

THE UNIVERSITY OF
MEMPHIS[®]



DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

GRADUATE STUDENT HANDBOOK

UPDATED FALL 2026

NOTE: THESE ARE GUIDELINES COMMON TO ALL OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT'S FIVE GRADUATE PROGRAMS. MORE SPECIFIC INFORMATION RELEVANT TO EACH GRADUATE PROGRAM MAY BE FOUND IN A HANDBOOK RELEVANT TO THAT SPECIFIC GRADUATE PROGRAM

CONTENTS

THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY	4
GENERAL INFORMATION:	
Ethical Behavior and Expectation of Mutual Respect	4
Structure of the Department	4
Programs	5
Research Areas	5
Major Professor/Advisor	5
People in the Department	5
Graduate Coordinator and Administrative Assistant	5
Program Directors	5
Main Office and Finance Team Staff	5
Psychology Graduate Student Association (PGSA)	5
Space, Safety, Security, and Resources	6
Digital ID Cards	6
Office and Lab Space	7
Keys	7
Security	7
Parking	7
Mail/Copy Room	8
Email	9
Software/Off-campus Access to Apps	9
Recreation and Wellness Center	9
Athletics	9
Student Discounts	9
Healthcare	9
FUNDING	10
Assistantships	10
Other employment	11
Getting Paid	11
COURSES	11
What to Take	11
What is a Full-Time Load?	11
Late Stage Doctoral Credit Hour Enrollment	12
Pins, Permits, and Registration	12
PROGRAM MILESTONES	13
MSGP Milestones	13
MA/EdS Milestones	13
PhD Milestones	13
Thesis/Dissertation Hours	13
Transferring a Thesis	14
Mid-point Project (i.e., second milestone)	14
Committees, Chairs, and Graduate Faculty	14
Committee Composition	14

Announcement of Proposals and Final Defenses	15
GRADES AND RETENTION	15
GPA	15
Transfer of Credit	16
Repetition of Courses – University Policy	16
Academic Probation	16
Incomplete Grades	17
Grade Disputes	17
Annual Evaluations of Students	17
Changing Major Professor or Programs	17
Leaves of Absence	18
Grievance Procedures	18
Harassment/Discrimination Grievance Procedures	18
Other Grievances	19
Graduation	19
Policy for Summer Tuition	19
Appendix A. Department Grievance Procedures	20
Appendix B. Leave of Absence Request Form	21

THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

The Department of Psychology is home to five graduate programs: Doctoral Programs in Clinical, Experimental, and School Psychology (Ph.D.); Masters of Science in General Psychology (MSGP); and Masters/Specialist degree in School Psychology (MA/Ed.S.).

The purpose of this Psychology **Department Graduate Student Handbook** is to provide practical, nuts and bolts information that you need as a graduate student in our department. The handbook provides information about such things as how to register for courses and how to complete the right paperwork for each program milestone. This Handbook is also [online](#) and may be accessed at the bottom of the screen under “Other Forms and Information”.

Another important source of information is the University of Memphis [Graduate Catalog](#). The graduate catalog is the university’s book of rules and regulations, including the list of specific courses you need to take and other requirements you need to meet in order to graduate. Psychology department entries for our graduate programs can be found in the graduate catalog under the [College of Arts and Sciences](#).

GENERAL INFORMATION: ETHICAL BEHAVIOR AND EXPECTATION OF MUTUAL RESPECT

Students enrolled in a Department of Psychology graduate program are expected to behave in accordance with the university’s [Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities](#) and the university’s [policies on academic and classroom misconduct](#).

As a graduate student, you may be exposed to issues that you may encounter in the professional practice of psychology, including, but not limited to, culture, disability, ethnicity, gender, generation, sexual orientation, national origin, privilege, race, size, and different views on religion in education, policy, research, practice, recruitment, and retention. The University of Memphis Department of Psychology strives to offer resources to students that promote goals of professional responsibility, understanding, and mutual respect. The American Psychological Association has policies and recommendations regarding these issues, as evident in the following sources: [Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct](#) and [Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, Seventh Edition](#).

Our goal is to foster a community free from discrimination, harassment, exploitation, and intimidation. Formal grievance policies are in place and discussed later in this Handbook.

GENERAL INFORMATION: STRUCTURE OF THE DEPARTMENT

The Department of Psychology at the University of Memphis has a two-dimensional structure: Programs and Research Areas. Your Major Professor/Advisor is the key point of contact in this structure.

PROGRAMS

We award graduate degrees in five major programs: Ph.D. degrees in Clinical, Experimental, and School Psychology; MA/EdS degrees in School Psychology; and MS in General Psychology (MSGP). Each of the department's graduate programs has a Program Director.

RESEARCH AREAS

We also define ourselves by the focus of our research interests: Clinical Health, Behavioral Neuroscience, Child and Family Studies, Cognitive Psychology, and Psychotherapy Research. Some of these areas hold regularly scheduled research meetings and are open to any member of the department.

MAJOR PROFESSOR/ADVISOR

The closest academic relationship you will have as a graduate student is with your Major Professor. Doctoral students are assigned a Major Professor; MSGP students have the MSGP Director as their academic advisor and are encouraged to become associated with a faculty mentor to serve as Major Professor. Your Major Professor is the Chairperson for your various milestones (described later). In addition, your Major Professor is your primary representative at student evaluation meetings.

GENERAL INFORMATION: PEOPLE IN THE DEPARTMENT

GRADUATE COORDINATOR AND ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Dr. Helen Sable is the Graduate Programs Coordinator (also called "Graduate Coordinator"), and in this capacity manages policies among the graduate programs and signs off on most graduate student paperwork. The Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant, Dr. Chelsea Liddell, oversees graduate admissions, maintains graduate student records, issues permits so you can enroll in classes, and handles paperwork when you meet various program milestones.

PROGRAM DIRECTORS

For specific questions related to your specific program, you are encouraged to communicate directly with your program director. Dr. Gina Caucci is the director of the MS in General Psychology program, Dr. Ryan Farmer is director of the MA/EdS program, Dr. Helen Sable is the Experimental Psychology PhD program director, Dr. Beth Meisinger is director of the School Psychology PhD program, and Dr. Joah Williams is the director of the Clinical Psychology PhD program. Dr. Brook Marcks serves as an Associate Director of the Clinical Psychology PhD program as well.

MAIN OFFICE AND FINANCE TEAM STAFF

Office Associate Rebecca Moore can furnish you with keys, supplies, and equipment, and help you schedule room reservations). Administrative Assistant Tinese Hazlett Harris supervises all office staff and can assist with scheduling meetings with Dr. Floyd. Chaquieta Williamson and Sheryl Hoffman handle most money issues (such as contracts for assistantships).

PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENT ASSOCIATION (PGSA)

The PGSA is comprised of psychology graduate students who are elected by students to represent students in department-wide issues. They do this by representing student opinion at

most faculty meetings, overseeing the distribution of travel funds to graduate students in the Psychology Department, helping to organize orientation for new students, planning lunches with faculty job candidates, and bringing issues to the attention of the faculty in general. PGSA meetings are scheduled on an ad hoc basis, typically monthly. Announcements are sent out via email, and all psychology graduate students are welcome to attend.

Student elections for the PGSA representatives are held annually. Generally, one student is elected from each class (first through fourth years) in the Clinical, Experimental, and School Ph.D. programs, and one representative is elected from the MA/Ed.S. School Psychology program and one from the MSGP program to ensure adequate and diverse representation. Representatives are permitted a maximum of three votes and vote on most issues at faculty meetings. Student votes are not taken for matters relating to individual faculty members or matters related to other students.

GENERAL INFORMATION: SPACE, SAFETY, SECURITY, AND RESOURCES

Digital ID Cards

The University of Memphis credentials allow each student, faculty and staff member access to a digital identification card that bears their name and image, referred to as your Campus Card. This permanent identification card is used as the primary campus-wide method of determining privileges and accesses. To get started visit <https://www.memphis.edu/campuscard/mobile-id.php> and upload a photo in .jpg or .bmp format that meets the requirements detailed below.

 Example of photo	• Photo MUST have a solid white background • Normal facial expression • Eyes open • No hats or caps • No ‘glamour shots’ (such as head tilts, turning sideways, etc.) • No headphones, wireless hands-free devices, ear buds, etc. • Head covering may be worn for religious reasons as long as your full face is visible and the head covering does not cast any shadows on your face. • Prescription glasses are acceptable as long as there is no glare. Tilt your head slightly downward or remove your glasses. • Dark glasses or non-prescription glasses with tinted lenses are not acceptable unless you need them for medical reasons (a medical certificate may be required)
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Once activated your digital ID can be saved to your Apple, Samsung, or Google wallet. Your UofM digital ID will remain active as long as you are enrolled but remains the property of The University of Memphis.

OFFICE AND LAB SPACE

You will be spending a lot of time in the Psychology Building. Doctoral students are assigned an office, which is likely space that is shared with one or more other students. If you are working in a research lab, you might also have space to work there.

KEYS

Keys to offices and labs are maintained by staff in the main office. Keys for labs require consent (a note, email, or call) from the faculty assigned the lab indicating the room(s) for which you need a key and the semester time frame for which you will be using it. All keys assigned to graduate students will be recorded on their digital inventory. Students are responsible for the security of the keys and for returning the keys when they are no longer needed. If keys are not returned when requested, a hold will be placed on the student's record restricting registration, transcripts and receipt of diploma.

SECURITY

Graduate students may need access to the Psychology building during a wide range of hours. You must get permission for your *digital* University ID card to be used to gain access to the building. You can call the campus police general number for non-emergencies such as being locked out of your office at night (901-678-3848). The emergency number to police services is 901-678-4537 (901-678-HELP).

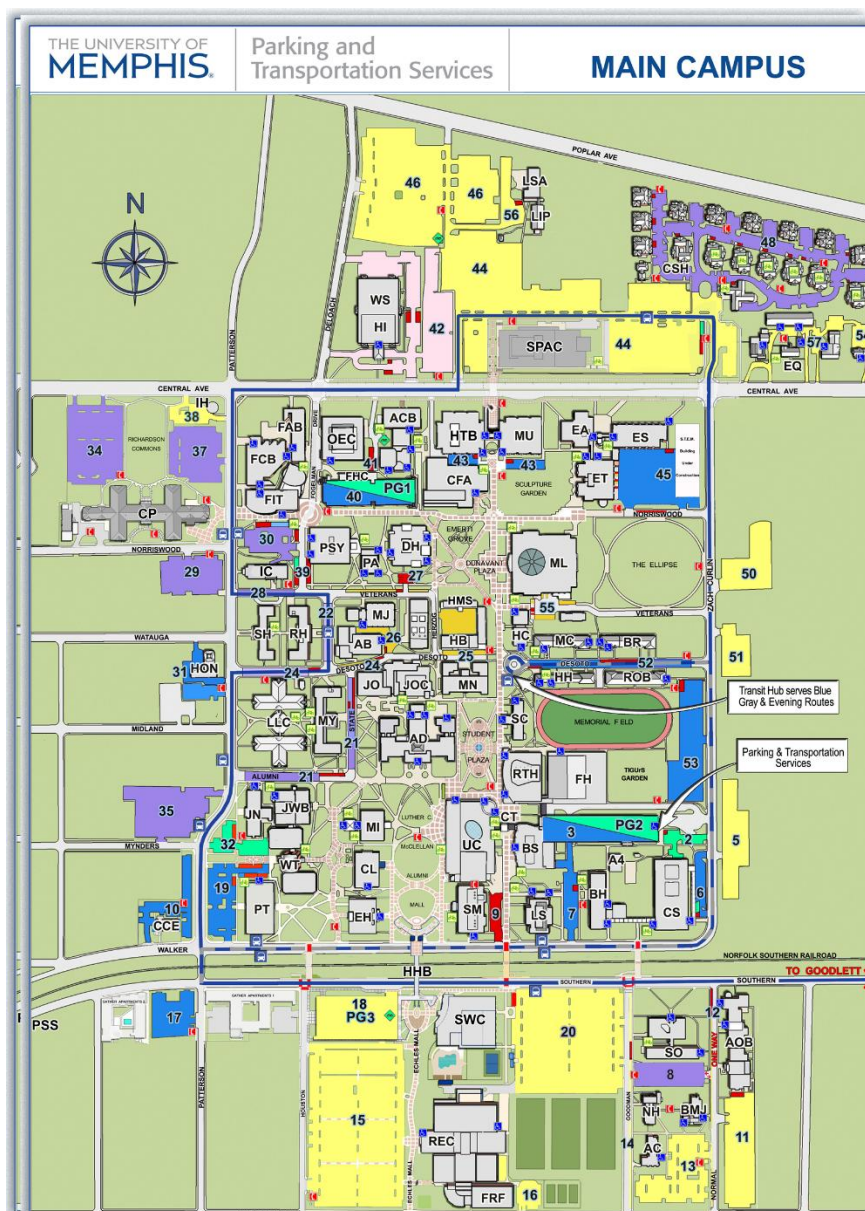
Tiger Patrol is a personal escort program staffed by students to enhance the safety of persons on campus in the evening. There is no need to walk alone and we encourage you to use Tiger Patrol if you aren't walking in a group. Normal hours for the fall and spring semesters are 6:00 p.m. until 2:00 a.m. seven days a week. To request an escort, you should call 678-4663 (678-HOME).

All students who are members of Tiger Patrol have had a criminal background check and are in good standing with the University. When they arrive by foot or golf cart, you should notice a multicolored lanyard holding an ID that says Tiger Patrol under the person's name.

After Tiger Patrol hours, campus police provide escorts until dawn, although response time may be dependent upon officer availability. (Note: Use of the escort program as a "taxi" for convenience rather than safety is discouraged, e.g. multiple people wanting a ride because it is raining. Use in this manner detracts from their ability to provide other services. Please do NOT call for an escort after dawn, as their normal duties restrict them from providing service after that time.)

PARKING

There are several different types of [parking](#) on campus. *General Parking* is paid for through the maintenance fee portion of semester tuition. Once the student has registered for classes, a semester validation sticker will be mailed to the address on file with the Student Records Department. New students are mailed a permit (hangtag) along with a semester validation sticker prior to fee payment. The permits (hangtags) run on a three-year cycle and need to be updated every semester. If, for any reason, you do not receive the semester validation sticker or permit through mail, you need to go to the Parking Office the first week of class to obtain one. The semester validation sticker should be placed on the right side of permit. This validates the permit



(hangtag) to be used in General Parking Lots only. The parking office website shows a map of where these lots are on campus.

Priority Gate Access

Parking is available each semester on a first come first serve basis.

Availability of parking lots differs each semester. Check with the Parking Services Office for information on space availability. Faculty/staff may purchase priority permits year-round on a monthly, semester, or yearly basis depending on employment status.

memphis.edu/parking

LEGEND

- Accessible Entrance
- Emergency Phones
- Motorcycle Parking
- Bike Racks
- Blue Line Bus Stop
- Main Campus Blue Route
- Park Avenue Campus Gray Route
- Evening Route

PARKING AREAS

- Accessible Permit
- General Permit
- Hotel Parking Only
- Priority Permit
- Reserved Permit
- Resident Permit
- Visitor

Students may only purchase into a Priority lot for a given semester during the permit sales window. Evening only access is also available for students to purchase. Evening access begins at 4:30p.m. Priority Lots: 6, 7, 18, 19, 37, 43, 45, 52, and 53 Parking Garages: Lots 3 and 40.

MAIL /COPY ROOM

You will have a key to the mail/copy room with approval (see key section above), which is Room 203. You will also have an assigned mailbox. Note that your mail will be in the box **BELOW** your name. Faculty mailboxes are also in this room, and also **BELOW** their names. The copiers require an access code via TigerPrint, which you can get from your major professor (if copies are research-related) or from the instructor of record if copies are related to your role as a teaching assistant.

EMAIL

All currently enrolled students have a Universal User ID (UUID) created automatically. The UUID is a username shared among various services delivered to students and is the basis of your university email account address, as follows: UUID@memphis.edu. Your university email is the official email address used for university correspondence. If you prefer to use another account, you need to have your university email forwarded to your other address. Visit the ID Management [website](#) to make adjustments to your account, including how your username is displayed.

SOFTWARE/OFF-CAMPUS ACCESS TO APPS

The University of Memphis Information Technology Department provides various [software](#) free of charge and for purchase including Adobe Acrobat, Microsoft Office, SAS, and SPSS. Likewise, various aspects of Oracle may only be functional when on campus or when connected via [AnyConnect VPN](#) if off campus.

RECREATION AND WELLNESS CENTER

The university also has a recreation center located south of the railroad tracks. Please see their [website](#) for information on the variety of services it offers including free classes, the indoor/outdoor pools, gym, personal trainers and much more.

ATHLETICS

If sports are an interest, the University of Memphis has great athletic teams. For game schedules, tickets, scores and much more, see the [athletics page](#). Students generally receive free or discounted tickets to athletic events.

STUDENT DISCOUNTS

As a student, you are given discounts at area events such as the Orpheum Theatre and Playhouse on the Square. There are also discounts for Malco movies, the Pink Palace Museum and IMAX Theater, Ballet Memphis, and many more. To check out information on where, when and how much you can save being a student, check out the TigerPerks [website](#).

HEALTHCARE

The University of Memphis has contracted with [Wellfleet](#) to provide a comprehensive health insurance option for our international and full-time domestic graduate students. This is an ACA compliant (Affordable Care Act) plan and provides annual coverage.

All [international students](#) (holding F or J visas) are automatically enrolled in the Wellfleet system upon registering for classes each semester. All [domestic graduate students](#) on a full-time (i.e., 20 hour/week) graduate assistantship (GA) are also eligible. To receive this insurance, full-time GAs must OPT IN by completing the necessary [enrollment form](#) by September 4, 2026. A one-time administrative fee of \$230 will be deducted from the graduate assistants paycheck after enrollment period is complete.

If you are an international student who is also a full-time graduate assistant, your status in the Wellfleet system will be switched from "international" to "supported GA" once your contract is processed and the health insurance charges will be reversed on your tiger express account. This process can take up to 72 hrs.

Dependents cannot receive health benefits but coverage is available for purchase through Wellfleet.

Limited medical services are also available at the University Health Center upon presentation of a valid digital student identification card.

FUNDING

ASSISTANTSHIPS

Doctoral students in good standing are expected to work in a 20-hour per week (September through August) assistantship in exchange for tuition waiver, fees, and a stipend. The stipend is typically \$18,000/year before you get your Psychology masters' degree, and \$19,000/year after you get your master's degree (completing an empirical thesis). Some MSGP and MA/Ed.S. students may be funded.

If you have an assistantship you are considered a Graduate Assistant (GA). There are four types of Graduate Assistants: Research Assistant, Teaching Assistant, special assignment, and external placement. If assigned a GA as a research assistant (RA), you will be assigned to work in a faculty member's lab. Alternatively, you may be assigned as a teaching assistant (TA) with duties related to teaching (e.g., assisting a professor with a course or undergraduate course instructor), or given a special assignment (SA) which can have varying duties related to the department. Students in the School Psychology and Clinical Psychology programs are sometimes assigned to placements in community agencies after their first year.

Time off from assistantship duties for vacation, illness, travel, or holidays may be taken in accordance with the policies of the site. For departmental assistantships, this typically includes university holidays and 2 to 4 additional weeks. Time off should be scheduled and negotiated in advance with the supervising faculty member. Please note that in most positions you will be expected to work even during Fall Break and Spring Break (as the university remains open during these periods) unless you have arranged for time off with your supervisor. Any changes to your schedule should be discussed with your immediate supervisor.

Graduate students who are funded by faculty grants, or other outside graduate student funding positions such as clinical placements, have their own leave policies. Each student should ask the placement supervisor about leave policy.

Graduate assistantships are allocated by the Department Chair and Program Directors and specific assignments are made by the Graduate Coordinator with input from the Department Chair. With some exceptions, only full-time students are considered for assistantships or other university support. Continuation on an assistantship is dependent upon academic and assistantship performance. Academic probation or unacceptable assistantship performance are sufficient grounds for termination of support. Graduate students are typically not supported for more than six years.

OTHER EMPLOYMENT

If you are being paid for any professionally-related work, it should be approved in advance by your Program Director. We want to ensure that there is a clear line between training experiences and paid work, and we also want to ensure that your burgeoning psychology skills are not being exploited. There are also rules about getting paid by more than one state agency. With very few exceptions, we do not expect graduate students on assistantship to have additional employment activities.

GETTING PAID

On assistantship, you get paid monthly, on the last business day of the month beginning at the end of September and ending at the end of August each year. The university requires that regular paychecks be handled through direct deposit.

COURSES

WHAT TO TAKE

The question of which courses to take depends a lot on the program in which you are enrolled. Your primary guide, especially in the first year, will be your Major Professor and your Program Director (particularly for MSGP students). The timing of various courses will depend in part on program recommendations and course availability. Your Program Director might also have a checklist you can go by. The list of all the courses you need to graduate is listed in the [graduate catalog](#). If you plan to use Masters Thesis research completed at another University, you should enroll for 8000 level courses, and arrange for the defense of your prior thesis (see Transferring a Thesis, in this document).

You can take courses in other departments, but know that they may or may not count toward your degree requirements and may or many not be covered by tuition remission if you have a GA. You can also take undergraduate courses with special permission, if they are deemed directly relevant to your program of graduate training. This permission would come from your major professor and Program Director. If approval is granted and you have an assistantship, payment for these courses is covered by your tuition remission just like your other courses.

WHAT IS A FULL-TIME LOAD?

PhD students on assistantships must maintain enrollment in at least 9 credit hours for fall and for spring semesters unless they are late-stage doctoral students (i.e., taking externship and/or dissertation credits). This is to ensure that you qualify to have the department cover your tuition, fees, and eligibility for health insurance. A typical load would be three courses, each worth 3 hours of credit. Hours needed to make the 9-hour minimum could be filled with courses such as first year colloquium, a research area colloquium, course credit for working in a research lab (Research Practicum), or course credit for working on a thesis or dissertation.

For international PhD students, a minimum of 9 credit hours of enrollment is required in all regular semesters, with 6 of those credit hours required to be on campus, in the classroom. Students taking overloads in a Spring or Fall semester still must have 6 credit hours on campus, in the classroom, but may take all other courses online.

In rare cases, a PhD student may be granted permission to enroll for a lighter load. However, approval must be obtained from the Program Director and Department Chair, and the lighter load may mean that you no longer qualify for an assistantship. Also, in rare cases, a student is granted permission to enroll for heavier load (i.e., > 9 credit hours). Again, approval must be obtained from the Program Director and Department Chair to do so.

Graduate students in the Department of Psychology will be permitted to drop courses only in exceptional cases and only with the prior approval of the Program Director. If dropping the course means going below the 6-hour limit for full-time students on assistantship, then approval must be obtained by the Department Chair.

MA/EdS students must attend full-time (at least 9 hrs) unless approved for fewer hours by the program director. Students in the MSGP program are not required to take any minimum number of credits per semester unless on a full-time GA and wanting health insurance, which will require enrollment to be full-time (i.e., 9 hrs).

LATE STAGE DOCTORAL CREDIT HOUR ENROLLMENT

In addition to individual waivers to the 9-hour requirement in order to maintain full-time student status, advanced doctoral students are considered “Late Stage Doctoral status” and are able to be recognized as full-time students even if they register for fewer than 9 credit hours (for up to two years). Students who have completed Masters and Mid-point Project requirements and have submitted completed Thesis and Comprehensive Examination forms to the University are eligible for this. Under this policy, late-stage doctoral students can request to be considered a full-time student if they: a) register for at least one credit hour and, b) maintain at least part time work on their Dissertation research. Students who certify that they meet both of these requirements are recognized as full-time students and are eligible for department, university, and external funding. Students who certify that they meet both a) and b) may continue to receive this benefit for up to four semesters (excluding summers). Late-stage status is formally offered when signing at the bottom of the University [Comprehensive Exam Results Form](#).

PINS, PERMITS, AND REGISTRATION

Registration is done through [myMemphis](#) using your UUID and password. Most graduate classes are listed under two numbers, one starting with a 7 (e.g., PSYC 7010) and one starting with an 8 (e.g., PSYC 8010). Often these appear together (e.g., PSYC 7010/8010 or 7/8010). Students who have not yet received a master’s degree should enroll in the course beginning with 7***. Students who have been awarded a master’s degree should register for courses beginning with 8***.

Registration will typically require a pin to to begin registration and psychology courses may also require a permit to register . Both pins and permits are issued by the graduate administrative assistant (Dr. Liddell). To request a pin or permit, [email Dr. Liddell](#). For permits, make sure to include the course name, course number, CRN, and instructor of the course you need the permit for. In some cases, the size of the course is limited, so permits will be issued for eligible students who are closest to externship/graduation.

A permit is *permission* to enroll. You must still go into the myMemphis system to register for the course. Note that the Psychology Department graduate secretary cannot issue permits for restricted courses in other departments.

PROGRAM MILESTONES

Program milestones vary from program to program. Each milestone has a committee and involves a proposal of the planned project and a defense of the final project. A committee is involved throughout the process. Topics for these milestone projects must be empirically based, psychological in nature, and acceptable to the committee. Each milestone has paperwork to accompany it. Forms must be completed, signed, and handed in upon completion of each stage for each milestone. You can get the requisite forms off the [psychology department webpage](#). Here is an overview of the milestones for each program.

MSGP MILESTONES

Thesis (or Specialty Review)

MA/EdS MILESTONES

M.A. Oral and Written Exam

Ed.S. Praxis Exam

MS/PhD MILESTONES

I. Thesis

II. Clinical Students:

- a) Major Area Paper
- b) Completing an empirical manuscript or clinical case study, submitted for publication
- c) An applied clinical research project such as a program evaluation
- d) Submission of a grant with the student as Principal Investigator

Experimental Students:

- a) Major Area Paper
- b) Completing an empirical manuscript, submitted for publication
- c) Specialty Exam
- d) Submission of a grant with the student as Principal Investigator

School Students:

- a) Specialty Exam

III. Dissertation

THESIS/DISSERTATION HOURS

Students writing a thesis or dissertation or engaged in a culminating or capstone project must enroll on a continuous basis (Fall and Spring) until they have met capstone program requirements. Most programs require at least one culminating experience course; see specific program requirements for details. A student must be enrolled for at least 1 hour each Fall and Spring semester until the thesis, dissertation, or project is complete. A student must be enrolled in the Summer semester if the thesis, or dissertation project will be defended during the summer

semester. You can earn up to 3 hours of credit for work on your thesis, and up to 9 hours for work on your dissertation.

The grade of “S” is awarded when the student is making satisfactory progress toward completion or has successfully defended the thesis or dissertation; the grade of “U” is awarded when the student fails to make satisfactory progress toward completion or has defended unsuccessfully. Two consecutive semesters of “U” in thesis or dissertation coursework may result in termination from the program.

TRANSFERRING A THESIS

If you conducted a thesis at another master's program, it must be evaluated by our program faculty to see if it is acceptable for credit in our program. The thesis must be an empirical project in psychology or a closely related field and must be approved by a three-person committee, headed by your Major Professor. Membership of the committee should otherwise follow the regular rules for thesis committees previously described. The committee will review the completed thesis and accept or reject the thesis. You *must* schedule an oral defense with your committee. If a majority of the committee approves, the thesis requirement will be waived. If the committee fails to approve the thesis, the student must complete a thesis at The University of Memphis.

MID-POINT PROJECT (I.E., SECOND MILESTONE)

Although there are hours for Major Area Paper, you need *not* sign up for a particular course for the Second Milestone (Mid-Point Project) because this is solely a department requirement. You can earn up to 6 hours for your MAP.

COMMITTEES, CHAIRS AND GRADUATE FACULTY

All milestones require a committee to evaluate your planned project and to evaluate the final product. It is the student's responsibility to ask faculty to serve on the committee. There are several rules guiding the composition of these committees.

COMMITTEE COMPOSITION

The University of Memphis has three levels of graduate faculty status: [Full, Associate, and External](#). Graduate Faculty Status is *not* the same as the faculty members rank (Assistant, Associate, or Professor). The composition of the Department of Psychology milestone committees in terms of Graduate Faculty Status levels is as follows:

- Only Full status, psychology graduate faculty members may chair doctoral committees and must be full time members of the Psychology Department.
- Full or Associate psychology graduate faculty may chair Masters committees and must be full time members of the Psychology Department.
- External graduate faculty may *not* chair Masters or Doctoral committees.
- No more than one External (if not employed with the University of Memphis) graduate faculty member may serve as a voting member of a student's committee.
- No more than one member of the committee, regardless of status, may be employed outside the University of Memphis.

You may find Psychology graduate faculty membership and ranks at https://www.memphis.edu/gradschool/resources/graduate_faculty/cas/psyc.php.

The thesis, the MSGP Specialty Review, and the Mid-Point milestone committees must each have a minimum of three members including the chairperson. The dissertation committee must have a minimum of four members including the chairperson. For *all* committees, two committee members, including the chairperson, must be full-time faculty members in the Department of Psychology.

At least one of the committee members must represent either

1. Another department at the University of Memphis, or
2. A University of Memphis Psychology Department PhD program outside the student's doctoral program (Clinical, Experimental School), or
3. A doctoral area at another institution.

NOTE: For MSGP students, 2 and 3 would refer to someone outside the degree program of the student's Major Professor. Also, the department chair is an ex officio voting member of all department committees and signs off on all decisions.

The student and faculty committee members sign an agreement (Thesis/Dissertation Committee Appointment form), a copy of which is maintained by the Graduate School.

Once selected, a committee chairperson or committee members will not be changed except under unusual circumstances. Such changes must be made by the student's Program Director and approved by the Department Chair. The student should not begin the thesis, the major area paper, or the dissertation without formal, written committee approval. Expenses incurred in the conduct of thesis and dissertation research are the responsibility of the student, in consultation with the committee chairperson.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF PROPOSALS AND FINAL DEFENSES

The student and Major Professor should first develop a list of dates and times for a proposal or final defense meeting, then send this list to the other committee members to arrive at a meeting time. Students are required to distribute an email to all Psychology faculty and students announcing the a) title, b) date, time, and room, and c) list of committee members for both the proposal defense and the final defense of all milestone projects. Students should refer to the [online list](#) of all of the necessary forms for the department and for the University for each milestone.

GRADES AND RETENTION

GPA

University Graduate School policy requires that a GPA of 3.0 be maintained across all graduate work. In addition, if a student's graduate *psychology* GPA falls below 3.0 the student will be placed on academic probation. Grades of "D" and "F" will not apply toward any graduate degree but will be computed in the GPA. Continuation of any type of university or external agency

financial support will be contingent upon academic performance in all psychology coursework that is above the minimally acceptable 3.0 GPA level.

Note that there may be additional course-related requirements relevant to the school and clinical PhD programs based on APA accreditation requirements.

TRANSFER OF CREDIT

If you've taken graduate psychology classes elsewhere, or have taken graduate courses in another department at the University of Memphis prior to admission to the Psychology Department, you may apply for transfer credit toward your coursework. Credits can transfer as substitutes for a specific course, or as credit hours only with no course substitution. Both types of decisions about transfer credits are made by the appropriate graduate program director (Clinical, Experimental, School) and the Graduate Coordinator, often with input from the student's Major Professor. Approved transfer credit may be accepted for up to one-half the total number of hours toward a master's or doctoral degree. No more than 12 hours of course credit may be transferred toward a master's or EdS degree. Substitutions generally are not granted for any of the Clinical Psychology program's core curriculum.

For transfer credit, please use either the [master's program form](#) or the [doctoral form](#) as appropriate to the student's program. A separate transfer form exists for [certificate programs](#). Instructions to guide the student and department through transfer credit processes are on the forms. Credits the student wishes to transfer must conform with academic department requirements (as communicated by the department) and University requirements (noted on the forms above). It is a good idea for the student to discuss their transfer credit plans with their advisor prior to registration. The Psychology department needs to approve these credits for transfer before the Graduate School is notified.

For a transfer credit form to be reviewed and processed at the Graduate School, the student needs to make certain an official transcript is on file with the Graduate School.

REPETITION OF COURSES—UNIVERSITY POLICY

Grades of "D" or "F" must be repeated if they are to count for graduation. No more than seven hours of "C-", "C", or "C+" grades will be applied toward degree requirements. Grades of "C-", "C", or "C+" may need to be repeated to keep the psychology GPA over 3.0. No course may be taken more than twice. You can repeat a course to earn a higher grade only if the earned grade was lower than a "B". Only the grade earned in the second attempt will be included in the computation of the cumulative GPA. A maximum of two courses may be repeated to improve a grade. Department policy concerning the repeating of a course to improve a grade is the same as the University policy (see Graduate Catalog). However, faculty in a program have the right to require a student to repeat any course graded as lower than a "B-" (regardless of overall GPA) if they feel it is necessary for the student's training.

ACADEMIC PROBATION

A graduate student whose cumulative psychology GPA drops below 3.0 will be placed on probation; two successive semesters on probation may lead to termination from the program. Continuation in graduate school beyond two consecutive semesters on probation might be

granted if recommended by the Program Director and Graduate Coordinator and approved by the Arts and Sciences' Director of Graduate Studies and the Assistant Vice Provost for Graduate Studies. If, in the opinion of the program, department, and the Graduate School, the student is not making satisfactory progress toward degree completion, the student will be dismissed from the degree program. Students may also be placed on probation by their graduate program for inadequate progress on milestones, a lack of professionalism in completing work tasks or interacting with peers and supervisors, ethical/legal transgressions, or poor development of teaching, clinical, or research skills.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

A grade of Incomplete ("I") is given only if the student has not completed course requirements for some unavoidable reason that is acceptable to the instructor. Unless the student completes the requirements within 90 days from the end of the semester or summer term in which the "I" was received, the grade will automatically be changed to an "F" by the Records Office. Extensions of grades of "I" will be granted only under exceptional circumstances. The policy on "I" grades does not pertain to those courses in psychology for which grades of "S" (satisfactory), "U" (unsatisfactory), or "IP" (In Progress) are awarded (like credits for working on your thesis or dissertation).

GRADE DISPUTES

If you want to dispute a grade, you should talk with the instructor first in an effort to work out the dispute. If you are not satisfied with the resolution, you may consult with the Department Chair, Associate Chair, any Graduate Program Director, or Graduate Coordinator. You can also submit a [grade appeal](#) to the Graduate School. Note that there are time limitations for submitting a complaint.

ANNUAL EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

Each year, you will receive feedback from your Program Director and Major Professor about your progress in the program. Ideally, you will be talking with your Major Professor throughout the year. Each program conducts at least one formal evaluation of students each year, usually in the spring. This is a chance for the program faculty to identify areas of strength as well as weakness, so that you can be advised on curriculum and other training issues. If there is a serious problem, the program might ask you to engage in some remedial work (e.g., repeat a course, obtain additional experience in a particular area). The program might even require this as a condition of you remaining in the program. If the problem is egregious enough, or you haven't responded to past requests to engage in remedial work, you may be terminated from the program. Students who are terminated cannot take additional courses in the department. (Students can appeal these decisions. See related section on "Grievance Procedures.")

CHANGING MAJOR PROFESSOR OR PROGRAMS

Each of the doctoral programs has a mentor model, and students are admitted to work with a particular professor. We assume that you will work with your mentor during your entire time in our program. Changing Major Professors is a significant decision that must be made only after much thought and discussion with your current Major Professor, Program Director, and the Graduate Coordinator. Note that this process is not guaranteed, as it requires identifying a new

major professor who has the willingness and funding to support you. Once you have talked to everyone involved and a plan is in place, you complete a form (available from the Graduate Coordinator) to make the change official. This form is submitted to the department's Graduate Programs Administrative Assistant.

Sometimes students find that their training interests would be better served in a different program (Clinical, Experimental, School) than the one to which they were admitted. If you think you would like to apply to a different program within the department, you should discuss this both with your current major professor and the Graduate Coordinator. Admission to the new program is not guaranteed. You need to apply just like any other applicant, follow all regular procedures, and be evaluated against the applicant pool. You should never assume that you can just "switch" programs. Continued graduate funding is also not guaranteed.

LEAVES OF ABSENCE

All graduate students in the Department of Psychology, consistent with University policy, are expected to maintain continuous enrollment during the fall and spring semesters. A student who plans not to enroll for a semester or more must request a leave of absence in writing. This does not apply to students going on a program-required internship.

The Leave of Absence Request Form (Appendix B) must indicate the general reason for the request and specify the anticipated date of return. Submission of this form will be taken as confirmation that the student understands that GA funding upon return to the program will be based on the conditions approved by the program at the time the leave is granted contingent on budget availability. This request must be approved by the Program Director, Graduate Coordinator, and Department Chair.

The student should be aware that the university may require submission of an application for readmission to the University. Any extensions beyond the period initially requested must be justified and reapproved by all parties. Students who fail to return to the program at the end of their approved leave without notification to the program may be considered for termination from the graduate program.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

HARASSMENT/DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

No form of sexual or racial harassment, discrimination, or retaliation will be tolerated. The University has [formal procedures](#) for dealing with these issues in the workplace. It should be noted that, as part of these procedures, "All faculty members, students and staff, particularly management and supervisory personnel, are responsible for taking reasonable and necessary action to prevent and discourage sexual or racial harassment and are required to promptly report conduct that could be in violation of institutional policies and guidelines. Such reporting should occur when information concerning a complaint is received formally or informally."

OTHER GRIEVANCES

Sometimes during a student's time in graduate school, a situation can arise that requires mediation to reduce/resolve conflict. The Psychology Department suggests you use the following procedures:

First, you should go to the person with whom you have a complaint and try to come to a resolution. You should feel free to consult informally with any other faculty member about the issue. At any time, you may consult with other students, including PGSA officers, to discuss the issue confidentially. You may elect to have a PGSA officer meet with a department administrator to discuss ways to resolve the concern. You may also contact the PGSA officers by email, or you can put a written complaint into the PGSA mailbox. Except for harassment and discrimination complaints (see above), the nature of these conversations can be kept confidential.

If you are unsatisfied or remain concerned, you may directly go to any Graduate Program Director to address the issue; you may go to the Graduate Coordinator; or you may go to the Department Chair or Associate Chair. You can email them or put a written complaint into their mailboxes. Except for harassment and discrimination complaints (see above), the nature of these conversations can be kept confidential.

Finally, if you wish you may take a more formal step and form a Grievance Committee. A full description of this procedure may be found in **Appendix A**.

GRADUATION

Students should pay careful attention to [graduation deadlines](#). Failure to turn in the appropriate forms and material to the Graduate School can result in the delay of graduation. At the beginning of the semester the student intends to graduate, PhD students must submit a [candidacy form](#) to the Graduate School. For Masters students, the Graduation Analyst will review your UMDegree to verify you are ready to graduate with your Masters degree.

POLICY FOR SUMMER TUITION

Students who have not successfully defended thesis/dissertation research before the end of the spring semester who wish to graduate in August must enroll in one hour of thesis/dissertation credit during the summer. Unfortunately, the department is unable to pay for summer thesis or dissertation credits. Requests for an exception to this policy may be submitted to the Graduate Director (e.g., unable to defend in spring due to medical circumstances). Please note that it is possible to graduate in August without paying summer tuition if you defend your thesis or dissertation by the last day of the spring semester and final administrative forms and manuscripts are successfully submitted to the Graduate School prior to August deadlines.

Appendix A

Department Grievance Procedures

As detailed elsewhere in this Handbook, sometimes during a student's time in graduate school a situation can arise that requires mediation to reduce/resolve conflict. The Psychology Department suggests you use the following procedures. First, you should go to the person with whom you have a complaint and try to come to a resolution. You should feel free to consult informally with any other faculty member about the issue. At any time, you may consult with other students, including PGSA officers, to discuss the issue confidentially. You may elect to have a PGSA officer meet with a department administrator to discuss ways to resolve the concern. You may also contact the PGSA officers by email, or you can put a written complaint into the PGSA mailbox. Except for harassment and discrimination complaints, the nature of these conversations can be kept confidential.

If you are unsatisfied or remain concerned, you may directly go to any Graduate Program Director to address the issue; you may go to the Graduate Coordinator; or you may go to the Department Chair or Associate Chair. After consulting with any or all of the individuals above, if you wish you may take a more formal step and form a Grievance Committee.

Formation of Grievance Committee

1. The Grievance Committee will consist of three faculty members (a chair plus two additional tenured faculty members).
2. The members of the Grievance Committee will not be permanent but rather will be selected for each individual case.
3. The selection of these committee members will be done in the following way:
 - a. The student bringing the grievance will select one of the program directors to be the chair.
 - b. The selected chair will choose one tenured faculty member to serve on the committee.
 - c. The student will choose one tenured faculty member to serve on the committee.
 - d. It is advisable that the selected chair and the student confer on their selections.

Function of the Committee

1. The committee will attempt to mediate the grievance and find a resolution.
2. The committee can make recommendations to the department chair. The department chair does have the power to override decisions made by the committee.

Important Considerations

1. By taking an issue to the Grievance Committee it is likely necessary to notify the person to whom the complaint is directed towards in an effort to remedy the situation.
2. It is possible that additional people may be contacted to gather information pertaining to the complaint (e.g., if a complaint is about mentoring, bring in other students of the mentor to inquire about their experiences with the mentor).
3. The Grievance Committee should be used only when other points of contact for grievances have not yielded a satisfactory resolution.
4. A grievance can be brought by one or more students or can be presented by a PGSA representative for a group of students. It is important to recognize that the names of students bringing the grievance cannot be confidential; the accused person has the right to know who is lodging the complaint against them.

Appendix B

Leave of Absence Request Form

Department of Psychology
The University of Memphis

Student's Name: _____

Date of Request: _____

Important: Please note that university policy indicates that a student who does not enroll for fall or spring semester must apply for readmission. Submission of an application for readmission does not ensure acceptance.

***** Note, GA funding upon return to the program will be based on the agreement about funding approved at the time the leave is granted contingent on budget availability. *****

When is your anticipated return date? (Semester and Year) _____

Please briefly indicate the reason for the requested leave. Specific information about medical and/or personal reasons is not required (however, it may be requested in certain circumstances).

Required Signatures:

Student: _____ Date: _____

Program Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

Graduate Coordinator: _____ Date: _____

Chair: _____ Date: _____

To be returned to Graduate Administrative Assistant.