Handbook for Ph.D. Students in the Behavior Analysis Specialization

USU Department of Psychology

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Introduction

This handbook provides information for students enrolled in the Behavior Analysis specialization in the Ph.D. program in the Department of Psychology at Utah State University. The handbook conveys program expectations and summarizes information from several sources, including:

- the General Catalog (http://catalog.usu.edu/),
- the Department of Psychology (http://psychology.usu.edu/), and
- the School of Graduate Studies (http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/).

Please consult original sources as necessary to clarify or supplement the information here. The Department of Psychology continually reviews and, as appropriate, refines its programs and operations. Therefore, the requirements, policies, and regulations outlined in this handbook may change at any time. Change may take place before a new handbook is issued, and students must adhere to these changes. Although the Department attempts to notify students through posting of information about important changes, it is the student's obligation to ascertain current rules, regulations, financial aid opportunities, deadlines and procedures, program requirements, and the like.

Behavior Analysis Specialization Overview

Students successfully completing the program will acquire in-depth knowledge and technical skills in Behavior Analysis and psychological science more generally. The program is designed to produce experts in research; that is, someone who is capable of contributing to the knowledge base in the field.

The program is a full-time graduate program. **Students entering with a baccalaureate degree** are expected to complete the Ph.D. within 5 years. **Students entering with a Master's degree** are expected to complete the Ph.D. within 4 years. Failure to make appropriate progress toward completing the program within these timelines can result in dismissal from the program.

The sections below outline several **program requirements** that students must complete before earning their Ph.D. degree. In addition to coursework, students are required to engage in research and to produce finished products illustrating their understanding and ability to apply key concepts and skills. Timelines for completing these program requirements may be found below.

In addition, prior to receipt of the Ph.D., students must complete three **professional milestones**:
1) presenting your research at a professional meeting, 2) writing and submitting a grant, and 3) publishing a paper. To accomplish these professional milestones requires involvement in research above-and-beyond the program requirements (i.e., the second-year project, dissertation research, etc.). Student progress in completing the program requirements and professional milestones is evaluated annually.

Program Requirements

Students entering with a baccalaureate degree will first complete a second-year project. Students entering with a Master's degree are required to complete the second-year project only if their Master's thesis was not accepted by three members of the Behavior Analysis faculty. All students will complete the follow program requirements: 1) formation of the Graduate Supervisory Committee (GSC), 2) Program of Study approved by the GSC, 3) pass the comprehensive exam, 4) successfully propose the dissertation, 5) conduct the dissertation research, 6) write the dissertation document to the satisfaction of the GSC chair, 7) submit the Application to Candidacy form, and 8) defend the dissertation. In addition, students will complete the three Professional Milestones described below.

Second-Year Project

Students entering with a baccalaureate degree must complete a second-year project by the end of their 5th semester in the program. *Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.* The second-year project is developed in collaboration with the student's advisor starting early in the first semester. The written project proposal will include a review of the relevant literature and will propose a
novel research question. The proposal will consist of an Introduction, Methods, and Expected Results/Interpretation sections (no more than 20 pages double-spaced, not including references). In the fall semester of Year 2, the student will make a research-proposal presentation (~15 min) at the annual Research Day meeting, attended by the experimental faculty and students. Students must submit an electronic copy of their proposal document to the Behavior Analysis faculty two weeks before the presentation.

After the proposal is given at Research Day, the student will work with his/her advisor to consider integrating into the research design comments/suggestions made on Research Day or in writing. The student will then complete the project under the supervision of the advisor.

At the Research Day held in the fall semester of Year 3, the student will present (15 min) the results of the project. By the end of the fall semester, the student will defend the Second Year Project during a meeting of the Behavior Analysis Seminar (Psyc 7090). The publication-quality paper must be submitted to the Behavior Analysis faculty two weeks prior to the defense. No later than two weeks after the defense, the faculty will provide the student with their written feedback. Students will use this feedback to revise their paper. The revision process will continue until the student’s advisor is satisfied with the final product. The revision process must be completed by the end of the student’s third year.

Formation of the Graduate Supervisory Committee

By the end of the third semester, the student should have formed the 5-member graduate supervisory committee (GSC). At least one, but no more than two members of the GSC may come from outside the Department of Psychology. The GSC chairperson, in most cases the student’s advisor, must be from the Psychology Department. A faculty member outside the department may act as co-chairperson. Only one member of the GSC can hold the "adjunct" title.

Because the GSC usually serves as the student’s dissertation committee, students are urged to ensure the members have complementary strengths (e.g., knowledge of the relevant literature, research design and data analysis skills). The GSC is responsible for guiding the student in completing appropriate coursework and the dissertation. The GSC will define coursework requirements for each student to meet individual needs.

Students are admitted to the program to work with a specific chairperson. GSC members will be agreed upon jointly by student and advisor. The student is responsible for inviting potential committee members to serve. In the event a student has difficulty forming a committee, the program or department chairperson may be consulted.

Once the committee has been chosen, the student must complete and submit to the department a committee form. Forms are available at: http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/

Program of Study Approved and Signed by Graduate Supervisory Committee

Once the GSC has been formed, the student should work with the advisor to develop a Program of Study, which must then be approved by the members of the GSC. Changes to the program of study must be approved by the student, advisor, and department head.

Comprehensive Exam

All students are required to pass a comprehensive exam prior to advancement to doctoral candidacy. Students entering with a baccalaureate must pass the comprehensive exam prior to the beginning of the 4th academic year in the program. Students entering with a Master’s degree must pass the comprehensive exam prior to the beginning of their 3rd academic year in the program. Comprehensive exams must be submitted no later than 30 days prior to these deadlines so that faculty members will have adequate time to grade the submission before the deadline expires. Students failing the comprehensive exam or failing to pass the exam by the deadlines outlined above will not advance to doctoral candidacy and may be dismissed from the program.

Comprehensive Exam Details. The exam must be completed in 3 weeks without the aid of others (e.g., student’s advisor, prior instructors, peers). The exam consists of a 7-page (excluding references), single-spaced, NIH formatted research proposal. The proposal should review the relevant area of research, identify a significant gap in knowledge in that area, and propose a novel, interesting, well-
justified, and methodologically sound experiment to fill that gap. Graduate coursework at USU will help students prepare for the comprehensive exam, as all behavior analysis courses require an NIH-formatted grant proposal as the final-project paper. In addition, students are encouraged to take PSY 7700, Grant Writing, to prepare for the comp.

The proposal submitted as the comprehensive exam must include the following sections:

1) Specific Aims (1 page)
2) Background and Significance
3) Approach (Methods section)
4) Expected Results and Interpretations
5) Potential Pitfalls and Future Directions

The exam is graded by 3 Behavior Analysis faculty members. Students will receive one of the following grades:

1) Pass
2) Conditional Pass
   • Appropriate revisions submitted within 1 week may earn a Pass.
   • The revised proposal should include a 1-page response to the previous reviews that details how concerns in the previous version were addressed.
3) Fail with Retake
   • Students who receive a grade of Fail with Retake on their first comprehensive exam may request a retake. The student will be given a new set of topics for the retake.
   • Only one retake will be permitted.
   • Second comprehensive exam must be completed within 6 months of receiving the Fail with Retake decision, or an interval of time specified by the comprehensive committee.
   • Should the student not meet this deadline, the grade will be changed to Fail and the student will be dismissed from the program.
4) Fail
   • Student will be dismissed from the program

Dissertation Proposal

Early in the student's program, informal preparation (e.g., selection of an area of research interest) should begin on the dissertation proposal. This is done by meeting with the GSC chairperson (the student’s advisor) to define a research problem and develop the proposal.

Preliminary research should begin as soon as feasible and drafts of sections should be submitted periodically to the major professor for critiquing. Primary responsibility for development of the dissertation rests with the student and the major professor, but individual committee members should be consulted on sections which involve their special expertise. When the chairperson believes that the dissertation proposal is in defensible condition, approval is given to schedule the defense with the GSC. The proposal document is limited to 30 double-spaced pages (not including references) and must be given to BSC members 2 weeks prior to the proposal meeting.

The Proposal Meeting. The student will schedule a proposal meeting with the full GSC. During the meeting, the committee will make final input regarding requirements for the research. The student is responsible for obtaining the statistical and research expertise necessary to carry out the research and is expected to cover all costs of the research where projects are not specifically funded. When the proposal is accepted, and the Proposal Cover Sheet signed by the GSC, a copy is then placed in the student's file.

Regarding the scheduling of dissertation proposal (and defense) meetings, a faculty member is not obligated to students, other faculty, or administration to perform any activities during noncontract or off-time periods, including summer months. A faculty member who chooses to perform professional
duties during off time (e.g., noncontract, vacation, holiday periods), does so on a completely voluntary basis and will not be compensated for such activity in any way.

**Prior to Conducting the Research.** If human subjects are involved in the study, approval by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Participants must be obtained in advance of collecting data. To do this the student completes the "Application for Review of Research Using Human Subjects” form (available on-line at http://irb.usu.edu). The student's proposal must be approved by his/her committee prior to submitting the research to the IRB for review. The student's GSC chairperson must be listed as the principal investigator on the IRB application and must sign all application forms.

If research animals are involved in the study, approval by the University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) must be obtained in advance of collecting data. To do this the student completes the IACUC Application form (available on-line at http://iacuc.usu.edu). The student's proposal must be approved by his/her committee prior to submitting the research to the IACUC for review. The student's GSC chairperson must be listed as the principal investigator on the application and must sign all application forms.

**Conducting the Dissertation Research**

As in the writing of the proposal, the actual research is conducted under the primary supervision of the chairperson, with input along the way from other members of the GSC as needed. Each step of the research should be checked by the student and the chairperson. The research should conform to the requirements of the proposal, to sound methodological practice, and to the desires of the committee. The Graduate School offers a USU Publication Guide for Graduate Studies to aid in the writing of the dissertation that is located on the forms page: http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/.

**Preparing the dissertation document.** The chairperson will supervise the student in writing and rewriting the final product until it is ready to present to the full committee. Other committee members may be asked for help or input as appropriate but should not be asked to review the product until it has first been approved by the chairperson. The student, not the chairperson or the committee, is responsible for writing the final product. Therefore, the student should expect to continue making revisions until the product is adequate and should not expect the chairperson to do the rewriting.

**Application to Candidacy Form Submitted**

The Application to Candidacy form must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies at least three months prior to the scheduled dissertation defense date. The form can be obtained on-line at http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/. This form may not be submitted until all of the Program Requirements have been completed:

- Second-Year Project (if applicable)
- Program of study approved by GSC
- Completed the majority of the coursework requirements
- Successfully passed the comprehensive examination
- Successfully defended the dissertation proposal

**Dissertation Defense**

When the chairperson is satisfied that the manuscript is in excellent condition, the student arranges a meeting of the GSC where the completed research is presented and defended. The appointment for examination form (available online at http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/) is signed by the entire committee and must be submitted to the graduate school at least 10 working days before the defense. Each committee member must receive a copy of the dissertation at least four weeks before the scheduled defense. Committee members who believe that the dissertation is not ready for defense will notify the student and the major professor prior to the oral examination. The student and major professor may postpone the defense in order to make revisions to the dissertation.

The oral examination is a defense of a final document. Minor changes may be made following the defense. If major changes are needed, another defense will be scheduled for the new document. The defense should not be used as an opportunity to discuss the research and propose changes to the
dissertation project. Following the final defense, the final copy of the dissertation is prepared embodying changes approved by the committee members. It is then signed by the committee members. After signatures are obtained from the entire committee, the final paper must have formatting approval by a departmental reviewer, after which it is submitted electronically to the Graduate School Office. Many students elect to personally pay a formatter. If students do not do this, they are responsible for all proofreading and formatting.

Professional Milestones

Prior to the final defense of the dissertation, student must complete the 3 professional milestones described below. Completion is verified by the advisor and/or dissertation committee and documented on the yearly evaluation.

1) External Professional Presentation
All students must serve as the presenting author of a presentation at an appropriate external professional venue.

2) Peer-Reviewed Paper Published
All students are expected to make substantial author-level contributions to at least one peer-reviewed published article based on work conducted at USU prior to the dissertation defense. Most students in the program serve as an author on multiple such articles and generally serve as the lead author on at least one publication.

3) Grant Proposal Submitted
All students must complete and submit a grant proposal appropriate to their area or research. Decisions about the target and scope of the proposal must be made in collaboration with the major professor and/or dissertation committee.

Timeline

To assist in planning, checklists are available from the Graduate School: http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/

Year 1
During the first academic year, students will focus on the acquisition of skills by integrating into an ongoing research project. They will also complete coursework, attend seminar, and begin the literature review that will support the Second-Year Project.

Skill acquisition. Your advisor will outline the skills he/she expects you to acquire in the first year. This may include the handling of laboratory animals, mastering a programming language, and/or helping another graduate student complete an ongoing research project. Mastering these skills is critical to your long-term success in the program.

Coursework. Graduate students typically enroll in 7 credit hours per semester. This will most often include two content courses (6 hours) and seminar (1 hour). A listing of courses available in the Psychology and Special Education departments may be found below. Graduate students are expected to earn A’s in all of their courses. A grade of C is considered unacceptable. Students who earn more than one C grade may be dismissed from the program.

Seminar. Students are expected to enroll in, prepare for, and contribute to the Behavior Analysis seminar. Graduate students are expected to contribute to every seminar discussion.

Research Day. Each year, early in the fall semester, the experimental faculty and student gather for Research Day—a series of student research presentations. Behavior analysis students are expected to attend all presentations on Research Day, unless they have a teaching or class conflict.

If you entered with a Master’s degree. Students entering with a Master’s degree must provide their advisor with a copy of their Master’s thesis. The advisor will circulate the thesis document among
three behavior analysis faculty members. If the thesis is found to meet the standards of a USU Second-Year Project, the student is exempt from this program requirement. If the thesis is not accepted, the student must complete the Second-Year Project. In the latter case, the expected timeline for graduation is extended to 5 years.

If your thesis is accepted, you should form your Graduate Supervisory Committee (GSC) and begin work on your Program of Study. This should be approved by your GSC by the end of Year 1. You should also consult with your advisor about courses and writing experiences that will prepare you to successfully complete the comprehensive exam. The comprehensive exam must be successfully completed by the beginning of your third year. You are encouraged to complete it at the earliest date that you and your advisor believe you are prepared to do so. The dissertation cannot be proposed until after the comprehensive exam is passed, so passing it earlier means a more-timely graduation.

Preparing for the Second-Year Project. Near the beginning of Year 2, you will propose a research project that will be conducted in partial fulfillment of the Second-Year Project. To prepare you for the proposal you are expected in Year 1 to work on a review of the relevant literature. By reviewing the literature under the supervision of your advisor, you will identify an experimental question that will be addressed in the Second-Year Project.

After identifying an experimental question, you will work with your advisor to prepare a research proposal paper. This is due at the beginning of the fall semester in Year 2. See Program Requirements section (above) for details on the proposal paper.

Year 2
Second-Year Project. At the beginning of the fall semester, you will electronically submit to the Behavior Analysis faculty the proposal paper for your Second-Year Project. The paper must be submitted at least two weeks before Research Day.

Early in the same semester, you will orally present your proposed Second-Year Project at Research Day, attended by faculty and students in the Experimental programs. Students are expected to attend all presentations on Research Day, unless they have a teaching or class conflict.

In Year 2 you will conduct the research that was proposed in your Second-Year Project paper (amended with any changes requested by Behavior Analysis faculty). The project must be completed and defended prior to the end of the fall semester of Year 3.

Form the Graduate Supervisory Committee (GSC). Work with your advisor to select the five members of your GSC. Guidance on this is provided in the Program Requirements section above.

Seek GSC approval of your Program of Study. Work with your advisor to map out the remaining courses you will take. Course requirements and electives appear below. When this is completed, ask all members of your GSC to approve the program of study.

Coursework. Continue to take coursework, earning A’s, in accord with your approved program of study. Should you need to change your program of study, this should be done in consultation with your advisor, and must be approved by your GSC.

Preparing for the comprehensive exam. After you complete your Second-Year Project, the next requirement is the comprehensive exam. Details are provided in the Program Requirements section above. Consult with your advisor on the best way in which to prepare for the comp. Students who fail the comprehensive exam twice are dismissed from the program.

Year 3
Second-Year Project. In the fall semester of Year 3, you will present the results of your research at the fall Research Day. By the end of the same semester, you will submit a publication-quality paper that summarizes your research. You will present that paper at a meeting of the Behavior Analysis Seminar (Psyc 7090). This meeting will serve as the defense of your Second-Year Project. The paper must be provided to the Behavior Analysis faculty two week prior to the defense.

Comprehensive exam. Students who entered with a baccalaureate degree are required to pass the comprehensive exam by the beginning of the fall semester in Year 4. Details are provided in the Program Requirements section above. Failure to meet this deadline will result if dismissal from the program.
Year 4 and Beyond

Dissertation proposal. After passing the comprehensive exam, you may propose your dissertation and complete the steps thereafter (see Program Requirements above). Good luck!

Coursework

Behavior analysis students must complete 70 credit hours of required and elective courses before graduating. The table below provides a listing of these required and elective courses. Please note that students will enroll in one credit of PSY 7090 (BA Seminar) per semester. Students whose Master’s thesis was accepted will complete 51 credit hours before graduating. Students can enroll in variable credits of PSY 7900, 7910, and 7970, with no more than 3 credit hours in each within a single semester.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Prefix and Number</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Required Courses</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 6570</td>
<td>Introduction to Educational and Psychological Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 6600</td>
<td>Research Design and Analysis I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7090</td>
<td>Behavior Analysis Program Seminar</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7250</td>
<td>Professional Ethics and Standards</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7610</td>
<td>Research Design and Analysis II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7900 / 7910</td>
<td>Independent Study; Independent Research</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7970</td>
<td>Dissertation</td>
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<td><strong>Sub-Total</strong></td>
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<td>40</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Example Elective Courses (for other options see your advisor)</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7650</td>
<td>Theories of Learning</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7750</td>
<td>Behavioral Economics</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7810</td>
<td>Behavior Theory and Philosophy</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 7810</td>
<td>Experimental Analysis of Human Behavior</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPEC 7730</td>
<td>Behavior Systems/OBM</td>
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<tr>
<td>SPEC 7700</td>
<td>Single-Subject Research Design</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPEC 7820</td>
<td>Verbal Behavior/Derived Relational Responding</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 6200</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Neuroscience I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 6210</td>
<td>Fundamentals of Neuroscience II</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 6680</td>
<td>Neuroeconomics</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 6800</td>
<td>Addictive Behaviors</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 7110</td>
<td>Cognitive Neuroscience</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSY 7650</td>
<td>Multilevel and Marginal Models</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSY 7670</td>
<td>Literature Reviews in Education and Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>PSY 7700</td>
<td>Grant Writing</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>PSY 7780</td>
<td>Multivariate Statistical Analysis I</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>PSY 7790</td>
<td>Multivariate Statistical Analysis II</td>
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<td><strong>Elective Credits Needed</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Number of Credits</strong></td>
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Require Courses: Course Descriptions

PSY 6750: An introduction to research methods including identification of research problem, review and evaluation of research literature, and design and implementation of a research project.

PSY 6600: This is the first graduate-level statistics course. There are two prerequisites: Completion of PSY 6750 (or an equivalent graduate-level course in research methods) and passing a pretest evaluating knowledge of undergraduate-level statistics. See https://cehs.usu.edu/research/courses/educ-psy-6600 for more details.

PSY 7090: Provides an opportunity for doctoral students in the Behavior Analysis specialization to meet on a regular basis to discuss journal articles and explore student and faculty research projects. Repeatable for credit. Pass/Fail only.

PSY 7250: Designed to train clinicians and researchers in the field of psychology to operate within the professional ethics and standards of the field.

PSY 7610: Advanced treatment of research design and statistical concepts and issues in educational, human services, and psychological research. Prerequisite: successful completion of PSY 6600.

PSY 7900: Individualized discussion and intensive study of a particular problem or area. May be repeated. Graded pass/fail.

PSY 7910: Experiments are conducted, and papers are prepared for publication in peer-reviewed outlets. May be repeated. Graded pass/fail.

PSY 7970: Research conducted after the dissertation committee and ethics committee (IRB/IACUC) have approved the proposal. May be repeated. Graded pass/fail.

Additional Policies and Procedures

The Student-Advisor Relationship
Although most student-advisor relationships last throughout the degree program, either the student or the advisor may terminate the relationship without repercussions. A student may initiate the change if agreed to by the advisor. Should the advisor refuse, the transition should be mediated by the Behavior Analysis Program Coordinator and/or department head. After a change in advisors is made, the student has 6 months to secure a new advisor. Failure to meet this deadline may lead to the dismissal of the student from the program.

Review of Students’ Academic and Professional Progress
At the end of each academic year, program faculty will review students’ progress toward completing program requirements and professional development. Students will receive written feedback on their progress every year; a copy of the form is included as an Appendix to this Handbook. The feedback will address progress in the areas of:

- Research skills and progress
- Progress toward completion of the program
- Didactic coursework
- Assistantship performance
- Other accomplishments and/or concerns

Students who fail to maintain acceptable progress may be dismissed from the program.

Student Representatives
One Experimental area student is elected annually by his/her fellow students to represent the graduate students in the 4 experimental specializations (Behavior Analysis, Brain and Cognition, Quantitative, and Sociobehavioral Epidemiology) at department meetings. The representative or his/her
designee may also serve on any other committees on campus that request graduate student representation. Students are encouraged to contribute ideas and raise concerns relative to the graduate training program through their appropriate student representative.

**E-mail**

Email is the primary form of communication with graduate students. Therefore, it is critical that students 1) ensure that the e-mail address listed in the Psychology Graduate Student Directory is up to date, 2) check their email inbox daily, and 3) reply to emails in a timely fashion.

**Mail Distribution**

Each graduate student is assigned a mailbox located just inside the front door of Education 487. If you are teaching, your students will leave things for you in there. Best to check it at least once per week.

**Use of Psychology Department Facilities and Supplies**

The Department's research and clinical facilities may be used by faculty and students; however, students should follow all applicable scheduling guidelines. Students should not print personal documents (including class papers and dissertations) using university-supplied materials. The department does not provide letterhead, postage, or mailing supplies for students' personal use. Department staff are not available to do student word-processing (including formatting of dissertations) during working hours.

**Changing Specialty Area Within the Department**

Should a student wish to change from one specialty area to another (e.g., Behavior Analysis to Quantitative), the application must be approved by the faculty of the program the student wishes to enter. Students desiring to transfer may be asked to follow all of the normal admission procedures, deadlines, etc.

**Reasons for and Notification of Dismissal**

"The student's department and the School of Graduate Studies monitor the progress of graduate students. For continued participation in a graduate program, a student must complete requirements in a timely manner. In reviewing a student’s progress, several factors will be considered, including demonstrated ability to develop a [research] proposal, independence in the conduct of research, performance on comprehensive examinations, GPA, and special program requirements. Satisfactory progress also involves maintaining the standards of professional ethics and integrity expected in the student's discipline."

(USU General Catalog).

The Department of Psychology has established and strives to maintain high standards in all of its programs. In keeping with this goal, graduate students are expected to maintain: (1) high academic standards of achievement; (2) consistent and timely progress towards the completion of degree requirements; and (3) high standards of personal conduct and behavior that will reflect positively upon the Department and the psychology profession. To assist in maintaining such standards, any one or more of the factors listed below will result in a student being considered for dismissal.

1. Possessing a grade point average less than 3.0 in USU graduate courses (matriculated or provisional) during two consecutive semesters.
2. Any of the following: (a) any characteristics which would, in the judgment of the faculty, make the student unsuited to engage in a career in the specialization in psychology for which he/she is preparing; (b) conduct unbecoming a professional psychologist (see APA guidelines); or (c) failure to comply with departmental, college, and university regulations or procedures.
3. Failure to continue making adequate progress on programmatic requirements (e.g., excessive delay in forming a supervisory committee or completing research requirements).
4. Failure of the comprehensive exam.
Procedures for Dismissing a Student from a Graduate Program in Psychology
The following procedures, used by the Department of Psychology, are consistent with those outlined in The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University: https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/index.

1. One of the doctoral areas of specialization would convene as appropriate (e.g., via a steering committee meeting) to vote to recommend dismissal of a doctoral student. Program committees must ensure they are recommending dismissal of a student for reasons outlined in the appropriate program handbook and/or as stated in university policies. Program committees must also ensure due process in any dismissal procedures.

2. Upon recommendation of the specialization area, the program chair of the appropriate specialization area will forward the recommendation for dismissal to the entire psychology faculty.

3. The psychology faculty will vote on whether to approve the dismissal. This vote may be conducted either at convened faculty meeting or via e-mail. Not all faculty need to vote, and a simple majority of those voting is needed to uphold the dismissal recommendation. If voting occurs outside of a convened meeting, faculty must vote within 2 working days of the recommendation being put forward for a vote.

4. Assuming support for the dismissal, the Psychology Department Head will write a memo to the Dean of Graduate Studies recommending the student be dismissed from the Psychology PhD program. Note that this dismissal would normally preclude a student from requesting a transfer to another specialization area. If a transfer would be appropriate, this should be explored on a case-by-case basis prior to a recommendation for dismissal moving forward.

5. If faculty do not vote to uphold the dismissal recommendation, specific reasons for non-support must be provided. In instances in which the faculty cite lack of adequate due process as a reason for non-support, the program committee recommending dismissal should address these concerns and then, may again move forward with a recommendation for dismissal. If concerns other than due process are raised, those faculty raising the concerns must take responsibility for the student and for addressing those concerns. If these faculty then decide the concerns cannot be remediated, they can again recommend to the entire faculty that the student be dismissed.

6. Per university policies, the dismissed student retains the right to appeal the dismissal.

Grievances and Appeals
If the student wishes to appeal a dismissal recommendation, the grievance process as outlined in the Student Code should be followed. This includes appealing first to the Program faculty and second to the Psychology Department Head. If these appeals are unsuccessful the continued channel is: the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the USU Grievance Board, the Hearing Officer, the Provost, and the President of the University. If the student’s grievance is related to discrimination or harassment the AA/EO Director is also included in concert with the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. For more information on the grievance process see section VII-1 of the Student Code (available online at http://www.usu.edu/studentservices/studentcode/article7.cfm

USU Student Code
Graduate students in the Psychology Department are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times in line with the USU Student Code. The Student Code is available at https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/index. The code outlines student rights and responsibilities, university regulations, and discipline and grievance procedures. Students are referred to the document to answer questions related to procedure. Please be advised that USU is a dry campus. It is a violation of the student code to possess or consume alcohol on campus.

Financial Assistance
Several types of financial support are available to graduate students in Psychology. A brief description of each source of support is outlined below, along with an overview of application and awards procedures and deadlines.

**Graduate Assistantships**

Doctoral students in Psychology will be employed on .50 FTE (20hrs per week) assistantships as long as they remain in good standing in the program. Students may be assigned to one of the following 3 types of assistantships:

- **Graduate instructor** (GI) A graduate student assigned to teach one or more sections of a course for an entire semester. A GI must be the instructor of record.
- **Graduate teaching assistant** (GTA) A graduate student assigned to assist one or more faculty, or a senior graduate student, with instruction and grading. A GTA may lecture in a course occasionally, tutor students, or assist in some other teaching capacity, such as teaching a lab or recitation session under faculty supervision.
- **Graduate research assistant** (GRA) A graduate student assigned to work under faculty guidance on one or more research projects.

**Process for Applying for Graduate Assistantships**

Graduate Instructor and TA positions are awarded through the Department of Psychology. Each year in the spring, students are sent via e-mail a list of possible GI and GTA positions for the following year. Students apply for these positions by submitting rank ordering of desired positions.

Graduate RA positions are paid for by research funds allocated to a specific faculty member. Thus, RA positions are typically allocated by a specific faculty member with whom a student would work.

Graduate students are sent letters informing them of their assistantship placements each spring. **Students are required to accept (or reject) the assistantship by a specified date.** Students who reject an assistantship will not be awarded an alternate departmental assistantship.

**Tuition Awards**

Doctoral students are eligible for the doctoral tuition award which covers the in-state portion of tuition for classes on a student’s doctoral program of study. Out-of-state tuition awards are awarded to non-Utah residents during their first year in the program. After that, **students must obtain Utah residency** unless they are international students (in which case the out-of-state portion of tuition will continue to be covered). **All tuition awards are contingent on a student having a .5 FTE assistantship.**

**Student Representation and Responsibilities**

The faculty assumes that all graduate students are responsible for progress in their graduate programs and expects them to show initiative and independence in all aspects of their programs. A major function of the Department is to train competent psychologists who can work in research, academic, or applied settings.

All graduate students are expected to maintain the ethical standards espoused by the American Psychological Association and to comply with departmental, college, and university policies and procedures. Failure to do so constitutes grounds for dismissal from the program.

Graduate students are also provided an opportunity to participate in setting and reviewing departmental policies and procedures through representation on major departmental committees. In addition, elected graduate student representatives are invited to attend departmental faculty meetings.

For many of the program requirements described above there is a form which must be signed by the GSC members upon completion of the particular requirement. It is the graduate student's responsibility to see that these signed forms are placed in his/her file as soon as the requirement has been met.

**Student Resources**
For the most up-to-date information on graduate school policies, please see the “Graduate Catalog” tab on the School of Graduate Studies home page (http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/) Resources for students are also listed under the “Student Resources” tab on the Psychology Department web-site: http://psychology.usu.edu/
APPENDIX
Student Self-Assessment & Evaluation
Behavior Analysis Program
Psychology Department, Utah State University

Due Date: June 15, 2020
It is important to complete Part 1 and return it ELECTRONICALLY to your advisor by the due date. Each student in the Behavior Analysis program must complete this form to remain in good standing in the program. Your advisor will review with you the completed evaluation after the Behavior Analysis faculty have reviewed it.

Date Submitted:

Student Name:

Faculty Advisor:

How many years have you been in the program: _____

If you completed your Master’s degree elsewhere, was your thesis accepted by the BA faculty? Yes ____ No ____

Part 1: To be completed by the student

Instructions: When you submit this form electronically to your advisor, also attach to the email your 1) updated plan of study, 2) current Supervisory Committee forms, and 3) your CV.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Courses taken</th>
<th>Grade Earned</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Replace this text with the course name and number</td>
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</table>

Program Requirements (see Handbook for details) Semester/Year Completed

2nd Year Project Proposed

2nd Year Project Defended

Doctoral Committee Approved

Doctoral Program of Study Approved

Comprehensive Exam Passed

Dissertation Successfully Proposed

Professional Milestones (see Handbook for details) Semester/Year Completed

Presenting Author – Conference Paper

Replace this text with your APA-formatted vita entry. You should have only one entry here. All others should appear in your vita.

Peer-reviewed publication(s)
Grant Proposal Submitted

Replace this text with the grant title, granting agency, amount requested, and the funding decision. You should have only one entry here. All others should appear in your vita.

List your accomplishments in this academic year

Courses taught (indicate semesters):
  • Here and below, list your accomplishments as bulleted points. If none, indicated “none”
Program requirements (see above) completed:
  • List accomplishments or “none”
Professional milestones (see above) completed:
  • List accomplishments or “none”
Presentations (papers or posters) at professional conferences:
  • List APA formatted citation or “none”
Experiments completed:
  • List titles of completed experiments or “none”
Publications submitted/accepted:
  • List APA formatted citation or “none”
Grants submitted/funded:
  • List grant title/amount/funding-decision or “none”
Papers reviewed for professional journals (provide only the journal name):
  • List accomplishments or “none”
Other accomplishments:
  • List accomplishments or “none”

Briefly evaluate your performance this year. If you are beyond the first year, please indicate if you believe your performance has improved, stayed about the same, or deteriorated. If the latter, please outline your self-improvement plan.

Please evaluate your seminar performance this year. Are you adequately prepared? Are you contributing to the discussion? Students are expected to regularly and substantively contribute to seminar discussions.

Briefly outline your plans for the next academic year. What do you plan to accomplish? Which areas of your performance will you concentrate on improving?
Part 2: Faculty Evaluation of Student Performance (to be completed by the faculty)

Behavior Analysis students are expected to:

- Earn A's in all of their courses. A grade of “C” is “Unacceptable”.
- Be productively involved in research for the duration of the program leading to publishable products.
- **Actively** participate in a Psych 7090 Program Seminar.
- Be mature, professional, and involved departmental/program citizens.

Students demonstrating *Unacceptable* performance in any of these areas may be dismissed from the Behavior Analysis program.

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<th>Unacceptable</th>
<th>Meeting Expectations</th>
<th>Exceptional</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involvement in Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Seminar Participation</td>
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<td>(attendance and quality)</td>
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<td>Maturity/Professionalism</td>
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<td>Ability to Work with Others</td>
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<td>Responsiveness to feedback</td>
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<td>Performance in Assistantships</td>
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<td>Timely Progress Toward Completion of Program</td>
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<td>Course Grades</td>
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*Note: Performance is rated as “Exceptional” only for truly unusually exceptional accomplishments in an area.*

Comments/Recommendations:

*Standing in the Program:* Good _____  Probationary _____  Recommend Dismissal _____

Signatures:

Faculty Advisor: ________________________________

Student: ________________________________

Behavior Analysis Director of Graduate Training: ________________________________