



RUTGERS
NEWARK

Department of Psychology

Doctoral Student Handbook

Updated 10/16/21 by Vanessa LoBue

This booklet is intended to provide basic information for your time as a Graduate Student in Psychology at Rutgers-Newark. It will be updated and revised from time to time. Please keep it available to answer the many questions you will have about the procedures of our Graduate Program. Additionally, you should consult the Rutgers University Graduate School-Newark Catalog. The University Catalog covers all topics relevant for graduate students including tuition and fees, student services, academic policies and procedures.

Please excuse the sometimes formal and detailed description of rules, schedules, and deadlines in this handbook. We have found that the best way to be fair and to reduce anxious confusion is to spell out these rules clearly and apply them consistently. In general, any waiver or change in these rules requires a vote of the faculty.

General Information

Main Office Reception

The primary reception area of the Psychology Department is in 301 Smith Hall. All deliveries are made to this room.

Department Manager

Budgetary and administrative affairs are the responsibility of the Department Manager. You are advised to see her if you have any questions regarding policies, procedures, purchases, equipment, etc. that cannot be taken care of by the Graduate School Office or your Advisor.

Graduate School-Newark

The graduate school at Rutgers-Newark includes over 20 different doctoral and masters programs that are attended by well over 1,000 students. The Graduate School-Newark is administered from 401 Hill Hall. The Graduate School's website is an important resource for relevant information about the program, and contains the required forms for transfer credits, candidacy, etc.

Library

The main library of the university is Dana Library, located directly across the plaza from Smith Hall. The Psychology Department has a small reading collection in the Psychology Commons on the 3rd floor.

Computing

The department has state of the art servers and laser printers (color & B/W) which are available in the Psychology Commons for general use. Statistical, word-processing, database and general programming software are available.

Mailboxes

Each graduate student is assigned a mailbox. Mailboxes are in the main lobby of the third floor of Smith Hall next to the Main Office. Students should check for mail often, although email will be the department's primary means of communication.

Email

Each student will receive an e-mail account on the Psychology Department Server psychology.rutgers.edu. Please check your psychology email address frequently, as this will be one of the main ways for department communication besides your assigned mailbox.

Pay Checks

Stipends are paid on a two-week schedule during the term of appointment. Checks can be picked up in the Main Office in 301 Smith Hall and are usually available on Friday afternoons. Direct Deposit is available.

Room Key Policy

To obtain keys for your office, lab, you must first obtain a key card from the Main office (301 Smith Hall). Once this card is filled out, you must take the card to the cashier's office in Blumenthal Hall. There you will be charged \$5.00 for each key that you request. The cashier's office will give you a receipt. Then you must take the receipt and the signed key card to the Police Department at 200 University Ave. The receptionist there

will take the card and receipt from you. The keys will be made in 2-5 days and are delivered to the Psychology Department Office.

ID Card/Parking Decal

All Rutgers University students must have a valid ID card. This card is required to check out books from Dana Library, to access the department's computer lab, to obtain and use on campus parking, and to enter Smith Hall during the evenings and weekends. To obtain an ID card and a parking decal, see the Administrative Assistant in 301 Smith Hall. There you can obtain an official letter stating that you are faculty, a teaching assistant, or a student. This letter must then be taken to the ID office, Third Floor, Blumenthal Hall [(973) 353-1580]. A photograph will be taken of you at that time. It is critically important that you maintain possession of your ID card at all times. Lending your card to a friend can create significant security problems and will result in a significant loss of privileges on your part.

Expenditures

All research or teaching related expenses must have an appropriate account number or course number and the prior approval of your Advisor or course instructor. Contact the Department Manager, Room 325 Smith Hall, for information about reimbursement procedures and record keeping.

Photocopying

The department has a copier located in room 349 of Smith Hall. If you are unfamiliar with the copier, please ask someone in the Main Office to help you. To use the copier you must have a four-digit log-on number and the combination to the copier room door. Obtain your code from the Administrative Assistant and do not share this number with anyone. Undergraduate research assistants and teaching assistants must obtain their own codes.

Travel to Conferences

The department will reimburse students for travel to conferences in the amount of \$300.00 per academic year for up to five (5) years. Travel funds are only available to students who wish to travel to scientific research conferences at which they are making presentations (i.e., lead or co-authorship on any poster or paper). Funds in an academic year may be divided across multiple conferences but the total amount per academic year cannot exceed \$300.00. The following limitations apply. Firstly, no single reimbursement can exceed \$300.00. Secondly, reimbursements can only be made once the student has submitted original receipts and a photocopy of the conference abstract book indicating the name, location, and duration of the conference as well as the student's abstract to the Department Manager. Your original receipts must be submitted no later than two weeks after the conference. This new travel funding structure is effective as of the fall semester, 2017, and may not be applied retroactively.

Graduate Director, Graduate Executive Committee, Student Reps

Graduate Director: Day to day administration of the graduate program is conducted by the Graduate Director and Assistant Program Director.

Graduate Executive Committee: The Graduate Director consults regularly with the department's Graduate Executive Committee (GEC) on matters involving course offerings, policymaking, and student performance and concerns. The GEC is composed of the Department Chair, The Graduate Program Director, and three faculty members, usually chosen to ensure full representation on the GEC of all training areas in the department. GEC members typically serve a 2-year term.

Graduate Representatives (Grad Reps): Two Graduate Student Representatives provide input to the Graduate Director regarding student concerns and wishes.

Human Subjects

Many students will be conducting research involving human subjects. Every semester a senior Graduate student will be responsible for running the subject pool and can advise you on the procedures used to obtain volunteers. Students who intend to use human subjects must apply for human subject approval and receive approval before running their experiment.

A request for review and clearance of a project involving human subjects is available from the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs on the web at <https://orra.rutgers.edu/hssp>. Protocols received on or after the 12th of the month will not be reviewed until the following month. There is no human subjects protocol review meeting in August.

Importantly, Rutgers University has a **mandatory** human subjects certification program, titled the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI). All researchers (faculty, graduate students, undergraduates, etc.) must successfully complete CITI training and obtain a letter of certification upon doing so. Researchers must receive CITI certification BEFORE conducting any research. The program and training is found at: <https://orra.rutgers.edu/citi>

Informed Consent

Each research subject must sign an informed consent form before involvement in a study. If a subject is under 18 years old, a parent or guardian must sign for him or her. In addition, all subjects must be given an information sheet that states the title of the research, and the name, address and phone number of the investigator and the secretary of the Institutional Review Panel. After the study has been run, signed consents should be saved for safekeeping.

Subject Reimbursement

Course Credit. Most undergraduate students in Principles of Psychology opt to fulfill a course requirement by serving as a subject in experiments. If you are conducting a

study in Smith Hall and would like to advertise your study to this subject pool, you must post a notice on the Psychology Department's R-Points System web site. A faculty member must authorize the research. Moreover, you must have taken and passed the University's on-line CITI human subjects education program before you can post your experiment (see Human Subjects above). Subject recruitment posts should briefly describe the nature of your study, the time subjects must commit to it, the corresponding Research Points ("R Points—1 point every 30 min. of participation), and the room number in which the study is to be conducted. Please also provide the Main Office with this information. Note that postings must be approved by the University IRB.

Subject Payment. Sometimes laboratories recruit human subjects for pay. The normal rate of pay is \$10 per hour or \$5 per half-hour; rates are sometimes higher for neuro-imaging studies. Consult with your advisor or with the Department Manager for most current and appropriate rates. Please follow Department procedures for handling human subject payments and ensure your PI is involved in the request/processing.

Graduate Student Research Requirements

Every Ph.D. candidate in Psychology is expected to conduct research during every semester of their graduate career. To make timely and reasonable progress towards the Ph.D., students can expect to spend a minimum of 20 hours a week in their research lab and participating in research related activities such as reading journal articles, debating theories, and apprenticing with their graduate advisors. Such apprenticeship plays a key role in the ability of students to learn the research skills and on-going research projects of one's advisor necessary for a scientific career.

Graduate Student Teaching Requirements

Since most graduate students are funded as Teaching Assistants for several years, most assist in the teaching of several courses over their graduate careers. Graduate students may also teach undergraduate Psychology courses at Rutgers-Newark during the summer or winter sessions to earn extra money (about \$2500 - \$3000 depending on qualifications).

Graduate students are typically funded by research fellowships, known as Daniel S. Lehrman Fellowships, during their first year of graduate school (pending availability of Lehrman funds). According to University guidelines, graduate fellows do not teach. During your second, third, and (if you intend to complete your Ph.D. in 5 rather than 4 years) fourth years, most graduate students are funded as teaching assistants., According to University guidelines, teaching assistants normally engage in ten to fifteen hours of teaching activity. Fourth year students are required to apply for internal Dissertation Fellowships during their final year so that they may devote themselves to full time research.

Teaching assistantships are intended to expose students to the many skills necessary for teaching and should be part of a progression of responsibilities. Teaching responsibilities include: monitoring a class lab; assisting in large lectures (grading and preparing materials); leading recitation, discussion and laboratory sections; recruiting and supervising undergraduate teaching assistants; organizing problem-solving

sessions; guest lecturing; and teaching stand-alone classes (this last activity is reserved for students who have completed their qualifying exams).

Notification of Criteria for Appointment and Reappointment

Individual contract letters shall be issued to Teaching Assistants and Graduate Fellows upon appointment and reappointment along with written criteria for the assignment. The University encourages the Psychology Department to appoint full-time graduate students as full-time teaching assistants and graduate fellows.

All currently employed Teaching Assistants shall be notified by the University in writing of their status for the coming academic year on or before March 31 for Fall semester appointments and by October 31 for Spring semester appointments. Notification shall be either a) reappointment, b) non-reappointment, c) waiting list, with reappointment contingent upon the availability of funding or the meeting of other previously established and announced criteria. Notification of non-reappointment shall include written explanation of the reasons. Notification of waiting-list status shall indicate if reappointment is contingent upon the availability of funding or the meeting of other previously established and announced criteria or both. If notified of waiting-list status, a graduate student shall be further notified of the number of Teaching Assistants employed in the department in the current year and the number of appointments already offered in the department for the coming year. The names of those individuals who receive notification of non-reappointment shall, to the extent feasible, be forwarded to the Rutgers Chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AAUP—the academic union) within 20 working days of their receipt by the individuals whom they concern.

A graduate student who is placed on a waiting list shall be notified as soon as possible about any change in his/her status. If a graduate student on the waiting list requests in writing, he/she shall receive a second notification in writing on or before May 31 of the number of appointments already offered in the department for the coming year.

Teaching Assistants (TA) Workload and Training

Teaching Assistants who have primary responsibility for a class study section shall normally be notified in writing at least four weeks prior to the beginning of the semester of their course assignment for the coming year. All other Teaching Assistants and all Graduate Fellows shall be notified of their assignments on or before the first day of class. It is understood that unexpected circumstances may require modification of assignments. If a Teaching Assistant's assignment is changed substantially after notification, the University will provide notification in writing of the change. Graduate students may, at the time of their application for a Teaching Assistant position, indicate any preference they may have about teaching assignments.

The individual assignment of a Teaching Assistant or Graduate Fellowship shall be consistent with the current practice of the department or program. Because of the variety of duties that may be assigned, consistency in the assignment of TA lines should be a more reliable guide to individual workload assignments than any strict quantitative

measure or comparison with assignments in other departments or programs. Nevertheless, except for special academic circumstances (for example, an emergent situation regarding laboratory research or intensive preparation for a performance), a Teaching Assistant with a standard appointment is expected to work on teaching-related duties an average of 10 - 15 hours per week, which is separate from and in addition to students' own course work and research, or a prorated portion thereof if the appointment is less than full standard. Individual claims that workload assignments are inconsistent with the practices of the department or program shall be brought to the attention of the Graduate Director.

Notification of TA Status

The University will provide to the AAUP a list of all Teaching Assistants who are on the payroll as of September 30 and January 31 of each year. Such list shall be provided within ten working days after September 31 and January 31.

TA Training

All Teaching Assistants shall be required by the Graduate School, as appropriate, to participate in a teaching-effectiveness workshop. Such workshops shall be designed and conducted by the Graduate School and, when appropriate, by the Psychology Department. All Teaching Assistants and Graduate Fellows are also required to attend the University's training on research ethics.

Term of Graduate Appointment

The term of the work year for Teaching Assistants and Graduate Fellowships is from August 25th to Commencement in mid/late May. However, the terms of appointment for all Teaching and Graduate Assistants shall be set forth as September 1 to June 30 for payroll purposes. The period of the work year prior to September 1 are used solely for orientation, training, and preparation related to the Teaching Assistant's assignment. However, graduate students are expected to work towards their degree requirements year-round.

Colloquia, Theses, and Job Talks

Graduate students are integral members of the departmental community. As such, they are expected to attend all colloquia, thesis proposal defenses and dissertation defenses, and job talks given by prospective new faculty. These presentations are a critical component of graduate training, and are instructive, helping to support fellow graduate students.

Overall Graduate Student Workload

Graduate students typically receive support from outside agencies (e.g., NSF), research grants (as a Research Assistant (RA), and/or from the Psychology Department teaching budget (as a Teaching Assistant (TA) or a Graduate Fellows (GF). In addition, students during their first two years typically take approximately 3 courses or seminars per

semester, and attend colloquia, research seminars, lab meetings, and informal discussions. Students who have passed their qualifying exam normally focus on their research and take fewer or no classes during their final years. Expectations regarding a student's time, commitment, responsibilities, level of performance in research, teaching, and course work will be conveyed by your research advisor and the Graduate Director. If you do not feel you understand these expectations, you should talk to the relevant faculty member(s) or the Director of Graduate Studies. Regardless of the source of financial support, distribution of financial support (e.g., 1/2 TA, 1/2 GF) or number of courses, all full-time graduate students are expected to be engaged full time in activities related to their training in scholarship, research, and teaching. Therefore, students cannot take on other commitments such as an additional job without first discussing this with their advisor. Any students failing to put in a full-time effort toward meeting their requirements for the graduate program will have their TA or GF funding terminated.

Graduate Funding

As stated above, most graduate students are funded as either teaching assistants or graduate fellows. Teaching assistant salaries are determined by Rutgers University and the Teachers Union (AAUP). Both include tuition remission and some form of health insurance. These salaries are paid twice a month beginning in September and ending on June 30th. Fellowships and TA-ships do not pay summer salaries. Graduate students may receive extra pay by working on grant funded projects or by teaching Psychology courses during the summer or winter term.

Vacation Policy

Regardless of the source of student's financial support, graduate students are expected to work essentially full time (12 months) fulfilling degree requirements. Vacation time should be discussed with advisors. Graduate students accrue no specific vacation time other than the normal holiday periods observed by the University, such as winter recess, spring break and the inter-term period. Vacation time may not be accumulated for later use. Students are expected to spend the summer months conducting research.

Formal Requirements for the Doctoral Degree in Psychology

Core Program:

The Graduate Program in Psychology offers training in the Social and Behavioral Sciences in four core program areas: 1) Developmental Psychology, 2) Neuroscience, 3) Perception/Cognition, and 4) Social Psychology. The curriculum provides basic instruction in research methods and these core areas. Graduate students are expected to choose an advisor and specialize in one of these four core areas early in their career. There is a strong emphasis on research, empirical methods, and presentation skills throughout the duration of graduate studies.

The curriculum is organized around these same concentrations or areas of

specialization. Each area contains several courses. These courses, along with a series of research methodology, research design, and our pro-seminar course, form the basic course requirements. In addition, students are encouraged to participate in the specialized courses presented by the Rutgers Business School, the Rutgers School of Criminal Justice, the Rutgers Center for Molecular and Behavioral Neuroscience, the Department of Psychology at New Brunswick, the Public Administration Program, and the NJIT computer science program, and other relevant programs. The essence of the program, however, is the ongoing research conducted by each student under the direct supervision of a faculty member. Students are expected to begin research with a faculty advisor as soon as they enter the program. Students are also free to change their faculty advisors with the approval of both parties and the Graduate Director. Student research continues until completion of the degree. Students are expected (but not required) to demonstrate their achievements with periodic written or oral presentations and published papers.

Requirements for completing graduate training occasionally updated. However, students are not expected to retroactively meet new or revised requirements after having successfully completed earlier versions of these or closely related requirements.

Course Credit Requirements:

Doctoral students are required to complete 60 credits of coursework in psychology. Of these 60 required credits, 36 are obtained through: A) four Foundation Courses (1 credit Researcher Seminar, 3 credit Proseminar) and B) ten full-credit formal courses (3 credits each); see Course Listing, below. The remaining 24 credits are obtained as Research in Psychology (described below).

Foundation Courses and Formal Courses: These are divided across several categories. The distribution is presented below. Note that for Foundation Courses, there are only two courses required – the pro-seminar (taken once) is offered every other year and a research seminar (taken three times) is offered every semester. For other courses, specific offerings vary on a semester-by-semester basis and students are advised to check with the Graduate Program Director for information on upcoming offerings.

Cross-Listed Courses

At times, certain courses can be applied to fulfilling requirements in more than one content area. For example, a course on “Cognitive Development” might be applied to Developmental *or* Perception/Cognition requirements, but never both. Likewise, “Attachment” might be applied to Developmental or Developmental, but never both. That is, a student may count a single course as a requirement for only one content area.

Research in Psychology (24 credits)

Along with specific courses, students are expected to sign up for research credits. This aspect of the program is essentially an apprenticeship in research, with the student working under the close supervision of a faculty member. Students are expected to select a faculty advisor at the time that they enter the program. They will begin

immediately to participate in their advisor's ongoing research projects, developing their own projects as soon as they (and their advisor) feel they are ready. Students are expected to present their results at colloquia, symposia, and conferences, and, eventually to submit their work for publication.

Over-enrollment

Doctoral students typically are limited to 9 credits per semester to maintain full-time status, with the exception of their first year, where they will take 12 credits per semester. Students should enroll in a full 12 credits per semester for their first 2 semesters, 9 credits per semester for each of their second 4 semesters (total = 60 credits) to meet credit requirements and enroll in "matriculation continued" as needed to complete their dissertation research in their 4th and 5th years. The Graduate School provides Special Permission Numbers (SPNs) needed to enroll in matriculation continued. Enrolling for more than 9 credits beyond the student's first year may not be financially supported by the University or the Psychology Department, and the cost of enrolling in more than 9 credits will therefore be borne by the student.

Transfer of Credits

A maximum of 12 graduate credits may be transferred from other institutions, not including research credits. (All research credits must be taken in the Rutgers-Newark Psychology Department.) The Graduate Program Director has sole authority, with consultation from the Graduate Executive Committee as needed, to decide which credits to transfer based on a reading of the student's transcript and any other information the Director deems relevant (e.g., a syllabus). The student may schedule a meeting with the Graduate Director at any time after admissions to consider which courses taken elsewhere may be transferred.

Undergraduate Courses

Graduate students may take up to a maximum of two (2) undergraduate courses, to meet their formal coursework requirements. However, the following provisions must be met:

1. The undergraduate courses must not be generally available in the psychology program, elsewhere on the Rutgers Newark campus, or at the Rutgers New Brunswick campus.
2. Approval to take specific undergraduate courses must first be obtained from the Graduate Director. Approval will be contingent, in part, upon documentation that the desired undergraduate class (or a close approximation of it) is not offered at the graduate level at Rutgers Newark or Rutgers New Brunswick.

Scheduling of Graduate Psychology Courses

Given the size of our graduate program, courses across content areas are offered in flexible, typically two-year cycles. It is essential that students consult with their advisor and if necessary, with the Graduate Director to determine course schedules. If a student enters the graduate Psychology program with a moderate to weak statistical background, he or she may be asked to take undergraduate statistics (301) during his or her first fall semester. Foreign students coming from a country in which English is not

a common language may be tested for their English skills during the first semester of their first year. In this way, any weaknesses in a student's mastery of English can be addressed before that student serves as a teaching assistant during his or her 2-4th years in the program. Students can receive coaching on writing at the Rutgers/Newark Writing Program <http://www.ncas.rutgers.edu/writingprogram>.

MODEL PLAN OF STUDY FOR PSYCHOLOGY GRADUATE STUDENTS

Below is a model plan of study for a doctoral student in our program—yours will likely vary from this:

YEAR 1

Fall

Proseminar (3 cr)
Behavioral Science Res Design (3 cr)
Social Psychology (3 cr)
Research in Psychology (5 cr)

Spring

Multivariate Methods (3 cr)
Perception (3 cr)
Research Seminar (1 cr)
Research in Psychology (5 cr)

YEAR 2

Fall

Cognitive Process (3 cr)
Special Topics in Social Psych (3 cr)
Research Seminar (1 cr)
Research in Psychology (2 cr)

Spring

Intro Cog Neuroscience (3 cr)
Developmental Psych (3 cr)
Research Seminar (1 cr)
Research in Psychology (2 cr)

YEAR 3

Fall

fMRI Theory & Methods (3 cr)
Emotional Development (3 cr)
Research in Psychology (3 cr)

Spring

Social Cognition (3 cr)
Achievement & Motivation (3 cr)
Research in Psychology (3 cr)

YEAR 4

Fall

Matric Continued (1 cr)

Spring

Matric Continued (1 cr)

YEAR 5

Fall

Matric Continued (1 cr)

Spring

Matric Continued (1 cr)

Grade Requirements

Graduate students are graded in each course at the end of each term according to the

following Rutgers specific format (taken from the Graduate School-Newark Catalog).

Grade	Definition	Numerical Equivalent
A	Outstanding	4.0
B+		3.5
B	Good	3.0
C+		2.5
C	Satisfactory	2.0
F	Failure	0.0

Research courses at the 700 level and regular courses taken "not for credit" are not graded according to the above format and instead are graded as either S (satisfactory) or U (Unsatisfactory). Students may also receive a "W" grade if they withdraw from a class with the permission of the appropriate authority in a timely manner. If a student does not complete all assignments before the end of a course, the instructor may decide to award that student an "IN" (incomplete) grade. The student must complete all of their assignments within one year of the last day of the class in order for a normal letter grade to replace the IN. After one year, no change may be made to the grade and the "Incomplete" grade will remain on the student's transcripts and the student will not receive credit for that class. If a Ph.D. student accumulates 12 or more credits of "IN" course work, they will not be able to register for further courses.

All graduate students are expected to earn an average grade (GPA) of B or better in their course work. No more than 6 credits with a grade of C or C+ may be used towards meeting the Ph.D. requirements. Students with a GPA falling and remaining below 3.0 will be placed on academic probation and may eventually have their funding removed and/or be asked to leave the graduate program in Psychology.

Academic Integrity

"Academic freedom is a fundamental right in any institution of higher learning. Honesty and integrity are necessary preconditions to this freedom. Academic integrity requires that all academic work be wholly the product of an identified individual or individuals. Joint efforts are legitimate only when the assistance of others is explicitly acknowledged. Ethical conduct is the obligation of every member of the university community and breaches of academic integrity constitute serious offenses" (Academic Integrity Policy of Rutgers University, page 1).

Consistent with the University's position on academic integrity (summarized above), the Graduate Program in Psychology takes violations of academic integrity very seriously. Consequences resulting from violations of academic integrity can range from an official reprimand to suspension or immediate and permanent expulsion from the Graduate School at Rutgers-Newark. Violations of academic integrity include (but are not limited to) cheating, the fabrication or invention of information used in an academic exercise, plagiarism, and facilitating academic dishonesty (see the Graduate School-Newark Catalog). A faculty member who suspects a violation of academic integrity is required to

direct their concerns to the Dean of the Graduate School.

Plagiarism: The area of most difficulty is often plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when you use someone else's ideas OR words without clearly referencing your source for that information. Please note that paraphrasing someone's ideas by simply changing a few words, phrases, or sentences is **UNACCEPTABLE** and constitutes plagiarism.

Overview of Ph.D. Program Requirements (R) or Expectations (E) by Semester

First Year

Research: Students are typically accepted into our PhD program to work with a specific supervisor/lab. The research supervisor usually represents the student's main research area of interest and serves as the student's primary source of advice, guidance, constructive criticism and support. Normally, the research advisor is a full-time member of the Psychology Department. In extraordinary circumstances, exceptions may be granted by a vote of the Graduate Executive Committee, and students can switch supervisors/labs with approval from the graduate director. Because our Ph.D. program is research intensive, graduate students entering the program should spend much of their first year getting acquainted with the research focus in their respective labs, and training on any necessary procedures and protocols.

Courses: First year students are expected to take 2-to-3 graduate Psychology courses and 3-to-5 credits of research during each semester of their first year. Twelve credits represent a full-time load. First year students should take ALL their courses in the Department of Psychology. Exceptions will only be granted with the written approval of the Department Chair, the Director of the Graduate Program, and the student's advisor. Students are expected to maintain a B average in their course work. Failure to do so can result in academic probation and/or termination of the student's funding.

Mid-Year Admits: Students entering our graduate program mid-year (i.e., in January) are usually considered to be first year students for 1.5 years. However, they are still required to give an end of the year talk (described below) at the end of their first semester.

End of Year Presentations: At the end of the spring semester, all first-year students are expected to give a short formal talk describing the research that they have conducted during their first year in the graduate program. Each talk is followed by a short question and answer period. All second-, third-, and fourth-year students who have not yet scheduled their dissertation proposals will also make a presentation. Obviously, more advanced students will be held to a higher standard than first year students. Graduate presentations are traditionally scheduled in May, within one week following the end of final exams for the spring semester.

Good performance during the talk and the subsequent question-and-answer period indicates that a first-year graduate student is "on track" for their dissertation proposal. Poor performance indicates that a student is not "on track." Poor performance will result

in a meeting of the student, the student's advisor, and the graduate director. The goal of this meeting is to determine why the student has not reached his or her potential in the program and to discuss methods of remediation and the student's future prospects.

Feedback Procedures

Each year the Department is called upon to decide concerning each student's admission to another year of graduate study. Dialogue between the student and faculty is the primary means of conveying to a student the basis for the admission decision, expectation, and assessment of the student's academic progress. While no formal procedures can take the place of day-to-day interaction between a student and his or her advisor—and students are encouraged to consult the faculty on a regular basis for feedback about their performance—the department has two formal means of assessing student progress: The Student Activity Report and the Faculty End of Year Student Review Meeting.

Student Activity Report (SAR). To facilitate an orderly and regular feedback process, every graduate student and their faculty advisor is asked to complete a Student Activity Report form at the end of each semester. The goal of the Graduate Student Activity Report is to promote a constructive dialogue between student and faculty advisor on the student's progress and needs. The SAR is completed first by the student and then by the student's advisor and then submitted to the Graduate Director. Faculty advisors and students are encouraged to discuss their respective portion of the SAR with each other after the faculty has reviewed the student's answers and completed their own section. NOTE: All students are required to complete SARs, including graduating doctoral students who have successfully defended their dissertations.

Faculty End of Year Student Review Meeting. During the first week in June the departmental faculty meet to review each student's progress. The student's Spring SAR, the faculty impression of the student's end of year talk, and faculty experiences with the student in course work or more informal interactions provide the primary basis for this evaluation.

The faculty consensus about each student is conveyed by the Graduate Program Director into an end-of-the-year evaluation letter. A copy of this letter is placed in each student's file and a second copy is sent to the Dean of the Graduate School. The evaluation covers both course work and research and will fall into three main categories:

- (1) Performance is at an appropriate level, and we are pleased with the progress to date.
- (2) The student is not meeting his or her performance potential and we hope to see improvement during the next semester.
- (3) Performance is below expectations and continuation in the graduate program is doubtful.

Second Year

The second year is characterized by the student becoming more intensively involved in research. Moreover, by the end of the second year, students should aim to complete all their Foundation Course Requirements (12 credits), all of their Area Course Requirements (9 credits) and some of their Elective Requirements (that is, at least 6 credits of electives). They are expected to give an End of the Year presentation. Typically, second year students are funded as teaching assistants. Second year students also complete the Qualifying Exam in the Summer of their second year/early fall third year.

The Qualifying Exam

(approved 2/24/14 by Graduate Executive Committee; updated Spring, 2017)

At the end of the second year, students are required to take the Qualifying Exam.

The Qualifying Exam has four goals:

1. To help propel students forward in their research program
2. To help students develop the skills necessary to obtain funding for their research ideas
3. To ensure that students have the critical reasoning skills necessary for doctoral level research
4. To certify eligibility for continued training

The Qualifying Exam occurs in two stages and is evaluated by a Qualifying Exam Committee. The “written exam” stage requires students to produce a grant application following general NIH format guidelines. The “oral defense” stage requires students to present and defend their application orally to the Qualifying Exam Committee.

The Qualifying Exam Committee: The Qualifying Exam Committee includes the Graduate Director and three-to-four other faculty members. In total, the committee must represent at least three training areas within the department and must include one faculty member from each of the training areas represented by students taking the exam in a given cycle. The Graduate Director and the Department Chair select the committee annually. The composition of the Committee is established by about midway through the spring semester preceding the exam. In the event of multiple exams in a selected year, two committees may be formed at the discretion of the Graduate Director and the Department Chair. Faculty advisors must be present at oral defense meetings of their students but must remain silent during the oral exam. The students’ advisor cannot serve as a member of the students’ qualifying exam committee, and the Graduate Director will find another faculty member to serve in lieu of the advisor should

the need arise.

Although the entire committee evaluates each student, each student is assigned one member of the committee as the “chairperson” of his or her exam. This designated chair directs the oral examination process and summarizes committee feedback in a personalized letter once the grade has been assigned. In the event of a revise/resubmit decision, the chair manages the revision process until the student has either passed or failed in a final decision.

Qualifying Exam Evaluation: The Qualifying Exam Committee is comprised of three-four faculty members plus the Graduate Director. Faculty cannot serve on the Qualifying Exam committee if one of their students is completing the qualifying exam.

The committee reads each student’s grant proposal and assigns the student a score of 1—9 on each of 5 criteria, with 1 = exceptional performance and 9 = poor performance. Each committee member also assigns an overall score to the grant based on the same scoring criteria. The overall score is not necessarily an average of the scores on the 5 criteria, but instead, represents each committee members’ overall impression of the grant as a whole.

Rubrics related to the written exam are sent by committee members to the students Qualifying Exam the day before the oral exam. The chairs do not circulate the qualifying exams among the other committee members but use the rubrics to manage committee deliberations that follow the student’s oral exam and to develop summary evaluations sent to the student. Rubrics are transmitted only the student’s Qualifying Exam Committee chair. Individual committee members are not required to share their rubrics with the corresponding student but may do so at their own discretion.

After the initial oral defense, students receive one of four grades: Pass; Pass with a written response letter (to the Advisor and Graduate Director; Revise and Resubmit (to Qualifying Exam Committee). The grade is assigned after the oral exam and is **based on the combined performance on both the written and oral portions and reflect the majority of vote of the Qualifying Exam Committee.**

Meanings of the grades are as follows:

- **Pass:** The committee has determined that the student’s performance on the written and oral portions met expectations for passing performance, with an overall score from 1—3. The student advances to doctoral candidacy.
- **Pass with Written Response Letter (to Advisor and Graduate Director):** The committee has determined that the student’s performance on the written and oral portions met expectations for passing performance, but that the student would benefit from addressing some of the committee’s concerns in a written response letter. More specifically, a majority of the committee members have assigned the grant an overall score of 4—6 (see Grading Rubric), indicating that the grant has no major weaknesses, but that it does have **several moderate weaknesses** that

should be addressed. The advisor will decide when the response letter has sufficiently addressed the committee's issues, with final approval from the graduate director. The student then advances to doctoral candidacy. If the graduate director is the student's advisor, then the letter will be approved by the student's qualifying exam committee chair.

- ***Revise and Resubmit (to Qualifying Exam Committee):*** The committee has determined that the student's performance on the written and oral portions did not meet expectations for passing performance. More specifically, a majority of the committee members have assigned the grant an overall score of 7 or higher (see Grading Rubric), indicating that the grant has **at least one major weakness**. The student receives a detailed summary of the committee's concerns from his/her designated chairperson. The student must revise and resubmit the exam. Failure to do so successfully within stipulated dates can be grounds for dismissal from the program. (Instructions for the revision process are below.)

Exam Timeline

By March 1: Qualifying Exam Committee is formed.

By June 15: Graduate Program Director meets with the students who are taking the exam to review procedures and answer questions about the process.

By July 15: Specific Aims page and Advisor Attestation due to the Graduate Director. The Advisor Attestation is a written statement from the Advisor confirming that the content of the Specific Aims document is based on original work by the student and not the product of any earlier collaborations between the advisor and the student.

By August 30: Written exam due to the Graduate Director (Word format).

By September 15: Oral defense. This date is set in coordination with the Qualifying Exam Committee and the student's advisor. The student is required to attend at this time and make arrangements with instructors and with TA-ship supervisors in this regard.

Consultation with Advisor

Students may conduct in-depth conversations with their advisors about all aspects of their proposals up to when the Specifics Aims document is due. Thus, students may discuss the general problem area, relevant literature, general and specific hypotheses, research procedures, analyses, broader implications—anything and everything related to their proposals. Students may also share drafts of their Specific Aims page with their advisors up to when the Specific Aims are due. Also, students may use these pre-July 15 conversations to inform development of their actual proposal document. *However, students may not get feedback on the writing of their proposal documents from their advisors (or from anyone else); that is, their advisors cannot see or hear proposal*

document text, and cannot in any way contribute the writing of the proposal. After the Specific Aims are due, students are not permitted any conversations their advisors about any aspect of their proposals.

Students who are required to produce a second revision (see below) may consult with their advisor about all aspects of their revision but cannot receive any feedback on the writing of their revision and cannot share actual drafts of the revision with their advisor.

The Written Exam: The written exam is modeled after an NIH RO-3 application (<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/funding/r03.htm>). It is NOT a full RO-3 but borrows formatting and objectives of the RO-3. As such the written exam requires knowledge and critical evaluation of the research literature relevant to the student's interest; creativity on the student's part to identify a gap in the literature; formulation of testable hypotheses; design of one or more appropriate studies; and reflection on the significance of the proposed results and research as well as the potential pitfalls of the approach.

The Qualifying exam must represent an original piece of work written entirely by the student. Thus, proposals that the student might have worked on with others (including their advisor) may **not** be used for the qualifying exam. The student may, however, think of their written exam as a draft of a proposal that they may eventually submit, alone or in collaboration with others, including their advisor. The key concern is that the proposal submitted as the written part of the qualifying exam be entirely the work of the student.

Grant Format and Content Requirements: The NIH-format grant application will use similar rules and formatting as an NIH R03 application with some adaptations to suit the needs and requirements of the Department of Psychology Qualifying Exam. An R03 research grant covers 2 years of funding so students are expected to propose research within their area that is appropriate for a 2-year period (no more, no less). Thus, they should consider the feasibility of their research when writing the proposal and will be required to provide a timeline for how the research will be carried out within the 2-year timeframe. The written exam proposal can be no longer than 12 double-spaced pages (not including Specific Aims, references, or timeline). **Any text that goes over the 12-page limit will not be reviewed by the committee.** Footnotes may follow APA style or numeric style. For example, "Cognitive dissonance theory is central to social psychology (Festinger, 1959)" is acceptable and so is "Cognitive dissonance theory is central to social psychology¹". Formatting is important and must adhere to these rules: 12-point font and 1-inch margins—top, bottom, and sides. Further, the exam should be submitted as a Word document.

The Proposal Document must contain the following elements:

Specific Aims (1 page): A one-page single-spaced summary of your topic, proposed question, and specific hypothesis. Follow NIH guidelines for specifics. Due by July 15 AND must be included in the full proposal. *Specific Aims does not count toward 12 pages of proposal.*

Background (~4-5 pages): Set up your question with the appropriate introduction and background (literature review). Make sure to situate your hypothesis within the larger, current literature on this topic, defend your hypothesis, and describe how different potential patterns of results would fit into the larger literature.

Research Design & Methods (~5-6 pages): How will you test your research question? What method(s) will you use? Make sure to clearly describe a) the general paradigm proposed; b) the method(s) used, how they will be used, and justification for their use; c) expected patterns of results, including proposed analysis techniques and how your design and methods will allow you to test your hypotheses and advance the larger literature; All figures and figure captions are included within the page requirements.

Conclusions/Broader Implications (~ 1 page): What are possible shortfalls of your research and how might they be addressed in future studies? How will confirmation of your predictions inform theory and/or practice?

Reference section: Include complete, APA-style (including full title of each publication), citations for all references used. This section is **not** part of the page requirements.

Timeline and Feasibility: On the final page of the document, the candidate should include a timeline for proposed research with a brief explanation for why the proposed work is appropriate for a 2-year funding period. This section is **not** part of the page requirements.

As noted above, by July 15 the student must submit (via emailed Word format) a one-page specific aims document to the Graduate Director that highlights the general topic, proposed question of research and specific hypothesis. The submission must be no later than 5pm on the day it is due. Late submissions will not be accepted. Students who fail to submit their NIH-style specific aims page will not be allowed to submit the written exam and will be counted as having failed their qualifying exam.

The Oral Exam: The oral portion of the Qualifying exam involves a 50-minute meeting between the candidate and his/her qualifying exam committee. The candidate's advisor is required to attend and to take notes but cannot make comments of any kind during the exam. Only the student's advisor is permitted to attend; there can be no proxies for the advisor, and no one in addition to the advisor (e.g., second advisors, additional mentors) may attend the oral exam.

Candidates initiate the oral exam with a 10-minute (no more) verbal summary of their proposal. This should cover the basic research question and sub-questions, the research methods, and expected results. The next 40 minutes is dedicated to questions posed to the candidate by committee members. Candidates and their advisors are then dismissed, and the committee determines the candidate's overall performance (written document plus oral exam).

Candidates are permitted to bring an outline of their 10-minute introductory summary statement, and a copy of their proposals. The proposal-copies students bring to the exam may include handwritten margin-notes. However, students are encouraged to not

overly-rely on written material or notes but to demonstrate competence in extemporaneous responses to questions. Candidates cannot use PowerPoint or related media for the oral exam.

Role of the Advisor: The student and the advisor decide the topic of the grant application. They may discuss the project and the Specific Aims as much as they choose. For example, the advisor can give feedback on the study's research design, analyses, etc., provided it represents the student's original work. However, **once the Specific Aims page is submitted, the student and advisor may NOT discuss the grant until after the Qualifying Exam Committee assigns a grade.** Students may provide their advisors with copies of the Specific Aims and the grant application document but cannot discuss these materials with their advisors until after completing the oral exam.

Along with the Specific Aims page, the student's *advisor* must submit a formal attestation that stipulates to the following:

1. That the advisor has read and approved the Specific Aims.
2. That the work described in the Specific Aims has never been conducted previously by the student, nor included in any prior proposals that the student might have written collaboratively with the advisor.

Revision and Resubmission (to Qualifying Exam Committee): If a student receives a grade of "Revise and Resubmit (to Qualifying Exam Committee)" from a majority of the Committee on his/her initial exam submission, the following procedures take effect:

- As soon as possible, but no later than 1 week after the oral exam, the student's committee chair provides the student with detailed written feedback summarizing areas of concern in the written and oral exam.
- By October 1, the student should meet with his/her advisor and the Graduate Program Director in a joint meeting to discuss the overall process and clarify rules for revision. Typically, during the revision process, the student may only meet with his/her advisor to receive general feedback regarding how to respond to criticisms. The advisor MAY NOT review revised text; the advisor MAY NOT provide direct instruction on how or what the student should write. As needed, the advisor MAY request that other faculty members provide limited consultation to address specific areas in need of revision. Faculty advisors MAY NOT review revised text or provide direct instruction on how or what the student should write.
- By November 1, the student must submit a revised written exam that addresses problems identified by the committee. A cover letter in bullet-format that briefly summarizing problems and actions taken to remedy these problems may be a helpful addition to the revised proposal. Such letters are not part of the proposal and do not count toward the required page limit.

- By November 15, students who need to complete an initial revision will receive a score on the revised exam. At this time the score may be either “Pass” (scores ≤ 6) or “Revise and Resubmit” (scores ≥ 7), based on a majority vote. If the student passes, s/he is admitted to doctoral candidacy and the qualifying exam has ended. If the student receives another “Revise and Resubmit,” s/he will have until March 15 to prepare another revision. The student will again receive a detailed summary of the committee’s concerns from his/her designated chairperson.
- By March 15, students who need to complete a second revision will submit a final revision. Again, including a bullet-format letter that briefly summarizes cited problems and correction actions can be a helpful addition to the revised proposal.
- By April 1, students who need to complete a second revision will be re-examined via oral defense. At this time the student can only receive a grade of “Pass” or “Fail.” If the student passes, s/he is admitted to doctoral candidacy. If the student fails, s/he must leave the graduate program. Fail grades at this stage require a unanimous committee vote.

Advancement to Candidacy

Passing the qualifying exam is a big step in a student's graduate career as it frees him or her to apply for advancement to candidacy for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology. Thus, the faculty will not pass a graduate student unless it is clear that the student is prepared for doctoral level research. To apply for admission to candidacy for the Ph.D. in Psychology, you should go to the Office of the Graduate School (401 Hill Hall) and pick up a form or see the Graduate School website for an electronic version. Once you have completed the appropriate sections, the form should be submitted to the Department Chair and the Graduate Director. Once the form has been signed, it should be returned to the Office of the Graduate School. Students should apply for advancement to candidacy as soon as they have passed the exam at the Ph.D. level, completed their foundation and area course requirements, and settled upon a thesis topic in conjunction with their advisor. They should advance to candidacy at least two semesters before they defend their dissertation.

It is highly recommended that the student in consultation with his or her advisor establish a dissertation committee. This committee should be used for the dissertation proposal and the doctoral dissertation itself. According to University guidelines, a doctoral dissertation committee must contain at least four members. One member must be from outside the Psychology Graduate Program. The attendance of this member at the dissertation proposal presentation (described below) is not required. However, the outside member should be sent a copy of the dissertation proposal for comment. Students are invited to have dissertation committees larger than four members. A second advantage for a larger dissertation committee is that the approval of only four members of the committee is required for acceptance of a dissertation.

Third Year

Third year students will generally have successfully completed the qualifying exam as the year begins. The third year itself is marked by an increasing emphasis on research. Indeed, third-year students will probably take only a few courses during the entire year. During the third year, students should be directly focused on the preparation of their dissertation proposal. Third year students are generally funded as teaching assistants and they must also be mindful of their teaching responsibilities.

Third year and more advanced students who have not presented their dissertation proposal (described below) by the end of finals week of the Spring semester must give an End of the Year talk as described in the "First Year" section, unless specifically exempted by the Graduate Program Director. (Normally an exemption will only be given to those students who have scheduled their dissertation proposal by mid-June at the latest). At this stage, students should seriously consider submitting manuscripts for publication or papers/posters for presentation at conferences

Master's Degree

During the Fall or Spring semester of the third year, a student may wish to apply for a master's degree in Psychology. The Master's Degree in Psychology requires that a student complete 36 credits in course work as outlined in the previous section and pass the qualifying exam. Students who have failed the exam at the Ph.D. level may petition the Graduate Executive Committee (by submitting a simple written letter requesting such an evaluation to the Graduate Director) for an assessment of whether or not the exam was passed at the master's level. Format guidelines for the master's degree Thesis must be obtained by the graduate student from the Graduate School Office (401 Hill Hall) or the Graduate School's website.

Dissertation

Doctoral Dissertation Proposal: Guidelines (revised, Spring, 2008, July 17, 2016, October 16, 2021, August 18, 2022)

All graduate students who have advanced to candidacy for the Ph.D. in Psychology must conduct an original investigation of a problem or issue in the field of Psychology under the direction of a faculty member in the Graduate Program in Psychology. The results of this scientific investigation must be presented in a written doctoral dissertation. Guidelines explaining the Rutgers approved format for a dissertation can be obtained in the Office of the Graduate School (401 Hill Hall) or on the Graduate School's website. A subset of the necessary information can be found at the end of this handbook.

The steps to developing and presenting a doctoral dissertation proposal are outlined below.

1. Formation of the preliminary dissertation committee. Advisors and their students are strongly advised to form a preliminary dissertation committee shortly after the

successful completion of the comprehensive exams. The size and composition of the preliminary committee may vary, but ordinarily will consist of the student's primary advisor plus two additional members drawn from the departmental faculty. At the discretion of the student and primary advisor, the preliminary committee may be larger and may also include a member from outside the department. Under ordinary circumstances the preliminary dissertation committee members constitute the core of the final dissertation committee (see below).

2. Initial meeting with the preliminary dissertation committee to begin shaping the dissertation proposal. Students are required to meet with their preliminary dissertation committee sometime in their third or fourth year. The purpose of the meeting is to help the student in the early stages of dissertation planning by clarifying the thesis focus, make substantive or methodological suggestions, and establishing the dissertation committee as an active agent in the dissertation process. The initial meeting is to be an informal discussion and does not require a detailed written review of the literature or extended discussion of hypotheses and design.

In preparation for the meeting, the students shall prepare a brief outline of the general topic they propose to investigate and the specific questions they are considering making the focus of their dissertation. This outline is often related to the students' qualifying exam "grant proposal", but this is not required. It is often in the form of a Specific Aims page (see Qualifying Exam). The student's outline should be circulated to the committee members a week or two prior to the meeting.

At the meeting itself the student will begin with an informal presentation (roughly 10-20 minutes), drawn from the outline and including any preliminary data related to the proposed research. There then follows a dialogue between the committee and the student, the aim of which is to make suggestions or raise useful issues that will significantly advance the formulation of the dissertation proposal.

3. Formation of the final dissertation committee. Shortly after meeting with their Preliminary Dissertation Committee, students (in consultation with the primary advisors), establish a final dissertation committee. This committee should be used for the dissertation proposal and the doctoral dissertation itself. More frequent meetings with the committee are at the discretion of the student and the student's advisor. The purpose of such meetings is to address specific questions of research design and data analysis and in such other ways as the student and primary advisor feel would be helpful.

4. Doctoral Dissertation Proposal: When the student and the primary advisor are satisfied that the formulation of the research problem and general mode of analysis are sufficiently advanced, the student schedules a **Proposal Presentation** (previously Proposal *Defense*) given to the entire graduate program. They should submit an electronic copy of their dissertation proposal (once it has been given a final approval by their advisor) to the Graduate Director and every member of their dissertation committee **FOUR WEEKS BEFORE** their scheduled dissertation proposal presentation.

Graduate students are required to schedule their dissertation proposal presentation during a time when all their committee members can attend.

The Proposal Presentation is to be conducted in the spirit of an *informal dialogue* between the student and his or her colleagues, rather than a "defense" of an already set in stone and largely completed project. For this purpose, in most cases this means that not all the student's data should have been collected at the time of the Proposal Presentation.

The oral presentation of the dissertation proposal consists of four basic stages. Attendance varies across the stages. At the beginning of the presentation, the student gives a formal 20–30-minute talk that essentially summarizes their written proposal. This presentation is made in an open session of the committee members and of the members of the Psychology Department and any members of the University community. Friends and family are also welcomed to attend. This presentation is then followed by a 10–30-minute question and answer period during which the student defends his or her proposal to audience members who are not committee members.

Following the public Questions and Answers period, all members of the audience who are not members of the student's committee are required to leave the room. The committee members then join the student for an extended evaluation of the proposal. This stage can last from 45 minutes to 2 hours. Once the committee members have presented their principal questions and concerns, the student is asked to leave the room. Committee members meet alone and determine whether the student has passed his or her dissertation proposal (meaning that the student is free to pursue the proposed work) and what changes should be made to the proposed studies and/or theoretical framework. Once the committee members have come to an agreement, the student is invited back into the room to discuss the committee's recommendations.

5. Doctoral Dissertation. There are two options that students can choose from for their final dissertation proposal and defense.

Route One (Traditional Dissertation): PhD students may prepare a traditional dissertation under the approval and guidance of their sponsor and thesis committee.

Proposal. The culmination of the meetings with the dissertation committee is *the writing of the dissertation proposal*. The dissertation proposal is a relatively short document that provides an introduction to the issue of study. The structure of the proposal should be as follows: The proposal should begin with a title page listing the dissertation title, student's name, the names of all of the committee members, the student's Graduate Program in Psychology affiliation, and the month and year. The next page should contain an abstract of the project. This should be followed by a short literature review of the area of study. This overview is generally followed by an introduction to the student's hypothesis and then a description of the studies that the student and advisor have planned. The brief description of each study should include a precise statement of the hypothesis to be tested, a thorough description of the anticipated methodology and statistical analyses to be used, and finally a summary of the possible results and their implications. The text and references of the proposal should follow APA format. The Graduate Director has copies of previously submitted dissertation proposals and these may be used as examples.

Dissertation. The final dissertation is an extension of the proposal, with full results of the

previously proposed research, and a General Discussion.

Defense. The student will present their final work in an oral defense consisting of the same format as the proposal presentation (see #4 above). During the final oral defense, the Dissertation Committee will judge the quality and acceptability of the body of work represented in the dissertation and must agree that the document is of sufficient scholarly quality and scientific merit to be suitable for dissertation-level work. Note that the results of the studies in the dissertation do not need to be confirmed for the student to pass. In other words, the student may pass even if the results are null, or if follow-up studies are required for the paper to ultimately result in publication; the dissertation should nonetheless demonstrate scholarly quality consistent with doctoral work.

Route Two (Three-Publications Thesis): Having completed all other requirements of the Ph.D. and having consulted with the mentor, students may submit for approval to their thesis committee three research or theoretical papers in place of a dissertation. The typical standard will be that two of these papers be published or complete prior to the proposal, and these papers should be based on work the student has carried out while in the Psychology Department at Rutgers—Newark by the time of the defense. The third paper does not have to be published or submitted by the date of defense. One of the three required papers may be either a scholarly review of the literature or have a theoretical focus. Abstracts, chapters, or conference proceedings do not fulfill the requirement. The student must be the first author on all three papers, but co-authors are permitted. The dissertation will also include an Integrative Summary, which links the work presented in the three papers and situates the research in the context of the larger field. The student's dissertation committee is the ultimate arbiter of what constitutes an acceptable thesis.

Proposal. At the time of the proposal defense, the Dissertation Committee will approve the selection of the Three-Paper option. For this option, one paper must be published or in press in a peer-reviewed journal, the second paper must be complete (but not necessarily published or in press; it needs to be submitted before the dissertation defense), and the third will be proposed. As such, the proposal document will include the published paper (Paper 1), the completed paper (Paper 2), and a grant-style proposal for the third paper. The proposal should be no more than 12 double-spaced pages in length and should include a brief literature review situating the research question, a proposed method section with hypotheses, an analysis section, and anticipated results. Finally, the proposal should open with a one-page overview of the three papers, serving as a dissertation abstract, in the form of a Specific Aims page. If the proposed findings are confirmed, the proposed data should be of a scope sufficient to result in a third publishable paper. Note that the third (proposed) paper **must be empirical**; as mentioned above, the student may submit one theoretical paper as part of the Three-Paper Dissertation Option, but the theoretical piece must be published or completed at the time of the proposal.

The student's dissertation committee will be the ultimate arbiter of whether the collection of three papers serves as an acceptable thesis. For example, the committee can decide

whether an unpublished manuscript is indeed a publishable paper, and conversely, whether a published paper meets our dissertation standards. Thus, for the Three-Paper option, it is required that the student form their dissertation committee shortly after passing the qualifying exam and convene one or more pre-proposal meetings where the committee can discuss potential directions for this option.

Dissertation. The Three-Paper dissertation should begin with an integrative summary (< 2000—3000 words) that discusses the theoretical links among the three papers and their results, followed by the three papers themselves (see Table 1). The integrative summary is an opportunity for the student to reflect on how each of their papers contributes to the larger “big picture” question that is in the center of their research program. It should include a brief overview of the theoretical framework that governs their work, and how the design and results of the three papers contribute to that framework. It should conclude with the broad implications of the findings of the three papers, how they contribute to the existing literature, and in what future directions these findings might take the student.

Defense. The student will present their final work in an oral defense consisting of the same format as the proposal presentation (See #4 above). During the final oral defense, the Dissertation Committee will judge the quality and acceptability of the body of work represented in the three papers and must agree that the papers are of sufficient scholarly quality and scientific merit to be suitable for dissertation-level work. Note that the results of the studies in the proposed paper (Paper 3) do not need to be confirmed for the student to pass. In other words, the student may pass even if the results are null, or if follow-up studies are required for the paper to ultimately result in publication; the paper should nonetheless demonstrate scholarly quality consistent with doctoral work.

	Traditional Dissertation	Three Papers Dissertation
Introduction	x	Integrative Summary
Literature Review	x	Included within the three papers
Methodology	x	Included within the 2 or 3 (empirical) papers
Results	x	Included within the 2 or 3 (empirical) papers
Discussion	x	Incorporated within the Integrative Summary
References	x	Included within the three papers

Table 1. components of Conventional and Three Paper dissertation options.

Fourth and/or Fifth Year

During their final year in the Psychology Graduate Program, students completely focus on the completion of their dissertation. To facilitate this, students are required to apply for an internal Dissertation Fellowship through the Rutgers Newark Graduate School in their fourth year. If the student is not granted a dissertation fellowship, the department will fund their 5th year, but note that funding may require a TA-ship if a Lehrman is not available. Students should also begin to direct their energies towards applying for post-

doctoral research and faculty positions. The best way to begin this process is to discuss your future employment options with your advisor and to consult the job listings in the APA monitor and APS observer.

Submission of Doctoral Dissertation: As students complete portions of the research described in their dissertation proposal, they should write up their results chapter by chapter and submit them to their advisor for feedback. Thus, the development of a dissertation is best viewed as a continuous process of production and refinement. Students are invited to meet with members of their dissertation committee, either individually or as a group, to assist in the development of their dissertations. The structure of a doctoral dissertation is described in a pamphlet available in the Graduate School office (401 Hill Hall) or on-line at the address given previously. Again, some of the necessary information can be found at the end of this handbook.

Once a student and advisor are satisfied with a completed dissertation, the student can schedule their dissertation defense. The dissertation defense should be scheduled at least 4 weeks after the student has produced the final version of their dissertation and has distributed it to his or her committee members. The Director of the Graduate Program should also receive a copy of the dissertation at this time. Furthermore, it is important for students to schedule their dissertation defense dates several weeks before the deadline for that semester. Students are reminded that it is normal for the committee to suggest many changes in a dissertation. Therefore, several weeks should be left for making these changes and receiving approval for them before submitting the dissertation to the Graduate Studies Office in anticipation of graduation.

Dissertation Defense: One month after a student submits his or her dissertation to the committee members (including all outside members), the student may defend their dissertation. This delay provides time for approval by the Dean of the Graduate School, for public notice of the dissertation defense, and for a thorough evaluation by the dissertation committee. No final oral examination is to be scheduled unless a majority of the full-time faculty are in attendance. A candidate must defend the dissertation and otherwise satisfy the committee that he or she is qualified to receive the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Oral Defense: The oral dissertation defense presentation is chaired by the student's advisor. The total duration is ordinarily not more than three hours with the first 45 minutes consisting of a presentation by the student of the nature and principal findings of the dissertation. As in the dissertation proposal defense, the student's presentation occurs in an open, public session. This is followed by a question-and-answer period for members of the audience who are not members of the dissertation committee. Then the student and the dissertation committee members meet alone to discuss the dissertation. Once the committee members are satisfied with the student's defense of the dissertation, the student is excused from the room and the committee members meet in private to determine whether the student has passed their dissertation defense. Once this decision has been made, the student is invited back into the room and told of the committee's decision.

At the time of the dissertation defense, it is the responsibility of the candidate to obtain from the Office of the Graduate Dean the candidacy application for completion by the

committee at the dissertation defense. The committee members must also sign the title page of the dissertation, signifying their acceptance of it. Once the program director certifies that all program requirements have been completed for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, the candidate must return the candidacy application to the Office of the Dean. Additional materials to be submitted at this time include one original and one photocopy of the dissertation on 100 percent cotton-content bond paper, two copies of the title page and abstract, the receipted payment form for microfilming, the microfilming agreement form, and additional survey forms as required. All of the above materials must be submitted to the Office of the Dean no later than the announced deadlines for completion of degree requirements. The names of those failing to meet these deadlines are automatically removed from the commencement list for that degree date.

Importantly, a student **MUST** be registered for at least 1 credit during the semester in which they submit their approved dissertation to the graduate school.

Publication of Dissertation: After the granting of the doctorate, the Graduate School-Newark has the dissertation microfilmed. The dissertation must, therefore, be prepared with the same care as a publishable paper. The abstract that accompanies the dissertation is published in Dissertation Abstracts and, therefore, must also be ready for publication when it is submitted to the dean.

University Microfilms of Ann Arbor, Michigan, microfilms the dissertation and publishes the abstract. Information concerning the preparation of the dissertation and abstract, and the agreement with University Microfilms which the candidate is to sign, are available in the Office of the Dean. The fee for microfilming and binding of the dissertation and the publishing abstract is currently \$66.50. Registration of copyright is also available for a fee of \$35.00

All dissertations must be submitted electronically. To ease into the process, doctoral students can do practice runs as often as necessary and receive feedback from the Graduate Dean's office, as to whether all is in order, prior to making their final submission. The formatting instructions have been rewritten for electronic submission and are posted on the website at the check box, "Author Guidelines" at the bottom of the Step 1 page. Instructions are included for copyright and submission to ProQuest/UMI (University Microfilms). The electronic dissertation will be maintained in the Rutgers University library system. **Two original cover pages hand-signed by the student's dissertation committee members will still be required to be submitted to the Graduate Dean's office for permanent record, even when the dissertation is submitted electronically.**

Continuation beyond the Fifth Year

Some graduate students may require more than 5 years to complete their graduate training. The Psychology Department does not provide funding beyond the 5th year, and students who continue beyond this point must obtain "Matriculation Continued" status. Students are permitted to continue as "Matric Continued" for an additional 2 years, but not beyond that point. Students who do not successfully defend their dissertation within

7 years (i.e., their initial 5 years as a funded graduate student plus their 2 additional as a “Matric Continued” student) will be terminated from the psychology graduate program.

Joint Doctoral Degree with the Business School

The Department has a collaborative arrangement with Rutgers Business School (RBS) that permits psychology graduate students to simultaneously satisfy the requirements for the doctorate in Psychology with one of the ten majors in the RBS doctoral program. In this case, the student will be awarded a single Ph.D. in Psychology and in the RBS major. The student's transcript will be annotated to indicate that the student has satisfied the requirements of both Ph.D. programs. The joint degree arrangement will be of particular interest to students who may wish to pursue an academic career in a graduate school of business or a research career in a business setting.

A psychology doctoral student interested in such a joint degree should consult as early as possible with the graduate psychology program director, who will ask the RBS doctoral director to appoint a business-school faculty member to help advise the student on courses and on dissertation topics suitable for both programs. The student and his or her advisers will draw up a detailed course plan that is appropriate for the student's background and interests, satisfies the requirements of both programs, and is feasible given the best available information concerning course scheduling. The course plan should be designed to enable the student to take the qualifying examination for the RBS major as soon as possible after passing the qualifying examination in psychology. Upon receipt of the course plan, the RBS director will confirm whether it is adequate to prepare the student for the RBS qualifying examination. During the coursework stage, the student will need to check course schedules every semester to verify that the plan remains feasible. Any needed changes should be approved by the advisers and the directors.

To remain a joint candidate after passing the qualifying examination, the student must remain in good standing in both programs. Withdrawal or dismissal from one will not change their status in the other. The student's dissertation committee will be appointed by the two directors acting jointly.