

University of Cincinnati  
College of Arts and Sciences  
Department of Psychology

## Graduate Handbook

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The University of Cincinnati Doctoral Training Program in Clinical Psychology is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of the American Psychological Association. Questions related to the program's accredited status should be directed to the Commission on Accreditation: Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, American Psychological Association, 750 1st Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002; Phone: (202) 336-5979; Email: [apaaccred@apa.org](mailto:apaaccred@apa.org)

## Table of Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Introductory Information   | 3  |
| Dissemination of Information Within the Department                     | 3  |
| Admission to the Program   | 4  |
| Training Requirements  | 4  |
| Individual Training Proposal   | 5  |
| Course Requirements  | 6  |
| General Information about the Thesis and Dissertation                  | 9  |
| Thesis   | 9  |
| Major Qualifying Examinations  | 14 |
| Written Major Qualifying Examination                                   | 14 |
| Clinical Major Qualifying Examination                                  | 15 |
| Dissertation   | 17 |
| Academic Progress Standards  | 18 |
| Waivers of Program Requirements  | 19 |
| Evaluation Procedures  | 19 |
| Annual Evaluations   | 19 |
| Personal and Emotional Competency                                      | 20 |
| Evaluation of Readiness to Continue Beyond the MA                      | 20 |
| Evaluation of Readiness to Advance to Doctoral Candidacy               | 20 |
| Additional Requirements for the Clinical Training Program              | 21 |
| Clinical Placements  | 21 |
| Doctoral Internship  | 22 |
| Residency Expectations for Clinical Students                           | 23 |
| Licensure  | 24 |
| Student Discipline Procedures in the Clinical Training Program         | 24 |
| Background Checks for Clinical Psychology Students                     | 25 |
| Administrative Policies and Timelines                                  | 26 |
| Changing Mentors   | 26 |
| Changing Between Clinical and Non-Clinical Training                    | 26 |
| Residency  | 27 |
| Candidacy  | 27 |
| Leaves of Absence  | 28 |
| Deadlines for Completing Academic Requirements                         | 28 |
| Additional Information of Interest in the University Graduate Handbook | 29 |
| Financial Support  | 29 |
| Appendix A / Program Aims and Competencies                             | 32 |
| Appendix B / Presentations Portfolio                                   | 33 |
| Appendix C / Quick References  | 34 |

## Introductory Information

We are pleased to welcome you to the Department of Psychology at the University of Cincinnati (UC). Our goal is to provide you with an excellent broad foundation in the field of psychology, with additional training available in CAP (cognition-action-perception), health psychology, community psychology, neuropsychology, and industrial-organizational psychology. We operate according to a “mentor model,” under which you work closely with a faculty mentor who will provide you with academic and research guidance. In this Handbook, we describe the key departmental guidelines to help you progress successfully through your professional development.

In addition to the information outlined in this handbook, you are required to follow the policies and procedures outlined in the University of Cincinnati Graduate Handbook (published by the Graduate School at the University of Cincinnati) and the University of Cincinnati Code of Student Conduct. Please note that the two Program Directors (Director of Clinical Training and Director of Experimental Training) together serve in the role that the University refers to as the Director of Graduate Studies. Therefore, if you are reading University-wide guidelines that instruct you to consult with the Director of Graduate Studies, you should go to your Program Director. In addition, as a graduate student in Psychology, you are bound by the guidelines for professional behavior that are described in the American Psychological Association (APA) document “Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct.” The APA Ethical Principles will be reviewed during orientation, in your required coursework and are also available at <http://www.apa.org/ethics>.

Graduate school requires you to take an active role in your education. In the process of developing a professional identity and navigating graduate school, it is likely that you will have a number of questions. You are always welcome to direct questions, comments or suggestions to your mentor, Program Director, or the Department Head. **In addition, please note that the Quick References section of the handbook will help you to address your requests for information to the most appropriate faculty or staff member.**

**The various sections of this handbook contain individual deadlines for program milestones; you may want to refer also to the Quick References section for a summary of all major deadlines.**

### Dissemination of Information Within the Department

Faculty and staff in the Department rely on e-mail to disseminate information. It is imperative that you maintain a University of Cincinnati student e-mail account (even if you choose to redirect that mail to another account) and that you check your e-mail daily.

Information about colloquia, courses, and other professional development opportunities will be disseminated by e-mail. Your mentor will also make you aware of upcoming events that might be beneficial to your training.

In addition, you have a shared mailbox in the department mailroom on the 4th floor of Edwards One, in Suite 4150; your mailbox is identified by the first initial of your last name.

Student representatives attend Clinical Faculty meetings and participate on a number of departmental committees. In addition to communications to you from the faculty and staff, your student representatives should keep you informed of ongoing discussions in the department.

***All of the forms that you need for the various program milestones are available on the Psychology All Graduate Students Blackboard site or from the Graduate Coordinator.***

## Admission to the Program

The admissions policies of the Department of Psychology are consistent with those of the Graduate School. The departmental application may be accessed from the Graduate School's website [www.grad.uc.edu/](http://www.grad.uc.edu/). To be considered, an application must be completed by the due date posted on the web.

It is preferred, but not required, that applicants hold a baccalaureate degree in Psychology. At a minimum, applicants are required to have had one course in research methods in the behavioral or social sciences and one course in statistical methods. Applicants to the clinical training program must have a minimum of 24 quarter credit hours or 16 semester credit hours in non-introductory psychology courses, including the research methods and statistics courses mentioned above.

New students are only admitted to graduate study at the beginning of the academic year. The Department only admits students for full-time study and does not offer provisional admission.

Students who are admitted to the doctoral program are required to earn the Master of Arts degree during the course of their training if they do not already have this degree upon entry into the program. After a doctoral student completes the master's degree, the faculty makes a decision concerning his or her suitability to continue working toward a doctorate. However, it is the expectation of the faculty that nearly all doctoral students will continue for the Ph.D.

Under our mentor model, students are admitted with the expectation that they will forge productive research collaborations with specific faculty members. In order to foster such collaborations, individual faculty members who recruit students have a voice in the selection of students. Further, applicants to the clinical training program must be approved by the Clinical Faculty as being suitable for clinical work. Occasionally, clinical students may be admitted to the program to work with primary mentors who are not members of the Clinical Faculty. In order to ensure that each clinical student is receiving appropriate mentoring with regard to his or her career development, students in this situation will, in addition to the research mentor, be assigned a clinical mentor who is a member of the Clinical Faculty.

The University of Cincinnati is a member of the Council of Graduate Schools and abides by all requirements of that organization related to the deadlines by which applicants are required to respond to offers of admissions.

## Training Requirements

We offer a strongly research-oriented training program that is designed to prepare graduates for excellence in a broad variety of scientifically oriented professional positions. For students in the Clinical

Training Program, we provide training that draws on a scientist-practitioner model and that prepares our students to contribute directly to the scientific knowledge base and to draw on contemporary empirical evidence to implement optimal clinical treatments. The program faculty have articulated goals that *every* students must achieve prior to graduation in the areas of professionalism and research and, for those in the Clinical Training Program, clinical practice. **The complete list of the specific competencies that all students must achieve in these domains, together with the minimum acceptable level of achievement for each, appears in Appendix A. You are encouraged to be closely familiar with these competencies.** In addition to these requirements for all students, you have the opportunity to customize certain aspects of your program of training in order to facilitate achievement of your individual professional goals. For example, some of our students take courses outside of the department to develop skills such as computer programming; others have the goal of ensuring that they develop classroom teaching skills.

### Individual Training Proposal

One unique aspect of graduate training in Psychology at UC is the training proposal. Soon after entering the program, you and your mentor should discuss your professional goals and how your graduate education will contribute to your professional development.

To provide some breadth to the development of your training proposal, every student, together with his or her mentor, forms a training committee to supervise the student's course of study in the department. Each training committee consists of three UC faculty members, at least two of whom are Department faculty (i.e., faculty members who work full-time in our Department or who have joint appointments; adjunct faculty do not meet this criterion). The training committee should be composed of the student's primary mentor, a faculty member with related research interests who will serve as a secondary research mentor, and a faculty member outside the student's research focus who will serve as an additional professional mentor. The student is required to meet at least once per semester with each mentor. All three committee members will be required to make contributions to the student's annual review, with the primary mentor assuming the principal role. **The composition of the student's training committee should be submitted to the Program Director for approval by the beginning of the sixth week of the student's first semester in the program, using the form that is available on the All Graduate Students Blackboard site.** For clinical students, at least one member of the training committee must be a member of the clinical faculty. If clinical students have an experimental faculty member as the primary mentor, they must also have a clinical faculty member serve in the role of clinical co-mentor.

**The proposal for the student's course of study (training proposal) is determined in collaboration with the members of the training committee. An electronic version of the training proposal form is available on Blackboard.** The form refers to the following:

- Identifying information (name of student, name of mentor and names of other faculty members on the training committee).
- A statement of the student's intended area of study, i.e., the student's emphasis area (e.g., "CAP"; "clinical psychology with a focus in health" or "neuropsychology").
- A statement of the student's career goals (e.g., academic position, clinical research position in a medical center, research position in industry).

- The schedule according to which the student will complete the department's core training requirements and requirements for the area of emphasis (e.g., experimental-CAP, neuropsychology).
- If the student is in the Clinical Training Program, the schedule according to which the student will complete the clinical specialty training requirements.
- Additional courses or training experiences that the student would like to pursue, beyond those required by the Department or the Clinical Training Program. This list of courses should be built around well-defined and clearly identifiable goals whenever possible. Note that there are formal coursework recommendations for students who are seeking to develop expertise in Neuropsychology, Health, Child Clinical, CAP and Industrial-Organizational Psychology, and students are strongly urged to incorporate the appropriate courses into their training plans. This information is available on the student Blackboard site.
- A research schedule for the student's first year in the program that explicitly describes additional research-relevant training experiences and the scholarly products that the student expects to produce in the first year.
- A set of targets for scholarly productivity throughout the student's course of study. Given our training mission, all students are expected to produce research above and beyond the thesis and dissertation projects.
- Specific skills (e.g., teaching, organizational consulting) to be acquired during the student's course of training, and methods of obtaining those skills. It is not unusual for students to take graduate level courses in divisions, colleges, or departments other than the Psychology Department if the student's aims and program indicate that such action is appropriate. In rare cases, courses ordinarily designated as undergraduate courses may be taken for graduate credit, but students should always consult with their mentor prior to registering for an undergraduate course.

The student and every member of his or her training committee must sign the proposal. **Final proposals from the training committees should be submitted to the Director of Clinical Training or Director of Experimental Training by October 31 of the first year.** Program Directors may request additional documentation and/or revisions to the proposals. The Program Directors may choose to appoint committees of departmental faculty to review the appropriateness of the training proposal. In the unlikely event that the training committee disagrees with requests for revisions by the Program Directors, a committee of departmental faculty appointed by the Department Head will review the proposal and make recommendations regarding revisions. Approved proposals are placed in the student's departmental file.

These proposals constitute one basis for evaluating a student's progress in completing the program requirements. The proposals can be updated as needed to be consistent with the student's ongoing training needs. Updates might be initiated because a course is no longer offered, because the student's career goals have changed, or to reflect changes in the membership of the training committee. It is sufficient that the student and his or her mentor agree to a change in the training plan (including the composition of the committee), subject to approval by the Program Director.

### Course Requirements

Our philosophy is that you build your training in your area of emphasis on a firm foundation in content areas of psychology, methodology, and statistics. The following courses (or appropriate waivers based

on coursework completed at another institution, as described below) are required of all doctoral students.

### **Main Content Core**

1. Core Courses (typically completed in years 1 and 2; Experimental students must take 3 of the 4 Core Courses; Clinical students must take all 4 core courses):

- Biological Bases of Behavior Across the Lifespan (PSYC 7031; typically Fall of odd calendar years)
- History and Philosophy (PSYC 7033; typically Spring of odd calendar years)
- Cognitive Psychology Across the Lifespan (PSYC 7035; typically Spring of even calendar years)
- Social and Personality Across the Lifespan (PSYC 7021; typically Fall of even calendar years)

2. Basic Statistics (typically completed in year 1)

- Graduate Statistics I (PSYC 7014; taught annually in Fall)
- Graduate Statistics II (PSYC 7015; taught annually in Spring)

3. Advanced Statistics / Methodology (at least one course). Examples include the following:

- Structural Equation Modeling/LISREL
- Multivariate Statistical Methods
- Program Evaluation and Policy Analysis

4. Professional Development

- Ethics (CITI training completed prior to First Year Fall) – In order to meet the Ethics requirement, you must complete the CITI Ethics Training Certification through the UC Institutional Review Board website; **your certificate of completion must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator by the end of Exam Week of the first semester of graduate study.** (Note that clinical students will take a full course in ethics that is in addition to this requirement.)
- Presentations Portfolio – The Presentations requirement is met by creating a portfolio according to the guidelines outlined in Appendix B and on the All Graduate Students Blackboard site. **This requirement must be completed before advancing to candidacy.**
- Grant Proposal Writing (PSYC 7051; typically taken in Fall Semester of year 2)

### **Emphasis Area Requirements**

Each student in the doctoral program is required to declare an area of emphasis and to indicate this on the training proposal as described above. The majority of our students will focus in the areas of Cognition, Action and Perception; Health; Neuropsychology; or Industrial Organizational Psychology. However, it is possible to declare other emphasis areas in collaboration with members of the training committee.

1. **All students are required to attend a 1-credit seminar, journal club, or the equivalent in their area of emphasis, each term in Years 1 and 2.** Examples include Health Seminar, Neuropsychology Journal Club, Child Seminar, Seminar in Human Learning, and Cognition, Action and Perception Seminar (PSYC 7075). Students beyond Year 2 are encouraged to participate in these activities if their schedules permit.
2. **Students are required to complete advanced specialty courses (6 semester credit hours for clinical and 4 courses for experimental students).** The faculty in emphasis areas have developed sets of “strong recommendations” that fulfill this requirement; these courses should be viewed essentially as requirements for a successful career in that area. Other areas in the department give leeway to the student and the training committee (subject to approval by the program director) in determining exactly which courses can count toward the Emphasis Area specialty course requirements. In those cases, students may even pursue interdisciplinary coursework beyond the Psychology Department if it is relevant to the student’s training and career goals. Experimental students should plan to begin taking these specialty courses in year 1, while clinical students should expect to begin taking them in year 2. The student should work closely with his or her mentor and training committee to plan appropriate Emphasis Area courses.

### **Clinical Core Requirements (for Clinical students only)**

1. Ethics I (PSYC 8002; Fall of Year 1)
2. Ethics II (PSYC 8003; Spring of Year 1)
3. Introduction to Psychotherapy (PSYC 8010; Fall of Year 1)
4. Psychopathology (PSYC 8012; Fall of Year 1)
5. Assessment: Cognition (PSYC 8014; Spring of Year 1)
6. Intervention (PSYC 8018; Fall of Year 2)
7. Diversity in Clinical Psychology (PSYC 8020; Spring of Year 2)
8. Assessment: Psychopathology (PSYC 8015; Fall of Year 2)
9. Methods, Measurement and Design (PSYC 7050; Spring of Year 2)

### **Course Requirements for Graduation with the Master’s Degree**

In order to be awarded the M.A., you must complete 30 graduate semester credit hours and achieve grades of B- or better in each of the required courses in the Main Content Core (Core Courses; Basic Statistics; Advanced Statistics; and Professional Development, as described above). Note that the Emphasis Area requirements (for all students) and the Clinical Core courses (for Clinical students only) are *not* required for the MA but must be completed prior to advancing to candidacy.

You must also successfully complete, defend, and file the final version of your master’s thesis if you did not enter with an approved thesis. You are required to be enrolled for at least 12 credits each semester until you complete the master’s degree.

### **Course Requirements for Graduation with the Doctoral Degree**



In addition to the program-specific course requirements described above, the Graduate School requires all students to complete 7 semester credit hours of Dissertation Research prior to graduation. You are not permitted to be enrolled in Dissertation Research until you have successfully advanced to doctoral candidacy (described below).

In addition to course requirements, you must also successfully complete, defend, and file the final version of your dissertation. You are required to enroll for at least 1 credit each fall semester until your doctoral degree is awarded.

### General Information about the Thesis and Dissertation

In contrast to other program requirements, the thesis and dissertation include steps that must be taken both within the department and within the Graduate School. In order for these degrees to be conferred, you will need to attend to Graduate School requirements such as registering for graduation and filing your completed document electronically according to their published deadlines. For example, *you will most likely need to register for graduation with the MA well before you defend your document.* **Please see our Blackboard site and information on the Graduate School website for the steps necessary for graduation.** The Program Coordinator will send reminders of upcoming deadlines related to graduation, but it is ultimately your responsibility to be aware of and adhere to Graduate School deadlines.

The thesis and dissertation are two of the milestones that make graduate school very different from most people's undergraduate experience. These are projects that you complete on your own (with guidance) in addition to your other responsibilities. Each project is overseen by a faculty committee that provides guidance in the development and execution of the project. When your thesis or dissertation is complete, the committee reviews the quality of your written document and your performance during an oral defense.

### Institutional Review Board Approval of Research

A very important consideration: All research involving human participants must be reviewed and approved by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) prior to the actual collection of data. The University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee must approve research involving animal subjects. If the research involves outside institutions, additional IRB reviews by each institution may be necessary. These strictures do not apply only to theses and dissertations, but to all research conducted by students and faculty affiliated with the University. Failure to abide by the IRB requirements is a serious ethical breach that may result in probation or dismissal from the program. It is important that you allow plenty of time for the University IRB to review the project prior to collecting data. (Forms are available at <http://researchcompliance.uc.edu/irb/> ) Your final thesis or dissertation document must include in the Methods section a statement that all aspects of the project have been approved by the Institutional Review Board, naming the specific IRB (e.g., University of Cincinnati; Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center) that approved the study.

### Thesis

The process of working on a thesis typically begins with the chair suggesting a problem for the student to work on, usually in the student's first year in the program. It is never too early to begin discussing thesis ideas with your mentor. At a suitable time, the student and his or her thesis chair (typically the primary mentor) will make recommendations to the Program Director about the composition of the thesis committee.

### Committee Composition

The thesis committee must include at least three full-time UC research faculty members, the majority of whom are research faculty in the Department of Psychology. That is, more than half of the committee members must be full faculty members or joint faculty members; adjunct or emeritus faculty are welcome to be on the committee, but they do not meet this criterion. It is acceptable for a committee member to be a full-time research faculty member at another academic institution, as long as the majority of members are faculty in our Department. These external faculty members are appropriate for the thesis committee if they hold doctoral degrees, have a demonstrated track record of research and scholarly accomplishments, and will make a substantial contribution to the proposed project. It is required that clinical students have at least one clinical faculty member on their thesis committee. **The composition of the thesis committee must be submitted for approval to the student's Program Director, using the form available on Blackboard.**

### **Thesis Proposal for Committee Review**

A key component at the early stages of the project involves a written thesis proposal. This proposal will often take the form of the Introduction and Methods sections of the final document. Although the thesis committee has the authority to determine what constitutes an acceptable proposal, the thesis proposal must include a descriptive title and abstract (max 300 word abstract), and the norm is that any member of the faculty should be able to read the proposal and obtain a definite and clear understanding of the proposed research.

Prior to the student's committee approving the thesis proposal, the student and committee must hold a formal proposal meeting (see below for details on the proposal meeting). The student is encouraged to disseminate a copy of the thesis proposal to the committee at least 14 calendar days prior to the date of this proposal meeting. If a student disseminates the proposal less than 14 calendar days from the proposal meeting they should not expect to receive feedback from committee members until the day of the meeting. Also, if committee members receive the proposal less than 14 calendar days prior to the proposal meeting they have the right to require that the proposal meeting be deferred.

### **Proposal Meeting**

The aim of the mandatory proposal meeting is to provide the student and student's committee members with an opportunity to discuss the proposed project, formalize the roles of committee members (e.g., reviewing and advising responsibilities over the course of the thesis/dissertation work), develop a progress timeline, and establish expectations for how the student will provide committee members with updates on thesis progress (e.g., via email or in person meetings). The student and committee chair should discuss the details of this meeting prior to scheduling the meeting with the other committee members, including whether the meeting should involve a formal oral presentation of the proposed work. At a minimum, the meeting should include the student and the full committee and involve a detailed discussion of the proposed project and whether any changes or revisions need to be made to the proposal document prior to final approval. Other faculty and students are allowed to attend if invited by the student and committee chair.

### **Proposal Approval Form**

For the thesis proposal to be approved, the student and the student's committee must complete and sign the Proposal Approval and Committee Agreement Form and submit this form to the Graduate Coordinator along with a copy of the approved proposal. The student and committee chair should use the Proposal Approval and Committee Agreement Form to formalize the roles of

committee members (e.g., reviewing and advising responsibilities over the course of the thesis/dissertation work), identify a progress timeline, and establish expectations for how the student will provide committee members with updates on thesis progress that were agreed upon during the proposal. This form can be completed and signed at or after the proposal meeting, but not prior to the proposal meeting. A signed Proposal Approval and Committee Agreement Form represents a contract among the student, the committee, and the department regarding the appropriateness of the research problem and design.

### **Proposal Abstract Dissemination to Department**

Once the student's committee has conducted the Proposal Meeting and has approved the proposal by completing and signing the Proposal Approval and Committee Agreement Form, the proposal must be submitted to the Graduate Coordinator along with a copy of the Proposal Approval and Committee Agreement Form. The Graduate Coordinator will then disseminate the proposal title and abstract to the department.

Although only the proposal title and abstract will be disseminated to the department, any faculty member has the right to request a copy of the full proposal from the Program Director. Any objections, suggestions, criticisms, or other comments from the faculty concerning the proposed project must be submitted to the chair of the student's thesis committee. The chair will forward such comments to the student and the student's committee (with a copy to the Program Director). However, it is at the discretion of the thesis committee as to whether any action should be taken in order to address the concerns.

**The deadline for thesis proposal abstracts to be circulated is March 15 of the second year of study.**

### **Post-Approval Revisions and Proposal Re-Approval**

By signing the Proposal Approval and Committee Agreement Form, the student has agreed to conduct the research outlined in the approved proposal to the best of his or her ability and to consult with his or her committee members prior to deviating from the proposed work. If the proposed work needs to be changed or altered in significant way due to unforeseen circumstances or methodological concerns, the student **MUST** seek re-approval of the proposed project by his or her committee. The student is expected to discuss **ANY** and **ALL** changes or alterations to the proposed work with their committee chair (no matter how minor they are perceived to be by the student) to determine whether they are significant enough to require re-approval from the entire committee. If the student and committee chair decide that re-approval is required, a new proposal and Proposal Approval and Committee Agreement form should be completed and submitted to the Graduate Coordinator. A secondary proposal meeting can be held but is not required for re-approval.

### **Document Preparation**

The final thesis document must conform to the rules of the Graduate School, which are available on their website. The document must also conform to the guidelines of the most recent version of the

APA Publication Manual, although in situations where the Graduate School requirements conflict with APA Style, the Graduate School rules should be followed.

The Department encourages students to write theses of a length that facilitates publication of the research in a format suitable to the nature of the project (journal article, book, monograph, etc.). Decisions about thesis and dissertation length are the prerogative of the student's advisor and committee. The document consequently may be of journal article length or longer, as the advisor and committee decide. In all cases, the overriding concern should be with the scholarly quality of the document, and the student and committee should bear this in mind.

Typically, students will complete several drafts of the thesis document prior to submitting the final version to the committee for formal evaluation at the oral defense. The student's advisor is primarily responsible for advising the student with regard to document preparation and content. This includes providing verbal or written feedback on the different sections of the document (e.g., abstract, introduction, methods, results, discussion sections/chapters) if requested by the student.

Students are strongly encouraged to engage the full committee in the thesis review process and request non-chair committee members to provide feedback on analysis, content, and conclusions. As noted above, the student and committee chair are strongly encouraged to formalize reviewing expectations with committee members at the time of the thesis proposal using the Proposal Approval and Committee Agreement Form.

The primary advisor or other committee members are expected to work closely with the student on document preparation but are not required to provide limitless feedback. Accordingly, in the rare event that a student fails to make sufficient progress in revising the thesis document or does not attempt to adequately address the comments or concerns provided by committee members, the student's advisor and committee members do have the right to end the draft review process and provide a final set of suggested changes and revisions to the student.

Very rarely, a student will disagree with the advisor or one or more of the committee members as to the readiness of the document for defense. If a student insists upon the right to a defense before the committee chair or committee believes the document is ready, that student does have the right to due process (i.e., to hold a defense) but exercises this right to schedule a thesis/dissertation defense at some risk.

### **Scheduling the Defense Date**

The student and committee members should collectively agree on a date for the formal (oral) defense. Students and committee members are encouraged to schedule a date far enough in advance so that both the student and the committee members have a reasonable amount of time to prepare for the defense. Although it is at the discretion of the student and the student's committee what this length of time should be, the document submission and abstract dissemination recommendations and restrictions outlined below should be considered when deciding on a date.

### **Submission of Document for Defense**

Committee members have 14 calendar days to provide students with comments on the thesis document submitted for formal evaluation at the thesis defense. Accordingly, students should submit this document to committee members well in advance of the defense if they wish to receive comments prior to the day of the defense. Committee members are not required to provide comments on a second version of the document submitted for formal evaluation prior to the defense. If a student submits the

thesis document for formal evaluation less than 14 calendar days from the day of the scheduled defense they should not expect to receive feedback from committee members until the day of the defense. If committee members receive the thesis document submitted for formal evaluation at the defense less than 14 calendar days prior to the defense they also have the right to demand that the defense be deferred.

### **Abstract of Thesis for Departmental Distribution**

The Graduate School requires that completed thesis documents include an abstract of not more than 300 words. The student must provide the Graduate Coordinator with an electronic copy of the abstract, the list of committee members, and notification of the scheduled defense at least 10 calendar days in advance of the selected date. The Graduate Coordinator will then circulate the abstract to the department by email, together with the defense date.

### **Defense**

Oral defenses of master's theses are, traditionally, open only to faculty and graduate students. The Department faculty has voted to specifically prohibit parents and family friends from attending; other students in the Department may attend with the permission of the student and thesis chair. Many departments have a tradition whereby the student who is defending a thesis will provide food or beverages to the faculty on their committees. As much as we appreciate your "catering" efforts, we would like to discourage you from providing food at your defense. Your time and energy are best spent in preparing for an excellent presentation.

The defense of the thesis will include a short but formal presentation by the student about the research (20 to 30 minutes is the recommended length). Following that, members of the thesis committee may question the candidate. The chair of the thesis committee is responsible for moderating the defense. The chair will ordinarily begin the defense by reviewing the procedures to be followed, including suggesting an order in which members of the evaluation committee will question the candidate.

After all questioning has been completed, the candidate and anyone else present who is not a member of the evaluation committee will leave the room so the committee may deliberate. The examining committee has two decisions to make at this time.

**1. Determination that the written document is acceptable.** The evaluation committee may require any changes in the writing of the thesis or treatment of the data that its members judge necessary to bring the thesis to acceptable standards for final filing with the Graduate School. The thesis, with revisions, must be approved by a majority of the members of the examining committee.

**2. Determination that the defense of the document is acceptable.** The defense must be approved by a majority of the members of the examining committee. In those cases where the evaluation committee deems the defense of the document to have been unsatisfactory, the student may be permitted to defend the thesis a second and final time.

**Each member of the committee will fill out a form that evaluates the student's performance on the defense and the quality of the document, which will be retained in the student's permanent file.** Copies of these forms, as well as forms required by the Graduate School, are available on Blackboard or from the Graduate Coordinator.

**Students are required to complete all master's degree requirements (coursework, thesis, filing document with the Graduate School) in time to graduate with the MA in Spring of Year 3.** Note that the filing deadline in order to graduate in Spring will vary slightly from year to year. All deadlines related to graduation appear on the Graduate School website.

## Major Qualifying Examinations

After students successfully complete the master's degree requirements, they may begin work on their major qualifying examinations (MQE). **The MQE as well as any other outstanding course or portfolio requirements must be completed in time for students to advance to doctoral candidacy by the first day of Fall Semester in the fifth year of training.**

### Written Major Qualifying Examination

All students are required to pass a written major qualifying examination (MQE) designed and administered by their MQE committee. Typically it is the case that a student taking his or her MQE is in good standing, has completed the thesis, has met the residency requirement (see below), and has successfully completed all course requirements. In such cases, the MQE is the final requirement to be completed prior to achieving candidacy for the doctorate.

***There is a specific written MQE process required for clinical students. See the student Blackboard site for these requirements.***

The purpose of the MQE is to contribute to and assess the breadth and/or depth of the student's knowledge in his or her area of study in psychology. The following are general guidelines, applicable to all graduate students. Any more specialized guidelines are available on the All Graduate Students Blackboard site.

### **Committee Composition**

The MQE committee should consist of three full-time UC faculty members, at least two of whom are Department faculty (i.e., faculty members who work full-time in our Department or who have joint appointments; adjunct faculty do not meet this criterion).

The appropriate review committee must approve the MQE committee (i.e., the clinical faculty in the case of a clinical student or the appointed committee of general faculty members in the case of non-clinical students). The clinical program strongly encourages clinical students to have an MQE committee chaired by a member of the clinical faculty, and exceptions to this norm should be discussed with the Program Director.

### **Written MQE Proposal**

The student will prepare a brief, one-page proposal for the MQE examination for approval by the MQE committee. This form is available on the student Blackboard site. The student and committee jointly plan and agree upon content coverage, preparation procedures, and methods of assessment (within the guidelines specified by the Department). Content coverage involves breadth and/or depth within one's specialized field. MQE procedures will—at a minimum—assess writing, critical thinking, knowledge of content, and knowledge of research methods. The proposal should outline the committee composition, what the scope of the project is, and the nature of evaluation. The approved proposal should be given to the Program Director for review.

## **Evaluation Process**

**Students are expected to complete the MQE within one year of submitting the proposal or by the first day of the Fall Semester of the fifth year of study, whichever comes earlier.** This deadline refers to *completing* the exam requirement. Students are advised to plan their activities so that any required revisions or second attempts at the exam will be finished by the beginning of the fifth year of study. Students not attaining candidacy within the prescribed time may lose the status of good academic standing, which could contribute to termination of their training.

The MQE is an exam and, thus, is a project that is carried out independently by the student. Other than planning the project and evaluating the final product, faculty involvement is ordinarily limited to helping the student interpret the requirements of the examination. If the nature of the examination project is such that faculty input would be appropriate, the nature and extent of this input should be mentioned in the one-page proposal. It is very important that students and committees discuss the nature of the committee involvement very early in the process to avoid confusion about the committee's role and the nature of the examination.

The student's mentor must inform the student and the Program Director in writing of the outcome of the MQE no later than three weeks after its completion.

Students are given one opportunity to redo their MQE if the initial attempt is deemed inadequate. A second failure will be cause for dismissal from the program. The student's committee may specify that only parts of the exam need to be redone.

### Clinical Major Qualifying Examination

In addition to the Written MQE, clinical students must complete a Clinical MQE, which involves a thorough examination of a clinical case. **Clinical students must complete *both* the Written and the Clinical MQE (in any order) by the first day of the Fall Semester of the fifth year of study.**

### **Committee Composition**

The Clinical MQE committee must include at least 3 individuals, at least two of whom are members of the Clinical Faculty. Typically, a Clinical Faculty member serves as chair of the committee and the clinical supervisor of the case being presented is invited to be a committee member. Prior to beginning the examination, the student must request that the composition of the Clinical MQE committee be approved by the Director of Clinical Training, using the form available on the student Blackboard site.

### **Case Selection**

The Clinical MQE will consist of 1) a written report on a psychological treatment case *or* assessment case and 2) an oral defense of the case presentation. Clinical students often choose for their Clinical MQE a case that they worked on during one of their placements. Before selecting a given case for the Clinical MQE, it is imperative that students obtain the permission of the individual who supervised their clinical work with that client and that they follow any procedures that the placement agency may have relevant to the use of cases for teaching (e.g., some agencies may require that the client sign a release of information specific to this purpose). In addition, students must comply with the APA Ethical Principles and HIPAA requirements in taking appropriate steps to conceal protected health information.

### **Preparation of Written Document**

The written document is to be prepared independently by the student; that is, the committee members are not to provide feedback on draft documents the way they do for a thesis or dissertation. It is, however, permissible for the student to ask questions of the committee in order to clarify the examination requirements or the intended scope of the document. The student should distribute the completed document to the examination committee at least 10 days prior to the scheduled defense date. The following components must be included in the written document (approximately 15-20 pages without references). Depending on the specifics of the case the student may choose to present the information in an order different from the outline below, but in all cases every listed topic must be covered.

- A. If a treatment case is being presented, the document must include the following contents/sections: 1) referral question, 2) history of presenting problem; 3) other relevant histories (e.g., psychiatric, substance use, developmental, medical, social, educational, and employment); 4) theoretical and empirical information related to the presenting problem, including a review of the most relevant literature; 5) case conceptualization; 6) course and outcome of treatment; 7) cultural considerations and other aspects of individual differences that impact the treatment; 8) legal and ethical considerations; 9) description of how assessment was integrated into the treatment *or* discussion of which specific tests or assessment approaches might have provided valuable information were they administered; 10) student's reflections on the efficacy of the treatment and on lessons learned from this case.
  
- B. If an assessment case is being presented, the document must include the following contents/sections: 1) referral question and purpose of evaluation; 2) history of presenting problem; 3) other relevant histories (e.g., psychiatric, substance use, developmental, medical, social, educational, and employment); 4) theoretical and empirical information related to the presenting problem, including a review of the most relevant literature; 5) case conceptualization; 6) brief description of tests administered, including rationale for test selection and psychometric properties of the tests administered; 7) results of assessment, including numeric scores; 8) cultural considerations and other aspects of individual differences that impact the treatment; 9) legal and ethical considerations; 10) summary and recommendations; 11) student's reflections on the efficacy of the evaluation and on lessons learned from this case; 12) discussion of which psychotherapeutic interventions are recommended for this patient *or* which interventions might provide valuable to clients with similar presenting problems.

### **Oral Examination**

At the oral exam (approximately 1-1.5 hours), the student will give a formal presentation of the treatment/assessment case (20 minutes) and answer questions directly and indirectly related to the case. The student may choose (with the permission of the agency at which the patient was seen) to include audio or videotape sample(s) of clinical material during the oral presentation.

The committee members then vote to pass or fail the student's performance (written and oral presentations combined), with a majority vote required to pass. To receive a passing grade on the Clinical MQE, the student must demonstrate *all* of the following competencies at levels appropriate for students entering advanced doctoral training: 1) understanding of legal and ethical principles, 2) diagnostic and assessment skills, 3) psychotherapy skills, 4) integration of science and practice, and 5) consideration of diversity and individual differences. **Students are permitted two attempts to pass the Clinical MQE. Failure to pass the examination after two attempts will be grounds for dismissal from the training program.**



The committee chair is responsible for communicating the outcome of the defense to the Director of Clinical Training. The appropriate form is available on Blackboard or from the Graduate Program Coordinator. A copy of the final written case presentation should also be sent to the Graduate Coordinator.

## Dissertation

After successfully completing all required courses, the thesis, and the MQE(s), students may begin work on the dissertation. Candidates for the Ph.D. must produce a dissertation representing a report on an original, scholarly research effort. The Graduate School website contains information concerning the required style and form of doctoral dissertations. The Department's regulations governing the preparation, distribution and approval of a proposal, the proposal meeting, the preparation of the dissertation document, the dissemination of the proposal abstract and, later, the dissertation abstract, and the dissemination of the dissertation document for formal evaluation by the committee at the defense are the same as those described above for the master's thesis.

The major differences between the processes for the master's thesis and the doctoral dissertation are as follows:

### Committee Composition

Whereas one of the departmental Program Directors appoints the thesis committee, the Graduate School appoints the dissertation committee, based upon the recommendation of the Program Director. Please see the Graduate Coordinator for the appropriate form on which to request that the Program Director and the Graduate School approve your committee.

The dissertation committee must contain a minimum of three full-time research-active faculty members from the University of Cincinnati, and in all cases the majority of the committee members (more than half) must be full-time research-active faculty members in the Department of Psychology. In other words, a committee of three is sufficient for the dissertation, as long as two of the three members come from Psychology. (This number is sufficient to meet the Graduate School committee requirements also.) Adjunct or emeritus faculty are welcome to be on your committee, but they do not meet this criterion. If the student is in the clinical training program, at least one member of the dissertation committee must be a member of the Clinical Faculty. Larger committees are required if you choose to include persons who do not hold faculty rank in the Department of Psychology or at the University of Cincinnati. These individuals are appropriate committee members if they hold doctoral degrees, have a demonstrated track record of research and scholarly accomplishments, and will make a substantial contribution to the proposed project. However, the composition of the Committee should reflect the fact that your degree will be from the Psychology Department at the University of Cincinnati.

Either the chair of this committee or two other of these committee members must hold membership on the All-University Graduate Faculty.

### Defense

The dissertation oral examination (defense) must be announced on the Graduate School (not the departmental) website and is open to anyone from the academic community. Information about how to announce your defense is available on the Graduate School website or from the Graduate Program Coordinator. In addition, students are required to provide the Graduate Coordinator with information

about the date and time of their dissertation defense at least ten *business* days prior to the event, so that an announcement can be made to departmental students and faculty.

Although Graduate School rules permit guests from outside the academic community to attend Ph.D. oral exams, given that this is a scholarly presentation, the Department strongly discourages the presence of family members and friends who are not fellow students. Psychology Department faculty who are not members of the evaluation committee may be present and may participate in discussions during the committee's evaluation process if they wish, but they cannot vote on the acceptability of the dissertation or of the student's oral defense. Other individuals from the academic community who might be present but who are not official members of the evaluation committee may ask questions at oral presentations but do not enter into, nor are they to be present during, the discussion and vote about the student's performance.

Here are some other key aspects of the dissertation defense:

- Whereas the candidate's presentation at the thesis defense should ordinarily be about 20 to 30 minutes in length, the presentation at a dissertation defense may be more lengthy (i.e., 30 to 40 minutes).
- *The approval of a dissertation and its defense requires an affirmative vote of a two-thirds majority of the members of the evaluation committee.*

Each member of the committee will fill out a form that evaluates the student's performance on (1) the oral defense and (2) the quality of the document, which will be retained in the student's permanent file. Copies of these forms are available from the Graduate Program Coordinator and on the student Blackboard site.

The student who has successfully passed the dissertation defense must comply with the regulations of the Graduate School regarding publication of the dissertation. Copies of these rules are in the University Graduate Handbook.

### Academic Progress Standards

The Graduate Division at UC sets minimum requirements for academic performance, but the Psychology Department requirements, which must be met by all students in the program, are slightly more stringent and supersede the Graduate Division's requirements. Students must earn a grade of B- or better in all courses required by the Department for all graduate students, and clinical students must earn a grade of B- or better in all courses required by the clinical program. In the event that you receive a grade below B- in a required course, you must register to repeat that course for a new grade. According to Graduate School guidelines, it is not permissible for faculty to allow you to repeat a course and then change the grade that you earned for the semester in which you first registered; rather, your transcript should reflect both times that you registered for the course and both grades that you earned. The clinical faculty has ruled that receiving one F or two C's across all courses constitutes grounds for probation within the clinical program and that two F's or three C's constitute grounds for dismissal.

**You should be aware that unresolved grades of Incomplete are automatically converted to F's after approximately one year.** This is a university policy and we are unable to intervene.

Graduate students also are expected to show adequate academic progress at all times. In addition to failing to meet the coursework requirements described in the previous paragraph, examples of inadequate academic progress include, but are not limited to, inordinately slow progress toward goals

such as the major qualifying examination, thesis, or dissertation. Inadequate academic progress may constitute grounds for academic probation or dismissal.

## Waivers of Program Requirements

### Coursework

You may be able to waive certain courses that you have taken previously at other institutions. Your training proposal should include the training committee's recommendations as to which, if any, departmental requirements you may potentially be exempted from based on previous graduate-level course work. Decisions about accepting a specific course from another institution as satisfying a departmental requirement should ordinarily be made by the faculty member who teaches the course at UC, based on a review of your prior course syllabus and demonstration of your knowledge (in a one-on-one discussion or an exam). The departmental form for course waivers is available from the Psychology All Graduate Students Blackboard site or the Graduate Coordinator. If the student disagrees with the faculty member's decision, the Program Director should be consulted in an effort to resolve the situation.

The Clinical Faculty has voted that students will not be permitted to waive clinical core courses based on prior training. Exceptions to this rule may be granted for students who enter our program having successfully completed specific clinical core courses in APA-accredited doctoral programs at other institutions. Decisions about these exceptions will be made by 1) discussion by the entire Clinical Faculty and 2) a decision by the faculty member who teaches the corresponding course in our program that content of the prior course is comparable to our own and that the student is able to demonstrate the knowledge and skills taught in our course.

### Master's Thesis

In the event that the student has completed an empirical master's thesis at another institution and wishes it to be accepted in lieu of the UC master's thesis requirement, the student's mentor will review the document and make a recommendation to the Program Director about whether it should be accepted. A student whose thesis is accepted will not receive a master's degree from the University of Cincinnati. Furthermore, simply having the thesis accepted does not mean that the student is automatically exempted from all of the courses required for a master's degree from UC. Course exemptions are made on a course-by-course basis, independent of whether the student has had the thesis accepted.

## Evaluation Procedures

### Annual Evaluations

Student evaluations will take place every year according to the following plan. **By August 1, the mentor will be responsible for forwarding a student evaluation to the Program Director.** These evaluations will be developed with student involvement and include a review of the student's transcript and a summary of the extent to which research and other training goals have been accomplished. Students must also submit a current curriculum vitae (CV). At a minimum, this CV must include information about the student's professional memberships, publications, presentations, teaching, grants, and awards during the preceding academic year.

The mentor, with the help of the student and training committee, must solicit input from anyone who supervised the student in a teaching, research, or clinical placement throughout the year. **Blank annual evaluation forms are available on Blackboard and are aligned with the competencies**

**that appear in Appendix A.** The annual evaluation includes a clear description of goals for the next academic year. If the student is found to be performing below minimal levels of achievement in any area of training, the annual evaluation will include a clear remedial plan. If a clinical student's primary mentor is a member of the experimental faculty, the annual evaluation must be signed also by his or her clinical mentor, to indicate that the student's progress and goals for the upcoming year within the clinical program have been reviewed.

### Personal and Emotional Competency

The faculty's responsibility for training psychologists includes the need to attend to the personal and emotional competencies of the students. When, in the judgment of the faculty, a student exhibits behavior that interferes with the student's performance in program-related duties as a teacher, clinical practitioner, or researcher, the faculty may recommend that the student to take a leave of absence or, if the situation is more serious, discontinue the student's training permanently. While evidence provided by other professionals will be germane to such decisions, the faculty reserves for itself the sole responsibility for determining a student's fitness for continuation in the program.

Faculty have the professional responsibility to monitor areas of student development including, but not restricted to, interpersonal skills, work with clients, personal limitations that potentially interfere with competent performance in the clinical setting or in teaching or other obligations (e.g., poor appreciation of one's impact on others or an inability to respond constructively to feedback in supervision). In the case of clinical students, personal and emotional competencies are particularly important because of the impact that student impairment may have on the welfare of clients. In an extreme situation, should the faculty become concerned that a student's behavior is potentially seriously damaging to clients or other individuals (either because of direct observation by the faculty or reports from other of the student's supervisors), the faculty has the right to immediately suspend that student's clinical work while his or her performance is being reviewed.

### Evaluation of Readiness to Continue Beyond the MA

After the master's thesis has been completed, the training committee must address the issue of whether the student should be permitted to continue in the doctoral program. Passing required courses and producing and defending an acceptable thesis are necessary requirements for a student to continue toward the Ph.D. degree, *but these are not necessarily sufficient for continuation*. The department seeks excellence from its students; completion of the thesis provides the faculty with the opportunity to make an assessment of whether there is sufficient promise of excellence to warrant continuation in the doctoral program. The student's training committee must make a recommendation about whether the student should be allowed to continue in the program within two weeks of the time that a student has successfully defended the thesis and completed the course requirements for the Master's degree. The chair of the training committee should communicate this recommendation in writing to the appropriate Program Director on the provided form, who will be responsible for making a final decision (in collaboration with other faculty, when appropriate). The required form is available on Blackboard or from the Graduate Coordinator.

### Evaluation of Readiness to Advance to Doctoral Candidacy

Following completion of all coursework (with the exception of dissertation research) and the qualifying examinations, the Program Director, together with the student's mentor and training committee if necessary, makes a recommendation to the Graduate School about the student's readiness to advance to doctoral candidacy (i.e., to initiate the dissertation and the final stage of work towards the doctoral degree). It is extremely unusual for students not to be advanced to candidacy; grounds for such a decision would include repeated failure of the qualifying examinations or other serious

performance concerns about which the student has been notified in writing and been unable to remediate successfully.

## Additional Requirements for the Clinical Training Program

Students in the Clinical Training Program must complete all of the general requirements that are outlined above. In addition to these requirements, clinical students must complete the following experiences and adhere to the guidelines that are described below. Please note that certain of the clinical requirements, such as the Clinical Major Qualifying Examination and policies about examination committee membership, have been discussed previously.

### Clinical Placements

Clinical students in each of their first two years of the program complete 10-hour per week placements, which are unpaid clinical experiences designed to provide graduated training in basic interviewing and intervention skills. First year clinical students will be placed in the departmental clinical for placement, although exceptions are occasionally made. Students should register for Clinical Psychology Practicum (PSYC 8090) during Spring semester of Year 1.

Placements in Years 2 and above may begin at slightly varying times of year, depending on the specific training site. Our program requires that all students are available to begin placement on July 1, unless something different has been arranged by the placement site. In other words, it is expected that vacations or other optional activities will not be scheduled in conflict with a July 1 start date.

In the Spring of the first year, the Director of Clinical Training will provide all clinical students with information about placements that will be available for the subsequent year. This list changes somewhat from year to year but includes opportunities to provide services to both adults and children under the supervision of a licensed clinical psychologist. The Director of Clinical Training will work with the students and their mentors to facilitate placement of students at these agencies, or to create new opportunities as appropriate. Historically, there has not been any difficulty in finding suitable placement sites for our clinical students. The Director of Clinical Training must approve each student's choice of placement sites. During each semester of placement, students should be registered for at least one credit of Clinical Practicum (PSYC 8090) or, if more appropriate, the Neuropsychology Practicum (PSYC 9065).

In years three and above, clinical students complete paid 20-hour per week placements. It is important to understand that, traditionally, funding in the first two years comes from the University in the form of a teaching or research assistantship but that in years three and later it comes directly from the community placement agency that is serving as the student's employer. Each Spring, there is an annual Placement Fair at which students can learn about the broad variety of placements that are available to them for the coming year. Both students and agencies then conduct interviews and provide ranked choices to the Director of Clinical Training. Placements are decided by a match that is made by the Director of Clinical Training, who consults with members of the Clinical Faculty as necessary. Preference in placement assignments will be given to students who will be in their fourth year at the time that the placement begins. Students then are responsible for meeting with their supervisors for the next year and ensuring that a written contract is completed that details the job responsibilities, supervision plan, and pay scale. Templates for these contracts will be made available to students once the match is finalized. The placement agencies are required to complete semi-annual written evaluations of students' performance, and will be contacted by telephone during the year for a verbal

report about student progress. Failure to qualify for or accept such a placement when training opportunities are available may be judged as a failure to maintain good academic standing.

Clinical students are required to complete the clinical practica in years one and two and to participate in the placement match in years three and four. We occasionally have students who present compelling reasons to make clinical training arrangements that either differ from this standard schedule (e.g., completing a placement in year 2); involve work at agencies with which we have not collaborated in the past; are to be negotiated outside of the standard placement match; or involve more limited clinical work within the doctoral program. Students with these or similar special circumstances with regard to clinical practica and placements must petition the Clinical Faculty in writing for permission to make these arrangements. The petition must include a detailed plan for where the clinical experience will occur, how many hours it will require, the name and credentials of the proposed supervisor(s), and for new sites a description of the facility. In order to facilitate our effective collaboration with placement sites in the community, these petitions must be received prior to the meeting of the Clinical Faculty that is scheduled for February of the year in which the match will occur (i.e., February of the academic year prior to that in which the proposed clinical experience is to be completed). Once students have, with the permission of the Director of Clinical Training, accepted a clinical practicum or been matched to a community placement, they will be expected to complete these training experiences. In the rare instances in which issues arise about fulfilling an obligation to a community agency, the student should direct his or her concerns to the Director of Clinical Training, who will work with the student and/or the agency to help resolve the difficulty.

In certain cases, students who enter the program with advanced standing or who have external support (e.g., grant support) in years three and above may, with the permission of the Clinical Faculty, choose to complete fewer clinical contact hours than what is described above.

### Doctoral Internship

Students in the clinical program are required to complete an APA-accredited doctoral internship prior to receiving the doctorate. The internship is obtained through the computerized Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers (APPIC) match, with students applying in the fall and winter for experiences that begin the summer or fall of the following academic year. Applying and interviewing for internships is a time-consuming process that will require the student to work closely with his or her mentor and with the Director of Clinical Training. The Director of Clinical Training holds mandatory meetings each Summer and Fall that are designed to help the students applying in that year to understand the match process, select appropriate internship sites, prepare their APPIC applications, interview for positions, and rank order their choices of sites.

Because of the imbalance between the number of applicants nationally and the number of APA-accredited internship slots available, the Clinical Faculty has annually reevaluated the standing policy of requiring all students to obtain APA-approved internships in order to complete the doctorate. The program will continue to require the completion of an APA-approved internship for the following primary reasons: 1) in the absence of an APA-approved internship, graduates of our program would not be license-eligible in certain states and would be permanently ineligible for any federal employment, including positions in the VA system; 2) by ranking both approved and non-approved sites, students may be matched to a non-approved internship when they were in fact competitive for approved slots; and 3) training quality is known to be acceptable only for internships that are APA approved; 4) over the past 15 years or longer, we have never had an individual student fail to match for an APA-approved internship in two consecutive years. Despite these considerations, the Clinical Faculty does appreciate that presently we are facing a national internship imbalance and also that we may have certain students whose plans may not necessitate an APA-approved internships. Therefore, students who find

themselves in extenuating circumstances and who have already been unable to obtain an APA-approved internship in the first portion of the internship match (Match I) for their *second* application year may petition the Clinical Faculty for permission to apply to APPIC-approved (rather than APA-approved) internships. These petitions will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and approval to apply for this type of internship is expected to be granted only rarely.

During the internship, the Director of Clinical Training will receive a mid-year evaluation and a final evaluation from the internship training site. The final evaluation must document that the student has successfully completed the training experience. Until this final letter has been received, the Program Director will not certify that the student has completed the requirements for the Ph.D.

The APPIC application will require you to provide detailed information about your clinical training experience, including counts of the number of therapy hours you have provided (e.g., tabulating group therapy, marital therapy, and individual therapy separately), the amount of supervision you have received, the number and types of assessment instruments you have administered, and the demographic characteristics and presenting problems of clients you have treated. It is mandatory that, beginning in your first year in the program, you keep careful track of your clinical hours. You should refer to the APPIC website ([www.appic.org](http://www.appic.org)) for information about which variables are important to track. It is not possible to reconstruct these records retrospectively.

The Clinical Faculty strongly believe that it is important for students to make every effort to complete their dissertation work before they begin internship, because it is common for even excellent students to have difficulty finishing their degree requirements once they leave the campus and begin a full-time internship. One portion of the APPIC application is a required statement that the Clinical Faculty endorses the student's application for internship. In order to enhance our students' chances of completing the dissertation prior to internship, the Clinical Faculty has voted to require substantial progress on the dissertation before they will endorse the student's application. Specifically, prior to the final Clinical Faculty Meeting of the academic year (which is generally held in April), the student must submit to the Director of Clinical Training a written summary of the status of his or her degree requirements and dissertation. At a minimum, in order to be approved to apply for internship, the student must have advanced to candidacy, distributed the dissertation proposal abstract to the faculty, and submitted a feasible timeline signed by the mentor that demonstrates how the dissertation work will be completed prior to the beginning of internship the following year.

## Residency Expectations for Clinical Students

The Doctoral Training Program in Clinical Psychology is a year-round training program. Students are expected to be available for their assistantships, coursework, and work in their mentors' research laboratories during periods when classes are in session and also over the summer, with vacation time and other time off discussed in advance with mentors and other supervisors.

The program expectation is that students are on-site until they begin internship. This ensures optimal progress through the program, professional development, and depth of training. The program expectation is that students are on-site until they begin internship. This ensures optimal progress through the program, professional development, and depth of training. Occasionally, students may have professional or personal reasons for which they want to complete their 5th or later year of training off-site. In the case of a dire emergency, the DCT and Clinical Faculty will of course work with students to accommodate individual needs. Relocation for matters of personal preference can only be considered under certain circumstances. Specifically:

1. The student must be in Year 4 or later. The UC Graduate School requires doctoral students to be in residency full-time for a minimum of 3 consecutive years prior to the doctorate being awarded. This requirement is non-negotiable.
2. The student must have advanced to candidacy prior to relocating (except in unusual circumstances, such as moving to take advantage of a specific training opportunity that is program-approved)

In addition to meeting these requirements, a formal request to complete the remainder of the degree requirements off site must be made to the Clinical Faculty by January of the academic year prior to the planned move. This request should include the following information:

1. Reason for the request
2. Plan for completing any remaining clinical and research requirements
3. Description of how the student is demonstrating professional responsibility by working to minimize the negative impact of the planned move on those to whom they may have obligations (e.g., obligations to assist with data collection for a lab project or supervision of undergraduate thesis students).
4. Documentation that the students has or will have advanced to candidacy before leaving the area

The Clinical Faculty will then evaluate the request to determine whether the student has demonstrated acquisition of each required program competency and/or has developed a clear and specific plan to work under the direct supervision of a qualified professional to attain any remaining skills necessary to achieve program competencies and will be able to make reasonable progress on the dissertation from outside the area. Students who are not in good standing will not be approved to leave prior to internship start. Students should be aware that if they choose to leave the local area prior to internship they might not receive tuition remission.

The student is encouraged to speak to his or her mentor as soon as possible if an early departure from the department is being considered. This advanced notice will help to minimize the potential negative impacts of early departure.

## Licensure

In designing their training plans, clinical students are advised to research the licensure requirements in states in which they plan to seek licensure after completing the doctorate. Each state has its own specific course requirements, which may or may not map precisely onto the structure of our required curriculum. (It is not possible to design a single curriculum that meets the requirements for all of the 50 states.) Although some states are rather lenient about coursework, others are extremely rigid. For example, some states may require that you have a specific number of credit hours of classroom training on a particular topic, or that you attend a course that has a particular title. It is often much easier to incorporate these requirements into your graduate training than to seek them out after graduation. Therefore, if you know in advance where you will ultimately seek employment, you are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the guidelines in those states and to discuss any areas of possible discrepancy with your mentor or the DCT.

## Student Discipline Procedures in the Clinical Training Program

The vast majority of our students are able to fulfill the program requirements and guidelines without difficulty. The Clinical Faculty has adopted the following procedures in order to guide the decision-making in those unusual situations in which there are concerns about a student's performance.



Within the clinical program, the Director of Clinical Training will monitor each student's academic progress, in conjunction with the student's mentor. The DCT may write cautionary notes to students who are demonstrating borderline academic progress or may place students on probation if they fail to meet the academic performance standards outlined above. Each of these steps is to be taken in collaboration with the student's mentor, who will be copied on all correspondence between the DCT and the student. Should a student be placed on probation, the letter notifying the student of this status will state clearly the reason for the probation, the duration of probation, and any specific remedial steps that the student must accomplish as a condition of the probation. If a clinical student has serious academic deficiencies that may warrant stronger corrective action than probation, the Director of Clinical Training will first provide the student and his or her mentor the opportunity to present relevant information and then will bring the situation to the attention of the Clinical Faculty, who will vote on the student's suitability for continued training and develop a remedial plan if that is deemed appropriate.

Violations of the Student Code of Conduct will be handled in accordance with published University policies. In addition, the faculty is permitted to place additional sanctions on the student within the doctoral program. For example, a student who commits plagiarism on an exam may potentially receive a failing grade for that course and be reported to the Dean's office; in addition, the Clinical Faculty may vote to place this student on probation within the program or to take more serious action such as imposing a required leave of absence or expulsion. Similarly, behavior that is not in compliance with the law or the APA Ethical Principles, or behavior that leads to serious concern about the student's personal and emotional competency, may result in disciplinary action within the doctoral program. Should one of these unusual situations occur, the DCT would first meet with the student, the mentor, and other relevant parties (e.g., course instructor if difficulty occurred within a classroom setting) to clarify the circumstances and to allow the student to present his or her perspective. The Clinical Faculty would then vote on the dispensation of the case.

All decisions that are to be made by a vote of the Clinical Faculty require the participation of at least half of the Clinical Faculty members and must be decided by majority vote of those participants. The Clinical Faculty has ruled that it is permissible for individuals to vote by e-mail if they cannot attend a meeting. If the student requests to do so, he or she will be permitted to make a written or oral statement to the Clinical Faculty prior to that vote.

With regard to all decisions of the training committee and the departmental review committees, students have the right to appeal. Students may make an appeal to the Program Director, and may request that he or she appoint a review committee of program faculty (which the Program Director appoints on an ad hoc basis; the appeals committee will consist of four members of either the clinical or general training faculties who have not otherwise been involved directly in decision-making about the student). A student who is dissatisfied with the final outcome of the above process is advised to discuss the issues with the Department Head and to consider possibly filing a formal grievance (see the University Graduate Handbook for complete grievance policies).

### Background Checks for Clinical Psychology Students

In order to complete the training program in clinical psychology, students are required to participate in external practica, placements, and internships. Clinical psychologists and trainees should expect to be required to complete background checks in certain placement sites (e.g., when working with children, when working at federal agencies) and when applying for internship, for licensure as a psychologist, and for privileges to treat or admit patients in hospital settings. The following are samples of the types of questions you should expect to be asked on these background checks: Has disciplinary action, in writing, ever been taken against you by a supervisor, educational or training institution, health care institution, professional association, or licensing / certification board? Have you ever been suspended,

terminated, or asked to resign by a training program, practicum site, or employer? Have you ever been convicted of an offense against the law other than a minor traffic violation? (A DUI is not considered to be a minor traffic violation.) Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

If you will need to answer “yes” to any of these questions, it is possible that you will not qualify for certain clinical training experiences. In addition, it is important to understand that, when you apply for the required APA-approved internship, you will need to fill out a form that asks specifically about prior disciplinary action and prior legal convictions, and you will need to discuss your responses on this form with the Director of Clinical Training. Because legal convictions may have important implications for your clinical placements, your success in the internship match, and your eventual licensure, we strongly encourage you to discuss with the Director of Clinical Training as soon as possible any such incidents that have occurred prior to or during your training. While we do not require this type of disclosure prior to your filling out the paperwork for internship, sharing this information with the Director of Clinical Training will allow him or her to more effectively provide you with guidance about whether a conviction has negative implications for your professional development and about how to proceed in strengthening your applications for subsequent clinical experiences.

## Administrative Policies and Timelines

### Changing Mentors

It is important to emphasize that we believe strongly in the mentor model: it is an effective way to provide research and professional training. In addition, being without a mentor for any amount of time is likely to slow your progress through the program. That said, we do recognize that there are a number of circumstances under which students may want to change mentors during their time in the program, and every few years a few students do make this type of change. You are welcome to go to your mentor or your Program Director if you would like to discuss your options.

It is imperative that you discuss your plans with your current mentor (as early as possible), and inform your Program Director in writing so that your departmental file will reflect your new mentor. It is also important that you and your new mentor discuss your training proposal, make whatever revisions are necessary, and form a new training committee, which must be approved by the Program Director. With the exception of a possible brief period of time during which a student may be transitioning between mentors, all students are required to have an identified primary mentor throughout his or her time in the program.

### Changing Between Clinical and Non-Clinical Training

Students who are interested in clinical training ordinarily declare this interest at the time of their original application. If a student who was not originally admitted to the clinical program decides later that he or she wants to obtain clinical training, it is necessary for that student to formally apply to the clinical program and to be evaluated for admission along with the other applicants who apply for admissions that year. The Director of Clinical Training can provide you with information about this process and about the application requirements.

Students who are admitted to the clinical training program occasionally make changes in their career plans that lead them to request a non-clinical degree from our program. If a student would like to make such a request, he or she should provide the Director of Experimental Training with a proposal for a modified training committee and training plan that outlines the goals for the new course of study and how these goals should be accomplished. The proposal will be evaluated by the Program Director, in

consultation with the Director of Clinical Training and other members of the faculty as appropriate. In the event that a student who is requesting to change to non-clinical training has had substantial difficulty in meeting the academic, ethical, personal competency or other requirements of the program while a student in clinical training, the full faculty will vote on the suitability of this student to continue doctoral work in the department. The student will be given an opportunity to provide a written or oral statement to the faculty prior to that vote.

## Residency

“Residency” refers to registering for courses. Our Department has a minimum requirement that students register for 12 or more credit hours in each of the Fall and Spring Semesters for their first three years of graduate study. To maintain student status, students must register for at least one graduate credit hour in the Fall Semester of each academic year until they successfully graduate with the doctorate. In order to receive your doctorate, you must complete 90 hours of graduate semester credits (or 60 beyond the Master’s), 7 of which are Ph.D. Research hours. You need to complete at least 30 of those (aside from research credits) at UC. Be sure that you are familiar with the University requirements for graduation and consult with the Graduate Coordinator about any questions you may have.

## Candidacy

“Candidacy” refers to doctoral candidacy, or being a formal candidate for receipt of the Ph.D. In order to be admitted to candidacy for the doctorate, a student needs to:

- Have completed at least three years of full-time graduate study.
- Have successfully completed all course and training requirements with the exception of dissertation credit hours (for all students) and the doctoral internship (for clinical students only).
- Have successfully completed the Major Qualifying Examination process (including Clinical MQEs for the clinical students).
- When these requirements have been satisfied, the student should work with the Graduate Program Coordinator to complete the form officially requesting that the student be advanced to candidacy by the Graduate School. The Graduate School processes related to advancing to candidacy do change from time to time; the information that follows is accurate as of the date of this Handbook. Note that there is a single Graduate School form that both 1) requests advancement to candidacy and 2) proposes the composition of the dissertation committee. If you are not ready to propose your dissertation committee when you file the candidacy form, it is imperative that you see the Graduate Program Coordinator later to file a second copy of the form that contains the committee members. The candidacy form itself is for internal Psychology departmental purposes only and must be turned in to the Graduate Program Coordinator; the Program Coordinator will then enter the information into Catalyst for formal approval by the Graduate School.

You are not permitted to defend your dissertation without your committee first having been approved by the Graduate School.

Subsequent to attaining candidacy, the student needs to register for a minimum of one credit hour each Fall Semester until graduation (even if the student is on internship or another external placement) or candidacy will automatically lapse.

Several other issues are worth taking notice of:

- Students are required by the Department to achieve candidacy by the first day of classes of the Fall Semester of their fifth year. (Note that this is an earlier deadline than the minimum published by the Graduate School.)
- Candidacy expires nine years from the date on which students matriculated into the doctoral program, which includes the internship year for clinical students. Students are expected to complete the doctorate within this time period. Before candidacy expires, the student must successfully petition the Graduate School for an extension if one is needed. If candidacy has already expired, the individual must additionally petition the Graduate School for reinstatement, because at that point he or she is no longer formally a student. Any petition to the Graduate School must be reviewed by the Program Director, who will only make a positive recommendation if the student shows evidence of having made recent substantive progress toward completing the degree.

### Leaves of Absence

We want graduate students to devote themselves full-time to their graduate studies. We also recognize that unexpected things may happen in individuals' lives that make a leave of absence necessary. You would be well advised to discuss the reasons for a potential leave with your mentor or Program Director early in your thought processes—you may be able to examine options that you had not considered.

Requests for leave must be made by completing an official form (available from the Graduate Program Coordinator) and then must be approved by your Program Director and by the Graduate School. If you are granted a leave, the Graduate School will “stop the clock” on your milestones within the program, such as the deadline to advance to candidacy, and the time restrictions will resume when you return. Students are not required to register during approved leaves of absence.

Leaves will only be granted to students in good academic standing. Your request should present the reason for the leave and the duration of leave you are requesting. When a leave is approved, the letter from the Department will note the effect of the leave on your remaining deadlines and on the financial support you may expect upon your return to the program. You will also be given a date by which you need to inform the Department (in writing) of your intention to return. This is important because the Department needs to plan for assistantships, admissions, and other factors. It is very important that you realize that you are not “taking” a leave but are “requesting” a leave. Leaves can only be granted by the Graduate School.

The term of the leave may be extended, via petition to the Program Director and Graduate School, for up to one additional year beyond the duration of the leave that you originally requested. Regardless of when a leave starts, you must notify the Program Director, in writing, of your intention to return from leave by the deadline requested in your leave approval letter. Failure to advise the Department of your intention to return will be interpreted as your resignation from the program.

### Deadlines for Completing Academic Requirements

Students must circulate an abstract of their thesis proposal to the faculty by March 15th of their second year in the program.

Students are expected to satisfy all other requirements for the M.A. degree in time to graduate at commencement in the Spring Semester of the third year of graduate study.

Students must advance to doctoral candidacy by the first day of the Fall Semester of their fifth year.

Students must graduate with the doctorate within 9 years of matriculating into the program and must be making progress toward the degree at all times during their training.

Note: Failure to meet any of the above deadlines, unless you have successfully petitioned for an extension, may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination from the doctoral program. Students who have been terminated prior to earning the MA may petition the faculty for permission to earn a terminal Master's degree. Such petitions must be approved by a majority vote of the general faculty of the Department.

If you have trouble meeting any of the time limitations, you are strongly encouraged to consult first with your training committee and then with the Program Director well in advance of the deadline. The Program Director may grant an extension on any of the above deadlines if the training committee recommends an extension and if the circumstances warrant an extension.

### Grievance Procedures

The program strongly encourages students to seek informal resolution of any concerns through discussion with the mentor, instructor, supervisor, Program Director, or Department Head. For more serious concerns or those that cannot be resolved informally, formal University policies about non-discrimination, sexual misconduct and grievance procedures for graduate students are available at [uc.edu/about/policies.html](http://uc.edu/about/policies.html) and [grad.uc.edu](http://grad.uc.edu).

Additional Information of Interest in the University Graduate Handbook  
Here is some of the useful material covered in that online document:

- Non-Discrimination Policy
- Right to Review Records
- Grievance Procedures for Graduate Students
- Graduate Assistant Appointment Procedures
- Second Master's Degree
- Academic Honesty

### Financial Support

The rules and regulations of the UC Graduate School concerning financial awards are summarized in the University Graduate Handbook.

#### **Stipend Support**

University rules only permit the Department to make promises of financial support for one academic year at a time.

In the first two years of training, most students are supported with a Teaching Assistantship, a Research Assistantship, or from grants or fellowships. These types of stipends currently pay the

student a monthly income for 10 months (August through June) in the first year and 12 months (July 1 through June 30) in subsequent years. Students who receive a stipend or who obtain an external clinical placement should expect that 20 hours of work will be required each week, on average. Students in the first two years of the clinical program will receive teaching or research assignments that require less than 20 hours a week in recognition of their additional clinical training obligations.

More advanced clinical students are typically placed in outside clinical agencies in their third and fourth years, positions for which they are financially compensated. Clinical students are expected to complete clinical placements in their third and fourth years regardless of whether they received support from the Department in years one and two. The Department cannot guarantee support to third and fourth year clinical students who do not obtain a paid placement, although historically we have always been able to find placements for all of these students. Advanced non-clinical students are supported by grants or departmental assistantships.

In the extremely unlikely event that resources for financial support are insufficient to allow the Department to fulfill its intentions to support all students who are making sufficient progress towards the degree, the Department reserves the right to award available resources based on academic merit.

In no case will the Department admit a candidate simply because he or she can come without support. It is absolutely essential that candidates who come without funding have adequate academic credentials and be highly ranked by the proposed mentor. Students who are admitted without offers of support may be supported in subsequent years if funding becomes available, but the Department is under no obligation to provide such support. Clinical students who are admitted without support will still be required to fulfill all clinical training requirements.

### **Tuition Remission**

Additional major forms of financial support are the Graduate Assistant Scholarship (GAS) and the Graduate Incentive Award (GIA), which cover the cost of tuition in full or in part for students who receive these awards. Students receiving full tuition remission must register for at least 12 graduate credit hours every semester that they receive the GAS or GIA unless they are specifically instructed otherwise by the Program Director. Courses that the student audits will not count toward the 12 hours, nor will undergraduate courses.

According to the Ohio Board of Regents, students cannot be awarded any form of University-funded financial assistance if they have earned more than 174 semester credit hours (or 140 semester credit hours if the student is entering with a master's degree, *even if that degree is not in psychology*). International students should pay special attention to this regulation as visa requirements may prohibit them from pursuing alternative sources of income if the credit hour limit is exceeded. Note that our ability to offer tuition remission is contingent on budgets outside of the department, and we cannot promise that full tuition support will always be available to all students, even if they are below the 174 credit hour limit.

All students (even clinical students on internship and those who have completed all coursework) must be registered for at least one credit hour in the Fall Semester of each academic year in order to maintain good student standing. In addition, students wishing to use university facilities (e.g., library, gym) in a given academic semester must be registered for at least one credit hour in that semester.

### **Additional Forms of Compensation**

Summer school teaching assignments, University Research Council awards, and a wide variety of other mechanisms exist by which students can supplement their stipends. Nearly all such supplemental awards are competitive, and the Department will make every effort to announce such competitions as early as possible. Summer teaching, in particular, is both quite competitive and under the control of the Department. Students are assigned to teaching or teaching assistant positions as the budget allows. Summer UGS awards are often available to pay a student's tuition for summer courses.

### We Welcome You to the Program

Graduate school is an exciting adventure. It is important that you do your best to get all that you can out of this learning opportunity. Much of the learning in graduate school comes from experiences outside of the classroom: informal chats with faculty and colleagues, colloquia, and conferences. We look forward to your sharing an enriching and productive experience in our Department.

## Appendix A / Program Aims and Competencies



## Appendix B / Presentations Portfolio

We expect all of our graduate students to gain experience in planning and making professional presentations. Students are therefore required to make presentations and obtain feedback as part of their graduate training. **You must complete at least 4 of the activities below** in order to meet your Presentations requirement. Note that you may only count each option below once toward your requirement. For example, you cannot count more than one talk at a professional meeting in your Presentations portfolio; teaching an entire course would only count toward one of your activities.

### **You must choose at least one activity from Group A / Giving Presentations**

- Present a poster or paper at a professional meeting
- Give a one-hour long class presentation (either in one's own class or as a guest instructor for someone else's class)
- Make a professional presentation to a community group on a psychological topic

### **You must choose at least one activity from Group B / Attending and Evaluating Presentations**

- Attend a scholarly presentation (e.g., departmental colloquium, talk at scientific conference) and write a 1-page critical summary/evaluation of the organization and quality of the talk, including strengths and weaknesses
- Attend a University sponsored teaching workshop and summarize in two pages what you learned
- Attend another student's thesis/dissertation defense and provide a 1-page summary/evaluation of the organization and quality of the talk, including strengths and weaknesses

### **Submission of Portfolio**

After you have completed 4 of the above activities (including at least 1 from each of Group A and Group B), compile your printed work in a folder and submit to your program director. **Your portfolio must be submitted prior to advancing to candidacy.**

Your portfolio should include the following information:

- Title page that includes your name
- List of activities that you completed to fulfill the requirement
- For each activity, you must include:
  - Description of the topic, presenter, and size and composition of the audience
  - Documentation (e.g., copy of conference program; lecture notes for class taught)
  - Description of the presentation style and format
  - If you were the presenter, provide a self-evaluation (strengths and areas to improve) and an external evaluation (e.g., faculty member's written evaluation, students' evaluations, interview/questionnaire completed by someone who attended the presentation and was given the opportunity to comment on your strengths and weaknesses)

### **Evaluation of Portfolio**

Your program director will assign you a pass/fail grade for the portfolio, based on the completeness of your work product and the quality of the presentation(s) that you gave, your critique of others' work, and your reflections on your own performance.

## Appendix C / Quick References

### Summary of Major Deadlines

|  |  |
|--|--|
| M.A. proposal abstract   | March 15 <sup>th</sup> of the second year of graduate study  |
| M.A. degree requirements   | Student must complete all coursework requirements for the MA, defend the thesis, and file the final document with the Graduate School in time to graduate with the MA in Spring of the third year of graduate study. (Check with Graduate Coordinator or on the Graduate School website for the deadlines to apply for spring graduation and to file the completed thesis) |
| Presentations portfolio; Supervision and Consultation portfolio (clinical students only) | Prior to advancing to doctoral candidacy   |
| Doctoral candidacy   | No later than the first day of Spring Semester of the fifth year of graduate study. Note that this requires student to have completed all required coursework, MA, and MQE   |
| Doctoral graduation  | Student must graduate with the doctorate within nine years of matriculating into the program and must be making academic progress in each year of enrollment.  |

## Where To Find Information About the Program

It is our experience that the vast majority of the questions our students have are answered in our Student Handbook, so please begin your search for information here. If you still need assistance, you are welcome to ask anyone in the department for help, although the guidelines below may make it easier to find what you are looking for.

| If You are Looking For:  | Begin by Consulting:   |
|--|--|
| Guidance about planning your training or professional development  | Your mentor  |
| General information about Graduate School or Departmental requirements for graduate study                                  | Sarah Logan  |
| Information about deadlines for graduation   | Sarah Logan or Graduate School website   |
| Unofficial copy of your transcript   | Sarah Logan  |
| Information or forms related to Clinical Placements or other activities that are specific to the Clinical Training Program | Sarah Logan or Blackboard site   |
| Information about your stipend or paycheck   | Juli Ogden   |
| Forms needed for thesis or dissertation defense, MQE proposals, advancing to candidacy, petitions to the Graduate School   | Sarah Logan or Blackboard site   |
| An extension of a departmental deadline  | Your mentor and your Program Director  |
| An extension of a Graduate School deadline   | Program Director and Sarah Logan   |
| Travel Authorization forms (submit prior to <i>any</i> travel)   | Juli Ogden   |
| Information about reimbursement for student travel to conferences  | Juli Ogden (grant or department funds) or Psychology Graduate Student Association representatives (GSGA funds) |
| Assistance with conflicts that may occur with other students or faculty, or concerns about ethics or professional behavior | Mentor, Program Director, Department Head, Ombuds Office   |