

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

2023-2024



UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, BERKELEY

The Department of Psychology's *Graduate Student Handbook* has been produced to acquaint students with the department's graduate program, student organizations and resources, and with Graduate Division's policies and procedures. This handbook is best used in conjunction with the Psychology Department's [Graduate Program pages](#), the University's [Academic Guide](#) and the [Guide to Graduate Policy](#), as well as other Graduate Division publications. It is recommended that you keep the handbook in an accessible place for easy reference.

If questions arise, contact the Graduate Student Services Advisor, Berkeley Way West office 3312, psychgradadvisor@berkeley.edu, 510-642-1382.

For more information and reference tools, visit the Psychology Department's [home page](#), the department's Resources and Forms files in [bCourses](#), as well as Graduate Division's [website](#).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Learning Outcomes – 4
Degree Requirements – 4
Training as a Teaching Assistant – 10
Optional Master’s Degree – 11
Second-Year Research Poster – 12
Paper Requirement – 12
Student Committee Participation - 13
Qualifying Examination – 14
Advancement to Candidacy – 18
Normative Time and Candidacy – 20
Registration and Grading – 22
Academic Appointments – 24
Departmental Funds – 26
Student Organizations – 31
Health Insurance and Medical Resources – 32
Academic Resources – 33
Appeals Process – 35

❖ Learning Outcomes

Psychology as a scientific discipline aims to describe, understand, and predict the behavior of living organisms. In doing so, psychology embraces the many factors that influence behavior - from sensory experience to complex cognition, from the role of genetics to that of social and cultural environments, from the processes that explain behavior in early childhood to those that operate in older ages, and from typical development to pathological conditions.

The Department of Psychology at UC Berkeley reflects the diversity of our discipline's mission covering six key areas of research: Behavioral and Systems Neuroscience; Cognition; Cognitive Neuroscience; Clinical Science; Developmental; and Social-Personality Psychology. Our program learning goals focus on honing methodological, statistical and critical thinking skills relevant to all areas of Psychology research; enabling students with sufficient breadth to retain perspective in the field of psychology and sufficient depth to permit successful independent and significant research.

The major academic objectives of the Ph.D. program are for students to:

- Develop an understanding of the different theoretical and empirical frameworks that have defined and shaped the field
- Develop an understanding of the central questions and issues in contemporary psychology
- Develop expertise in one or more relevant research methodologies
- Build expertise in formulating testable hypotheses and designing appropriate studies
- Hone ability to critically evaluate scientific research
- Develop expertise in statistics and advanced data analytic approaches
- Develop an awareness of the importance of science to humanity while recognizing its limits (i.e., some scientific knowledge is culture specific and may not be applicable to the human condition universally)
- Develop competence as a teacher of undergraduates and mentor to graduate students.

❖ Degree Requirements

Degree Requirements: Coursework

Core Courses. The Psychology Department has only four department-wide core courses:

1. Psych 205, Data Analysis. See Statistics and Methodology, below
2. Psych 292, Introduction to the Profession of Psychology, which gives an overview of ethical issues and a series of faculty speakers, introducing students to faculty research programs and the history of the field (fall semester, first year);

3. Psych 293, Second-Year Seminar on Professional Development, a seminar on various issues in professional development (spring semester, second or third year);
4. Psych 375, Teaching Psychology, which is required prior to or concurrent with the first semester of teaching as a Teaching Assistant (TA) (offered only in the fall semester and is usually taken by students in their first year).

Statistics and Methodology. The Department requires each student to take two semesters of graduate level statistics. The psychology department offers a broad course in multivariate statistics (currently Psych 205). Statistics and Data Analysis classes are also offered in many departments across campus. Students might find that some of these classes are better at satisfying their specialized needs and second semester requirements. In addition, the campus offers short courses both in programming and in statistical analyses (e.g. dlab.berkeley.edu). Most students are thus encouraged to take 205 in the department during their first year and in consultation with their advisor to choose a second statistics course that best fits their need. Students are also encouraged to take advantage of the workshops such as those offered by [D-Lab](#) and to take a self-paced programming course.

All students should discuss their plans with their faculty advisor when considering substitution course to satisfy a specific requirement. We maintain a list of [pre-approved course substitutions for the Statistics requirement here](#). If you choose to take a class from this list to satisfy a requirement, you must notify the Graduate Student Affairs Officer (GSAO) at the time of course completion. If the GSAO is not notified, the course cannot be updated in the system to reflect counting towards the degree requirement. If you and your advisor would like to substitute a course that is NOT on this list, please submit the department's Department & Area Requirement Exception Request Form to the Graduate Student Services Advisor for consideration.

The form is in [bCourses > Psychology Graduate Students > Files > Enrollment & Registration > Dept. & Area Requirement Exception Request - fillable.pdf](#)

Research and Directed Study. Each area requires continuous involvement in research through the time in residence. Formal credit is obtained through enrollment in Psychology 299, Research. Also available is Psychology 298, Directed Study. These courses are taken normally as Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory (S/U), but may be taken for letter grades when there is mutual consent between the student and mentor. The number of units will vary from semester to semester, but when combined with the units from other courses, a full course load should total 12 or more units per semester. A unique Course Number (CN) for each research lab is required for correct Psychology 299 registration. CNs are posted each semester in Psychology Graduate Student Resources/Registration & Enrollment.

Colloquia. Each area has a colloquium series in which researchers lead discussions on selected topics in the area of specialization. Each student is required to register for and attend the colloquia in the student's area each semester in residence. The colloquia course numbers are:

- Behavioral and Systems Neuroscience (BSN): (See Note)
- Cognition (Cog): Psych 229A
- Cognitive Neuroscience (CN): Psych 229B
- Clinical Science (CS): Psych 239
- Developmental (Dev): Psych 249
- Social-Personality (S/P): Psych 259 and 269

Behavioral and Systems Neuroscience students may fulfill their requirement by attending colloquia in Cog, Cognitive Neuroscience, or Developmental Areas. See the Graduate Student Services Advisor for instructions.

Proseminars. Proseminars are offered either yearly or every other year. They provide the core content necessary for a student to become an effective scholar and researcher in the area of specialization. Each area has different requirements for the number of proseminars that students are expected to complete; see Summary of Area Requirements below.

Topical Courses and Seminars. Each student with appropriate training is expected to enroll in relevant advanced courses and seminars (e.g., 290B, 290H, 290I, 290J, etc...) in the area of specialization.

Summary of Department and Area Requirements. Below are the departmental requirements followed by each area's additional requirements for the doctoral program. The bolded entries are requirements for the optional M.A. degree. Clinical Science students should also refer to their area-specific documentation.

All students should discuss their plans with their advisor when considering a course not listed as a specific seminar or proseminar requirement. We maintain a [list of pre-approved seminar and proseminar substitutions here](#). If you choose to take a class from this list to satisfy a requirement, you must notify the Graduate Student Affairs Officer (GSAO) at the time of course completion. If the GSAO is not notified, the course cannot be updated in the system to reflect counting towards the degree requirement. If you and your advisor would like to substitute a course that is NOT on this list, please submit the department's Department & Area Requirement Exception Request Form to the Graduate Student Services Advisor for consideration.

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DEPARTMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

EXPECTED COMPLETION

Research (299)

Register each semester.

Weekly Colloquia (either 229A-B, 239, 249, or 259 & 269)

Register each semester.

Psych 292 (Intro to the Profession of Psychology)

Fall, Year 1

Psych 375 (Teaching Psychology)

Fall, Year 1 or 2 (preferably 1)

Psych 205 (Data Analysis) or approved equivalent

Year 1 or 2 (preferably 1)

Second semester statistics

Year 1 or 2 (preferably 1)

Psych 293 (Professional Development Seminar)

Spring, Year 2 or 3

Establish Qualifying Examination Committee

Spring, Year 2

Second-Year Research Poster

Spring, Year 2

Research Paper

By date of Qualifying Exam

Qualifying Examination

By end of Spring, Year 3

Advance to Doctoral Candidacy

By Fall, Year 4

Dissertation Proposal

By Spring, Year 4

Dissertation Filing

By Spring, Year 5

1. Procedural error or violation of official policy by academic or administrative personnel;
2. Judgments improperly based upon non-academic criteria, including, but not limited to, discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex, race, national origin, color, age, religion, sexual orientation, or ability status.
3. Specific mitigating circumstances beyond the student's control not properly taken into account in a decision affecting the student's academic progress.

A written complaint must be received by the head Graduate Advisor within 30 days from the time the student knew or could reasonably be expected to have known of the action that is the subject of the complaint. The department will complete its investigation and notify the student of the outcome of the complaint within 60 days of the date it was received.

The time frame for filing a written complaint may be extended by the department if the student has been involved in continuing efforts toward informal resolution, and the informal resolution process was initiated within 30 days of the time the student knew or could reasonably be expected to have known of the action that is the subject of the complaint. All time frames referred to in this procedure refer to calendar days. Summer and winter-semester recesses are not included within these time frames.

A. APPEAL TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION

If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the complaint under the department's procedure, he or she may bring the complaint to the Formal Appeal Procedure of the Graduate Appeals Procedure. The formal appeal must be received in the Office of the Dean of Graduate Division, 424 Sproul Hall, within 15 days for the date of the written notification of the result of the unit level procedure. Copies of the Graduate Appeal Procedure (updated May 11, 2012) may be obtained from the Department's Student Services Office or the Office of the Dean of the Graduate Division, or at the following link:

grad.berkeley.edu/policy/coursework-grading-probation-and-dismissal-policy/#e19-graduate-student-appeal-procedure

A. COMPLAINTS INVOLVING DISCRIMINATION

If the complaint involves allegations of discrimination or harassment on the basis of sex, race, national origin, color, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability, the department will consult appropriate campus compliance officers prior to commencing informal or formal resolution. The names, phone numbers, and campus addresses of these individuals are listed in the various campus publications and may be obtained from the Office of the Dean of Graduate Division (510-642-5472) or the Academic Compliance Office at (510) 642-2795.

A. OTHER COMPLAINT PROCEDURES

Graduate students may contact the office of the [Ombudsman for Students](#), the Title IX Compliance Officer, or the 504/ADA Compliance Office for assistance with complaint resolution. There are also other complaint resolution procedures listed in the Graduate Appeals Procedure for use regarding complaints that do not fall under this procedure.