July 1 to June 30.

B. Teaching Assistantships

Each semester, students may be assigned to individual faculty members as Teaching Assistants (TAs) for one or more courses. Teaching assistantships are expected to require no more than 20 hours of work per week. The specific responsibilities of a TA will vary by assignment. TAs may be expected to be one or more of the following: instructional assistants, lead teaching assistants, lab or discussion section leaders, database administrators, graders, online TAs, exam proctors, or course development assistants. Whatever the assignment, the goals are to provide support for students enrolled in the course, support for the principal instructor, and professional development for the graduate student. It is the responsibility of the TA to maintain a high standard of quality in contributing to the teaching mission of the university. More information about TAs can be found in the Department of Psychological and Brain Sciences Guidelines and Policies for Faculty and Their Graduate Teaching Assistants.

Graduate students are encouraged to obtain teaching experience as Instructor of Record during their course of study, particularly if they aspire to an academic career. The Department cannot guarantee the availability of appropriate teaching opportunities but does adhere to administrative procedures intended to provide equitable access to teaching opportunities for all students. See Section VII for more information.

C. Research Assistantships

Each year some students may be assigned to individual faculty members as Research Assistants. Typically, students are assigned to particular professors and are expected to assist in the research program of that professor, independent of the graduate student's M.S. or Ph.D. work. Research assistantships are paid in accordance with the terms of the research contract or grant that supports them. Although the exact amount of time allotted to faculty research by a Research Assistant may vary from week to week, it should approximate 20 hours per week.

D. University Fellowships

The following guidelines delineate a Fellow's responsibilities:

1. The award of a fellowship signifies a judgment of exceptional qualifications for graduate study. Because of this judgment, fellows are expected to engage in independent, scholarly activity that goes beyond the routine requirements of the candidate's degree program.
2. A Fellow is expected to work with their mentor in conjunction with the fellowship project. However, the research conducted by the Fellow cannot merely be a service to the faculty member, and the Fellow's activities must advance their professional training in ways that clearly exceed the typical or routine requirements of graduate students in the Fellow's program.
3. A Fellow may request teaching opportunities. However, the Department cannot assign teaching duties without a prior request from the Fellow.

E. Other Information

Financial support is given on a year-to-year basis. Each Fall, the faculty reviews all students and establishes priorities for new or continued funding. Students should not expect to receive further GTA support beyond their fifth year. Support may be available through other sources.

Students in Non-Degree or Conditional Status are not eligible for financial assistance through the Department. Financial assistance through the Department may be curtailed when a student is placed on Probation. If the student successfully restores the GPA to acceptable levels, reapplication for support may be made.

III. RESEARCH AREAS AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Areas of Research

Many research areas are represented in the Experimental Psychology Program, and a student's graduate training will depend in part on who they choose as their graduate mentor and the lab(s) in which they choose to work. At this time, the Experimental Psychology Program includes a variety of basic and applied research in various aspects of cognition, development, hearing, neuroscience, and vision. A broad plan of coursework provides each student with a solid foundation in modern research psychology. Specialty courses permit students to become expert in the content and techniques of their selected areas of research. Coursework is combined with opportunities for laboratory training in a wide range of research techniques.

B. Course Requirements

The Graduate School requires full-time graduate students to register for 6 credit hours in the summer and at least 9 credit hours (12 maximum) in the fall and spring until students have entered into doctoral candidacy. Course requirements for the Experimental Psychology program are listed below. Course selections must be approved by mentors.

1. **Statistics Core (6):** Students are required to take the following two courses:

PSYC 610, Advanced Statistics I

PSYC 611, Advanced Statistics II

2. **Program Core (6):** Students are required to take two of the following core courses:

PSYC 621, Cognitive Processes

PSYC 631, Sensation and Perception

PSYC 642, Behavioral Neuroscience -or- PSYC 645, Cognitive Neuroscience

PSYC 661, Advanced Developmental Psychology

3. **Electives (15):** Students are required to take five additional 600-level or above graduate seminars/courses:

Acceptable 600-level electives can be courses taken in or out of the department. However, electives must always be approved by the student's mentor.

Students who take more than two of the program core courses listed above may count the additional core courses as electives.

Two of the five electives may be taken Pass-Fail. For courses/seminars taught by Experimental Program faculty, the lowest grade that will receive a Pass is B-. For courses/seminars outside of the Experimental Program, the lowest grade that will receive a Pass will be set by the instructor or their program.

4. **PSYC 602-01 Research in Experimental Psychology (1)** (*repeated until in doctoral candidacy*):

PSYC 602-01 is a weekly 50-minute research seminar that provides a forum for students and faculty to present completed or ongoing research, called *RAPDS (Research and Professional Development Seminar)*. Students are required to take PSYC 602-01 (1 credit hour), each fall and spring in their first two years. Students in their second through fourth years in the program are required to give a presentation by the end of the Spring semester once each year. This requirement will be considered as part of the Review of Students each Spring semester. The format of the presentation will be decided by the student and their mentor (e.g., presentation on new data, soliciting feedback on a project proposal, dry run for conference presentation). Students who are not enrolled in the course are strongly encouraged to continue to attend the research seminar, to engage in our local research community to discuss research and professional development topics. Students who are unable to enroll in the course or present due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., medical reasons) should contact the Program Director regarding a waiver of this requirement.

5. **PSYC 602-02 Research in Experimental Psychology (1)** (*required for all 1st-year students*):

PSYC 602-02 is a weekly 50-minute orientation and professional development proseminar offered each fall, called *First Year Introduction (FYI)*. This course introduces students to program faculty, their labs, and their basic research program. Professional development topics will also be covered. All 1st-year students are required to register for PSYC 602-02 (1). This course is only required to be taken once. Any student may attend *FYI* sessions, even if not registered for the course, as topics may vary from year to year.

6. **PSYC 605 Independent Study - Research (1-8)** (*repeated until in doctoral candidacy*):

Students are required to register for a minimum of 3 credit hours of PSYC 605 Independent Study - Research with the student's graduate research mentor every semester until the Preliminary Examination is successfully completed. The following exceptions apply:

- Any semester in which PSYC 602-01 and 602-02 seminars are taken (1 credit hour each), the minimum requirement for PSYC 605 will be 1 credit hour.
- Any semester in which PSYC 602-01 is taken (1 credit hour), the minimum requirement for PSYC 605 will be 2 credit hours for that semester.

Faculty mentors will complete the End-of-Semester-Research-Evaluation form at the end of every semester PSYC 605 is taken.

7. GS 799 Doctoral Exam Prep:

GS 799 is intended for students who desire to focus on preparing for their Preliminary Exams and otherwise would register for 9 hours of PSYC 605 to maintain their full-time status. Thus, students in GS 799 are expected to be studying and preparing full-time for their exams. GS 799 is a 2-credit-hour course offered by the Graduate School and is considered full-time; it may not be taken with more than one additional 2-hour course. Permission of the faculty mentor and the program director are required to place the request with the Graduate School; approval is awarded at the discretion of the Dean of the Graduate School. Students considering this option have typically completed their courses and are about to begin their 4th year in the program.

8. PSYC 701 or Degree Candidacy (DOCT 600):

Upon passing the preliminary examination, students must maintain continuous enrollment at UofL by taking classes and/or Dissertation Research (PSYC 701) or by enrolling in a Doctoral Candidacy (DOCT 600) until completion of the degree. Students enrolled in this 0-credit hour course are considered full-time. After initially enrolling, the Registrar will automatically enroll students until a degree application is submitted. Note that, although this course is 0-credit hours, students are charged for 2 credit hours (which is covered by assistantships, if applicable).

C. Waiver or Substitution of Courses

1. In no circumstances may graduate course credit be granted for undergraduate courses or projects.

Rationale: Graduate level courses are assumed to require a higher level of performance, to deal with more difficult material, and to take a more comprehensive approach to topics than undergraduate courses.

2. The equivalence of a graduate course completed at another university or in another department at UofL to a statistics course or other core course in our program will be determined by the following procedure:

(a) The student will request a judgment of course equivalence from the instructor for the course. The student will present detailed information about the candidate course, e.g., a topical syllabus, text used, any additional reading required, descriptions of any relevant projects or papers conducted for the candidate course.

(b) The instructor may consult with other faculty if they so choose before making a recommendation to the Experimental Program Director. The final decision regarding course equivalence will be made by the Experimental Program Director, who will inform the student, the instructor, and the student's mentor of the decision.

(c) If the proposed course equivalence is approved, the Experimental Program will inform the Graduate Program Assistant in writing so that this information may be placed in the student's permanent file.

3. When a judgment of nonequivalence has been rendered, a student may then request the opportunity of meeting the general core requirement by examination. This request must receive the written approval of the student's faculty mentor, the Experimental Program Director, and the Department Chair. If these approvals are obtained, then two faculty members associated with the course will be asked to prepare, administer, and evaluate the examination. The format and scope of the exam is to be determined by the examiners. The student must obtain a minimum grade of "B" on the exam in order to fulfill the core requirement. In those instances where the two examiners disagree on the evaluation, a third faculty member will be asked to read the exam.

4. In cases where students, for good reason, cannot take a required general core course, it is possible to satisfy a course requirement through testing. To test out of a general core course requirement, the procedure described in the above paragraph is to be followed.

5. Students granted waivers of courses by the above procedures may also receive a corresponding waiver of up to 6 credit hours. Credit hour waivers apply only to statistics or core courses and would result in an appropriate reduction in the number of minimum credit hours stipulated in Section III.B.

D. Grade Requirements

1. Students must earn “B-” or above in courses counted toward core requirements, including statistics courses.
2. Students must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average across all courses.

The grading system used for graduate courses is a plus-minus system. The numerical equivalents of the letter grades for the system are:

A+	4.0	B+	3.3	C+	2.3	D+	1.3		
A	4.0	B	3.0	C	2.0	D	1.0	F	0.0
A-	3.7	B-	2.7	C-	1.7	D-	0.7		

IV. MASTER’S DEGREE

A. General Information

Students are admitted into the Doctoral Program in Experimental Psychology, not into a Master's Program. Students are required to earn a Master of Science in Experimental Psychology.

B. Master’s Degree Requirements

After approval of the MS portfolio (see description below) and 45 credit hours of graduate study, including the Statistics Core and Program Core, the student has completed the requirements for the Master of Science degree.

C. Applying for the Master's Degree

In consultation with the faculty mentor, the student should apply for the Master's degree in the semester they anticipate submitting the MS Portfolio for review. The deadline for applying for a Master's degree, and detailed instructions on how to apply, can be found at <https://louisville.edu/registrar/commencement-information.html>.

D. MS Portfolio

Typically, in the summer of a student's 2nd year, and after receiving approval from the student's faculty mentor, a complete MS portfolio is submitted electronically to the faculty committee for evaluation. The contents of an ideal portfolio should be generated as a natural consequence of each student's professional training and will differ in execution from lab to lab. Portfolios should primarily feature research efforts and training undertaken as a graduate student at the University of Louisville.

The electronic MS portfolio should include the Master's Portfolio Review Rubric with Part I completed by the student, a Table of Contents, the student's CV, and materials that provide evidence of the following:

- 1) Appropriate ethical and human subjects training as defined by the mentor and the department, such as CITI, HIPAA, and any additional other relevant qualifications or courses.
- 2) Mastery of relevant research skills. Every student must demonstrate mastery of the basic skills relevant to undertaking research within their area. Relevant skill sets vary from lab to lab and by topic. Relevant skills may include, but are not limited to, data collection techniques, training on specialized measures or equipment, experience with participant populations, certifications, and acquisition of other research-relevant skills or knowledge (e.g., computer programming, mathematics, languages).
- 3) The ability to understand and conduct lab-appropriate data analyses. The degree of analytical and statistical skill that must be exercised by each student will vary according to research setting and topic. Therefore, the mentor will set the criteria for meeting this requirement. In some cases, materials from course work may be added to the portfolio to demonstrate a student's expertise (e.g., submission of a relevant assignment from a statistics course, if mentor-approved), or a results section drafted by the student addressing a relevant data set. Students belonging to labs using advanced quantitative techniques will need to include evidence demonstrating their mastery of relevant skills as defined by their mentor.
- 4) The ability to present research to an audience. One of the end goals of any research program should be dissemination. Therefore, students are expected to present their work within the first two years of their training. Appropriate presentations include, but are not limited to, a departmental research seminar (RAPDS) presentation or a formal oral presentation or poster presentation at a conference outside of the University of Louisville.
- 5) Development as a science writer. The MS portfolio should contain evidence that the student is developing as an author. Thus, the portfolio should contain an appropriate writing sample, such as: a published or "in press" first-author manuscript, a first-author manuscript draft, or a writing sample including a literature review and methods section for an experiment related to the student's research interests and formatted for an appropriate target journal as defined by the student's mentor.
- 6) Scholarship. Students will demonstrate their developing knowledge of the literature and key concepts in one or more specific areas of psychological science.

The faculty committee for evaluation of the MS portfolio will consist of three faculty members: the committee Chair (the faculty mentor), a second reader from within the Department (including faculty with primary or partial appointments), and a third reader (a member of the Graduate Faculty who may be from inside or outside the Department). In accordance with the department bylaws, only full-time faculty members (as defined in Section I.B above) may serve as Chair of the Master's Committee.

The committee may accept the portfolio and recommend awarding the degree.

Alternatively, it may decide that an oral examination is needed before rendering a decision. If significant weaknesses are identified, the committee may recommend against awarding the degree. In such cases, the candidate will be allowed one semester to rectify any problems and to resubmit the portfolio for a new evaluation.

When the portfolio has been approved by the committee, the committee Chair shall notify the Experimental Psychology Program Director, Graduate Coordinator, and Department Chair by e-mail and attach the completed Master's Research Portfolio Review Rubric form and approved portfolio.

V. PRELIMINARY EXAMINATION

A. General Information

To be advanced to doctoral candidacy, at which time a student may propose a dissertation project, a student must have passed their Preliminary Examination. The Preliminary Examination is typically completed by the end of the third year, or early in the fourth year, of training.

B. Preliminary Examination

The Preliminary Examination will consist of an original critical review of a research area. The research area chosen must be one for which there has been no review published in the last three years. See below for more information on developing the topic or concept of the Preliminary Exam paper.

As reflected in the Preliminary Exam Review Rubric, the Preliminary Examination will be evaluated on the following:

- 1) Contribution to the literature
- 2) Critical evaluation of the methodologies of studies
- 3) Integration of literature (conceptual analysis, synthesis, integration)
- 4) Discussion of future directions
- 5) Overall quality of writing (presentation, format, flow)
- 6) Overall quality of oral presentation
- 7) Overall quality of oral defense (response to Committee's questions)

C. The Committee

The student will form a Preliminary Examination Committee in consultation with the faculty mentor. Preliminary Examination Committees will consist of three faculty members, with a minimum of two from the Experimental Program (including faculty with primary or partial appointments). Preliminary Examination Committees must have approval from the student's mentor. In accordance with the department bylaws, only full-time faculty members (as defined in Section I.B above) may serve as Chair of the Preliminary Examination Committee.

D. The Procedure

The sequence of steps for the Preliminary Examination is provided below (also see the Preliminary Examination Procedure Flowchart).

- 1. The Prelim Concept and Prelim Proposal:** The student will develop the concept of the preliminary exam with their mentor and prepare a written proposal describing the paper that would be submitted as the Preliminary Examination (prelim). The student will receive input on the proposal from their mentor until the mentor approves it.
- 2. The Proposal Sections:** The Prelim Proposal should include the following four sections:
 - **Background (Purpose of Prelim):** In this section, the student should identify the purpose of the prelim – the research area that will be reviewed and the main question to be addressed. It should include a brief summary of relevant theories and background.
 - **Significance (Gap):** In the section, the student should present justification for the need for this review – what gap in knowledge is to be addressed?
 - **Plan for the Paper:** In this section, the student should present a logical description of the approach that will be taken and what they will accomplish.
 - **References:** The proposal should end with a list of proposed sources divided into core references and additional papers likely to be cited.
- 3. The Proposal Formatting:** The Prelim Proposal should be 3-5 pages long (not including the references or any tables and figures). The proposal should be double-spaced with 1" margins and typed using Times New Roman 12 pt font. It should be formatted according to APA-7 style, including embedding any tables and figures within the document.
- 4. Distributing the Proposal and Scheduling the Proposal Meeting:** Once the proposal has been approved by the mentor, the student should email the proposal to the Committee and schedule the proposal meeting. The prelim proposal must be distributed to the Committee at least two weeks before the prelim proposal meeting. In some circumstances, for example, when the proposal meeting is likely to occur in the summer, the mentor may agree to allowing the student to schedule the proposal meeting before the mentor has actually approved the final version of the proposal. In this case, it is expected that student will schedule the proposal meeting far enough in advance to ensure that the Committee will still be given at least two weeks to review the proposal before the proposal meeting.
- 5. The Proposal Meeting:** At the prelim proposal meeting, the student and Committee will discuss the prelim proposal. Students may be required by their mentors to present a brief (5-10 mins.) presentation outlining the prelim proposal. After the presentation and/or discussion, the Committee will decide to either approve the proposal (with or without certain modifications) or require a revision of the proposal, in which case the process starts over. **Once the proposal has been approved, the Committee Chair should email the Program Director and Graduate Coordinator to inform them of the proposal approval date.**

6. **Preliminary Exam Writing:** The student has two months to write the Preliminary Exam. The student is expected to work independently on the Prelim Exam, with two exceptions: (1) oral discussions with the mentor are allowed if they are related to aligning the paper with the proposal, and (2) feedback on writing is allowed, but only from the Writing Center.
7. **Preliminary Exam Formatting:** Like the Prelim Proposal, the Preliminary Exam should be double-spaced with 1" margins and typed using Times New Roman 12 pt font. It should be formatted according to APA-7 style, including embedding any tables and figures within the body of the document. Unlike the Prelim Proposal, the Prelim Exam should include an abstract and be 25-35 pages in length (not including abstract, tables, figures, or references).
8. **Distributing the Preliminary Exam and Scheduling the Oral Defense:** Within 2 months of when the Prelim Proposal was accepted, the written Prelim Exam must be submitted to the Committee. If the student has not already done so by then, the student should also schedule the Preliminary Defense meeting. The Prelim Defense meeting will take place at least two weeks after the Preliminary Exam is submitted to the Committee.
9. **Preliminary Exam Oral Defense:** The Prelim Exam Oral defense meeting will take place approximately two weeks after the revised prelim was submitted to the Committee. The student should bring the Preliminary Exam Review Rubric form to the meeting for the committee to complete and sign at the end of the meeting. The student will give a 15-minute presentation of the Prelim Paper after which the Committee will ask questions. Following the discussion, the student will be asked to leave the room and the Committee will make a decision regarding whether the student has passed or failed. The Committee's decision will be based on majority vote. Whether the student passes or fails, the Committee should fill out and sign the Preliminary Exam Review Rubric.
10. **If the student passes the Preliminary Exam, the Committee chair shall inform the Program Director, Graduate Coordinator, and Department Chair via email of the Committee's decision. The student should email the approved Preliminary Exam and signed Preliminary Exam Review Rubric to the Graduate Coordinator (copying their mentor).**
11. **If the student fails the Preliminary Exam on the first attempt, the student is allowed to retake it. In this case, the student would start the Prelim process over. Additionally, the Committee chair shall inform the Program Director, Graduate Coordinator, and Department Chair via email of the Committee's decision regarding the first attempt. The student should email the Preliminary Exam and signed Preliminary Exam Review Rubric to the Program Director and Graduate Coordinator (copying their mentor).** According to the Graduate Catalog, if the student fails on the second attempt, the student may not retake the Exam. In this case, the student would not be admitted to candidacy.

VI. DISSERTATION

A. General Information

The purpose of the dissertation requirement is to provide supervised experience in the design, performance, evaluation, and description of research. The problem chosen should be at a level appropriate for a highly-trained specialist and should promise to provide a significant contribution to the literature. The proposal shall be a formal and written one and will require a vote to accept or reject by each committee member. In accordance with the department bylaws, only full-time faculty members (as defined in Section I.B above) may serve as Dissertation Director. The Dissertation Committee will consist of a minimum of four members. At least one and no more than half of the members (two if the committee includes either four or five

members) shall come from outside the Experimental Psychology program: one or both of the outside committee members may be from another institution. Faculty with primary or partial appointments in the Experimental program are considered as within-program committee members. All dissertation committees shall provide sufficient expertise in the area of study and sufficient faculty availability for necessary student guidance. All UofL members of the Dissertation Committee must be of the Graduate Faculty. Of the inside Department Members, at least two must be tenured or tenured-track faculty within the Department. Once the dissertation committee is formed, the Thesis/Dissertation Advisory Committee Appointment form must be completed and signed by the student, Dissertation Committee Members, and Department Chair. The form is then forwarded to the Graduate School for approval.

B. The Proposal

The student will prepare a formal proposal for the dissertation research, including a review of the literature and statement of proposed experimental methodology, and submit it to their Dissertation Director. When the student and Director are satisfied with the proposal, the student will submit the proposal to the Dissertation Committee and arrange a meeting with the Committee to discuss the proposal. The meeting should be scheduled for at least two weeks after the proposal was sent to the Committee. Some of the research could have been done during the student's course of study, but there must be a substantial portion of the research not yet completed for the dissertation. The proposal must be approved by the committee before the student can begin the dissertation.

There will be a minimum of six months between the successful defense of the dissertation proposal and the defense of the dissertation. This rule is intended to enforce the character of the proposal as a presentation of a plan for research that has not yet been conducted.

C. Preparation of the Dissertation

Students should consult a recent dissertation in the Department for style and format requirements. Generally, American Psychological Association Guidelines are followed; figures and tables are placed in text just after being mentioned. The Graduate School's recommendations and guidelines should also be consulted (<https://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-guidelines-1>).

Initial drafts of the dissertation will be submitted to the Dissertation Director, who will evaluate and suggest revisions. Once the Dissertation Director has approved a final draft, the student must schedule the final defense and provide the department Graduate Coordinator with the information necessary to complete the Request to Schedule Final Oral Defense online form (<https://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students>). This form must be submitted by the Graduate Coordinator two weeks in advance of the dissertation defense date. Therefore, the student must submit the necessary information to the Graduate Coordinator three weeks in advance of the dissertation defense date.

The student must submit the final draft of the dissertation to the committee two weeks before the date of the dissertation defense.

D. Dissertation Final Oral Examination

The Dissertation Final Oral Examination must be taken at least fourteen days before the end of the semester in which the degree is to be granted. Students must bring the Approval/Signature Page of the dissertation to the examination (<https://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-information>).

The examination consists of a brief oral presentation of the dissertation to the committee followed by questions. The university community is invited to attend the oral examination and to ask questions at the end of the presentation. After that question period, everyone other than the student and the Dissertation Committee members will be asked to leave and the Committee members will have an opportunity to ask their questions. Changes suggested by the committee will be discussed during the dissertation defense. Immediately after the oral examination, the student will be asked to leave the room and the committee will decide whether to accept the dissertation. Acceptance may be provisional requiring that the student make changes requested by the committee. Any changes specified by the committee will be completed by the student in consultation with the Dissertation Director. The committee will decide whether the changes must be approved by the full committee or if the changes must be approved only by the Dissertation Director. The committee may also specify that an additional oral exam may be required. In very rare instances, the committee may reject the dissertation.

The Committee chair shall inform the Program Director, Graduate Coordinator, and Department Chair via email of the Committee's decision. The student should email the approved Dissertation to the Graduate Student Coordinator (copying their mentor).

Once approved, the student submits an electronic copy (PDF format) of the final dissertation to the Graduate School (<https://louisville.edu/graduate/current-students/thesis-dissertation-information/thesis-dissertation-information>).

E. Time Limit on Ph.D. Degree

1. All students should take note of the Graduate School limitation on time from completion of preliminary examinations to completion of all requirements including dissertation.

All other requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy must be completed within four calendar years after passing the Preliminary Examination. In exceptional cases, the Graduate Council is empowered to grant a limited time extension to this four-year regulation.

Students should be aware that the failure to meet this deadline may result in dismissal from the degree program. At best, students violating this time limit will be required to retake the Preliminary Examination.

The meeting for the oral defense of the dissertation must occur prior to the four-year deadline date, and the dissertation must be approved by the committee prior to the deadline date. Failure to have the oral defense meeting or committee approval by the deadline date constitutes a failure to meet the four-year deadline and would require the retaking the preliminary examination before an extension would be recommended to the Graduate School.

It is the student's responsibility to ensure that members of the committee have a reasonable amount of time to review the dissertation, and it is the student's responsibility to ensure that there is ample time for scheduling the oral defense meeting. Any scheduling difficulties that prevent an oral defense meeting prior to the deadline date will not be acceptable as justification to extend the four-year deadline.

2. Procedure for Applying for a One-time Extension of the Four-Year Dissertation Deadline. Students failing to meet the four-year deadline to complete the dissertation (from the date upon which the Preliminary Examination was passed) may apply for a one-time two-year extension by retaking the Preliminary Examination.

The student must inform the Department Chair and mentor one month prior to the expiration of the deadline that the deadline will not be met and request that the Preliminary Examination be retaken.

The Preliminary Examination proposal meeting must be completed at the first opportunity following the notice to the Chair/mentor and/or as scheduled by the Preliminary Exam Committee. The extension begins when/if the Preliminary Examination is passed.

Should the Preliminary Examination be passed, the Chair shall recommend to the Graduate Dean that the two-year extension be granted. Please note, however, that extensions can only be given by the Graduate Dean.

Should the Preliminary Examination be failed, the student will be dismissed from the program. No second opportunity to pass the examination is provided.

Students failing to meet the four-year deadline and failing to engage these procedures will be dismissed from the program.

VII. TEACHING A CLASS AS PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR

A. General Information

Many students expect to obtain jobs at colleges and universities and want to develop teaching skills and gain varied teaching experience. The following policies and procedures have been developed to facilitate these goals:

1. Students who want teaching experience should make this known to the Experimental Program Director and the Department Chair by March 1 of any year.
2. Eligibility: Before teaching a course as Instructor of Record, students must:
 - Have at least 18 graduate semester hours in their teaching field, a Master's degree in a related field, and pass their Preliminary Exam.
 - Obtain mentor approval.
 - Have experience assisting a faculty member in a relevant undergraduate course. They would attend class regularly, assist with class demonstrations, give occasional presentations in class, conduct discussion or laboratory sessions, and help with test preparation and grading. Students must complete at least one semester of this type of apprenticeship before they could be considered for full responsibility for a course. Two semesters is preferred.
 - Have prior professional development in teaching beyond GTA orientation (e.g., GTA Academy, PLAN workshops, formal courses on teaching, completion of PSYC 690 while serving as a GTA, Delphi Center courses). This is preferred but not required.
 - Exceptions to these criteria may be considered.
3. Students who teach as instructor of record will not typically receive additional compensation for their time beyond their graduate assistantship. However, the following procedures will remain in place:
 - Students will teach one course maximum per semester and will not be assigned any additional GTA responsibilities that semester.
 - When possible, students will be given the opportunity to co-teach with another student.
 - Students will be given *at least* two months' notice about their teaching assignment, to give time to prepare.
 - Students will be paired with a faculty teaching mentor who will provide guidance and evaluation during the semester (e.g., regular meetings). Prior course materials will be shared with the students. If possible, students will enroll in PSYC 690 with their teaching mentor, to formalize the mentorship.
4. The Department will try to provide appropriate teaching experience in a timely manner for every student who requests it, but opportunities cannot be guaranteed. Students will not be required to teach as Instructor of Record. The Department Chair has final authority over assignments.

VIII. PROCEDURES FOR GRADUATE STUDENT REVIEW

A. Standards for Student Performance

Each semester the program faculty reviews the performance and progress of every student in the program. The program faculty uses the evaluations to determine degree status of each student and recommends action to the full faculty if necessary.

Students are evaluated in the following areas:

- Academic Performance
- Research, teaching, and assistantship performance
- Performance on preliminary and oral examinations
- Timely progress through program
- Ethical and professional conduct

1. **Academic Performance.** To remain in good academic standing, students must earn “B-” or above in all courses counted toward core requirements (including statistics courses) and must maintain at least a 3.0 grade point average across all courses.

2. **Research, Teaching and Assistantship Performance.** Students are expected to perform at a level of competence commensurate with their training in all assistantship placements, in their independent research projects, and in their teaching duties. Performance reviews by supervisors in each capacity may supplement the semester review.

3. **Performance on Preliminary and Oral Examinations.** Satisfactory performance on the preliminary examination is required (see Section V).

4. **Timely Progress Through Program.** All programs are considered five year programs with the Master’s degree to be completed at the end of the second year or the first semester of the third year and preliminary examinations to be taken in the third year or early in the fourth. The Graduate School requires that all other requirements for the Ph.D. degree be completed within four calendar years from the date on which the preliminary exam was passed.

5. **Ethical and Professional Conduct.** The Department emphasizes the importance of ethical behavior in all its forms on the part of graduate students (See Section I.3). Faculty and students alike must be aware of the threat posed by unethical conduct not only to our own training program but to the profession of psychology as well. Students need to be fully aware of and abide by the sexual harassment policies of the University (see Appendix A).

Ordinarily, a student demonstrating an inadequacy will be notified in writing and provided a reasonable opportunity to remedy the problem. However, summary dismissal is possible in cases of marked and blatant deviation from expectation. Dismissal under item 5 may take the form of Disciplinary Dismissal for which Procedures are stated in Section C.

B. Procedures for Academic Dismissal

The following procedures shall be followed in order for a graduate student to be reviewed and recommended for dismissal for academic (nondisciplinary) reasons:

1. **Discovery Hearing.** If, in the semester review, a student appears to be subject to a consideration for dismissal, consideration of dismissal shall be suspended and the student notified.
 - a. The student shall be notified by a letter from the Chair, and this letter shall indicate the areas of concern identified by the program faculty. If the student chooses to discuss these areas of concern, the Experimental Program Director shall review them with the student and provide available details and amplification.
 - b. The student should contact the Chair or the Experimental Program Director to make arrangements for a Discovery Hearing before the program faculty. The student shall acknowledge notification and the offering of the Discovery Hearing in writing.
 - c. The Discovery Hearing shall be held within ten working days of the notice to the student but major holidays (such as Christmas) shall add ten days to this period because of the difficulty in scheduling meetings during these times.
 - d. At the Hearing the student will be asked questions for clarification and be provided an opportunity to present additional information of their choosing. Afterwards the faculty shall excuse the student from the meeting and shall consider responses to the problems discussed, such as setting deadlines for completion, additional coursework, further mentoring, dismissal or other actions. A majority vote of all program faculty not on leave shall be required to advance a dismissal recommendation to the full faculty. The vote will be conducted by secret ballot.
 - e. The student shall be permitted to register for courses pending Department consideration.
2. **Department Faculty Meeting.** The program faculty recommendation shall be advanced to the department faculty. The department faculty must muster a quorum of 75% of all faculty not on leave in order to consider a dismissal recommendation. A simple majority of those present and voting shall be required to accept a dismissal recommendation and to advance it to the Graduate School. (No hearing is provided at this point since the program faculty had conducted a Discovery Hearing and an appeal is available in the Graduate School.) The vote must be conducted by secret ballot.

If the program faculty's dismissal recommendation fails, substitute motions are in order or the matter may be referred back to the program faculty for reconsideration and a new recommendation.
3. **Recommendation to the Graduate School.** Should a program faculty's recommendation for dismissal be accepted by the department faculty, the Chair shall advance that recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School. The student shall be notified of this action by registered mail and notified of the option to appeal at the Graduate School level.
4. **Dismissal Raised by Department Faculty.** If, in the Semester Review before Department Faculty, a student appears to be subject to consideration for dismissal (i.e., the program faculty's recommendation for a different action has failed and other lesser options are unlikely), consideration of dismissal shall be suspended and the Program Faculty required to conduct a Discovery Hearing and to consider dismissal. (Since such an event might occur when information or evaluations not available to Program Faculty are available to other department faculty, faculty with information and evaluations should be invited to the Discovery Hearing.) Such a referral to program faculty shall initiate the review sequence at point 2 of these procedures.

5. **Two Failures of a Dismissal Recommendation in One Semester.** Should a dismissal recommendation be twice advanced by the program faculty and rejected the second time, alternative substitute motions shall be accepted. These motions must muster a simple majority of those present and voting to be passed.

6. **Two Failures of a Lesser Action.** Should recommendations be advanced from a program faculty for actions short of dismissal, and the second recommendation fails and it appears that sentiment exists for dismissal, the department faculty shall conduct a Discovery Hearing as specified in Item 2. A two-thirds majority of those present and voting is required to advance a dismissal recommendation to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Should a motion for dismissal fail, alternative motions shall be accepted and require a simple majority vote (of those present and voting) to pass.

The student may opt to be present during the information-gathering segment of the hearing but will leave before deliberation is begun. The student may respond to any information or evaluation presented as they are recognized by the Chair.

C. Additional Information Regarding Academic Dismissal Procedures

1. Graduate Student Representatives to program faculties are considered part of the faculties for purposes of a quorum and vote count, as are all Graduate Student Representatives to the Department Faculty.

2. In order to preserve the nature of the student-faculty relationship at the level of the Department, no lawyers shall be involved in any hearing.

3. The faculty may request to hear from any person who might have information relevant to the decision. The student may request the faculty to hear from any other person who may have information relevant to the student's performance or conditions affecting that performance.

4. Detailed minutes of all hearings shall be kept. No transcription shall be required.

5. At any point during these procedures, the student may exercise the option of tendering a resignation from the program.

6. The person chairing any hearing has broad discretionary powers to assure an orderly hearing and to preclude obstructions to the hearing. The Chair may rule on procedural motions directly and require that persons presenting information stay close to the issues involved.

D. Procedure for Disciplinary Dismissal

1. The normal penalty for cheating or serious violations of ethical codes will be dismissal from the program. This penalty may be altered if it is established that extenuating circumstances exist.

2. In the event that a student is dismissed or disciplined for cheating or unethical behavior, the student has the option of appealing to the Graduate School.

3. **Hearings.** If a student is accused of cheating or unethical conduct, the Department Chair will first meet with the accused student, the Course Instructor, and the Experimental Program Director to discuss the accusation. The Chair, Experimental Program Director, and Course Instructor are charged with gathering information on the accusations and presenting this information to the faculty.

a. If the student denies the charges, guilt must be determined by the faculty at a full faculty meeting.

For this meeting, a quorum of at least 75% of those eligible to vote must exist. The determination of guilt will require a 75% majority of those present and voting. All ballots in all faculty meetings on disciplinary action will be secret.

In meetings of the Department Faculty (and of the program faculty as specified below) the student whose case is being considered will be allowed to be present before the faculty and to entertain questions from them. However, the student will be expected to leave the meetings before actual deliberation of the case takes place.

Three student representatives elected by the graduate student body will be allowed to vote in Department meetings considering disciplinary action against a student. For each academic year, one representative will be elected for the Experimental Psychology program, one for the Clinical Psychology program, and one at-large. Student representatives must be in their second year or above.

- b. If the student admits to the charges, or if the Department faculty meeting has determined guilt, the case will go to the program faculty and its voting student representative. This body will then decide on the disciplinary action to be recommended to the Department Faculty.
- c. The Department Faculty (including the student representatives) will meet to discuss the penalty. At this stage it may vote to adopt one of the recommendations made by the program faculty, or to return the recommendations to the program faculty for revision. In order to decide upon a penalty, a quorum of 75% of those eligible to vote must be present at the full faculty meeting. The penalty to be imposed will be decided by a simple majority of those present and voting.

E. Option to Appeal Disciplinary Dismissal Recommendation

Graduate students subject to a recommendation for disciplinary dismissal from the Department to the Graduate School have an option to appeal within the Department. The steps in the appeal are:

1. The appeal shall be filed with the Chair of the Department within ten days of notification of Departmental action. Three areas may be addressed:
 - a. that the faculty acted on inappropriate or incomplete information;
 - b. that there was a serious fault in the process of review; and/or
 - c. that there was prejudice on the part of one or more faculty members.
2. The student will then be asked to meet with the Executive Committee of the Department for a discussion of the appeal. The Executive Committee will act in a purely mentory capacity to the student and to the faculty. Nothing from this informal session disadvantageous to the student shall be introduced later should the appeal be advanced to full faculty. This meeting shall be held within ten days of the filing of the appeal.
3. If the informal meeting with the Executive Committee fails to resolve the issues, a meeting of the full faculty will be called within ten days. The student shall appear to present the appeal. After presentation, questions and discussion of facts will be permitted. The student will be excused while the faculty deliberates and makes a decision on the appeal.
4. The student will be permitted to attend classes, unregistered, while the appeal is pending.