

Overview of the Department of Psychology's Ph.D. Program

Courses

Year 1	PSY 500	Social Proseminar
	PSY 501	Cognitive Proseminar
	PSY 503	Foundations of Statistical Methods for Psychological Science
	PSY 504	Advanced Statistical Methods for Psychological Science
Year 2	PSY 591a	Responsible Conduct in Research
Years 1-5	PSY 543	Research seminar in Cognitive Psychology
	PSY 551	Research seminar in Social Psychology

Teaching

Each student must teach a minimum of 9 hours (which usually corresponds to 3 semesters of teaching). Students often teach more than 9 hours over the course of five years of regular enrollment, depending on fellowship and/or advisor funding.

Generals / Dissertation

Year 2	April 1	Determine General Exam Committee
Year 3	September 1	Research Paper Due Theoretical Paper / Literature Synthesis Due
	Late September / Early October	General Exam
Year 4	September 1	Determine Dissertation Proposal Committee
	November 1	Initiate first meeting with Dissertation Proposal Committee; Meet as necessary until the Proposal is approved, not less than once every 12 months
Year 5+	December 1	Determine Dissertation Reading and Final Public Oral Committees
	March 1	Submit Dissertation Draft
	March 15	Feedback from Dissertation Reading Committee
	April 1	Final Dissertation Due
	Mid April	Faculty Meeting Approval of Dissertations
	Late April / Early May	Final Public Oral

Committees

General Exam Committee*
(Advisor + 2 faculty members;
1 faculty member must be out-of-area)



Dissertation Proposal Committee*
(Advisor + 2 faculty members;
1 faculty member must be out-of-area)



Dissertation Reading Committee*
(Advisor + 2 faculty members;
1 faculty member must be out-of-area)

Final Public Oral committee
(Advisor + 2 *new* faculty members;
1 faculty member must be out-of-area)

* Same committee members by default, unless decided otherwise by the advisor and the student

Out-of-area is broadly defined as someone who broadens the scope of expertise in the committee

Non-Princeton committee members must be preapproved by the Graduate School

All Years

Beginning of Terms

Course Registration

Students are required to register for either PSY 543: Research Seminar in Cognitive Psychology, or PSY 551: Social Psychological Research each semester.

Teaching

Teaching experience is an important and meaningful part of graduate education in the department. Each student must teach a minimum of 9 hours (which usually corresponds to 3 semesters of teaching). Students often teach more than 9 hours over the course of five years of regular enrollment, and students are required to teach during any semester when they do not have fellowship or advisor grant support.

August

Graduate Student Orientation

Half-day orientation is scheduled for all incoming graduate students; they must meet with the Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, faculty, staff, and current graduate students.

Academic Year Sign-In

All enrolled graduate students are required to complete academic year sign-in through TigerHub in August in order to be enrolled and to receive their graduate awards and other University benefits to which they are entitled. Failure to complete sign-in will result in termination of enrollment. Students should communicate with their advisors by September 1st to learn of any departmental schedules that they must meet. International students must be lawfully present in the United States as a condition of sign-in.

NOTE: New students will receive instructions about using TigerHub and details related to Academic Year Sign-In from the Office of the Registrar, in August.

December

Yearly, one-on-one meeting with DGS

Each graduate student meets once per year with the DGS for 20 minutes. This is an open-ended conversation, and students are encouraged to seek support from the DGS (and/or others) about their their experience in the department, their research/teaching/coursework, and their thinking about the future.

January / February

Reenrollment

Reenrollment is the annual process whereby the department, and the Graduate School, evaluate the academic progress of candidates for advanced degrees. The reenrollment process, which is conducted during the latter half of the spring term, is often supplemented by other departmentally-specific evaluations conducted at different times during the academic year (e.g., doctoral students' dissertation committee meetings, which may occur once or at several times during an academic year). Students will actively participate in the annual reenrollment process by reporting their written statement of academic progress during the current year, and goals and objectives for the coming year, in TigerHub.

All students eligible for reenrollment, including those writing dissertations, must make a formal application each year through the department. Students who have satisfied all academic requirements within the department—and demonstrated their readiness for continuing graduate work—are offered reenrollment no later than June; others are notified about reenrollment when a basis for judgment is available.

Visiting Day

All department graduate students are asked to be available for the department's Visiting Day activities, which typically take place at the end of January.

April / May

Feedback Meetings with Advisors

During the spring semester (April/May), each student should meet with their primary (and secondary, for years 2-5) advisor(s). Each advisor will discuss and relay to the student the impressions that the Department faculty has of the student's progress.

DGS Meeting

All graduate students are invited to attend a meeting with the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS), which is usually held in April/May of each year. The purpose of this meeting is for the DGS to get a sense of graduate student life in the department. The Graduate Program Manager will share the meeting date, time, and location as soon as they are known.

Year 1

Beginning of Terms

Course Registration

In addition to the courses required for all years, all first-year students are required to register for the following courses:

- **PSY 500** (social psychology) Proseminar and **PSY 501** (cog/neuro psychology) Proseminar; depending on the year, one is offered in the fall and the other is offered in the spring
- **PSY 503** Foundations of Statistical Methods for Psychological Science, usually completed in the fall; and
- **PSY 504** Advanced Statistical Methods for Psychological Science, usually completed in the spring.

Courses are taken for a letter grade.

August

Graduate Student Orientation

Half-day orientation is scheduled for all incoming graduate students; they must meet with the Chair, Director of Graduate Studies, faculty, staff, and current graduate students.

April

Second Advisor Selection

By the end of the spring term, and in consultation with the primary advisor, all first-year students must select a secondary advisor and inform the Graduate Program Manager of who has been selected.

May

Course Evaluations

All first-year graduate students are evaluated during the April or May faculty meeting based on their performance in coursework.

Year 2

Beginning of Terms

Course Registration

In addition to the courses required for all years, all second-year students must register for and complete the six-week Responsible Conduct in Research course (**PSY/NEU 591a**) offered by the department in either the fall or the spring semester.

April

General Exam Committee

Due by April 1 of the second year. Second-year students should begin working with their primary and secondary advisors to determine the General Exam Committee members. The General Exam Committee will consist of three people minimum, with two faculty representing the student's sub-area of expertise (social or cog/neuro, broadly construed), and one faculty member from outside the student's sub-area. Students and advisors should consult and agree on what constitutes inside and outside a student's sub-area. Interpretation should be consistent with the spirit of this requirement, which is to ensure that the student is able to discuss their research in sufficient depth but also breadth. It is also noted that the two "in-area" members have traditionally been the student's primary and secondary advisors. If the student and advisor wish to have a non-Princeton faculty member serve on the Committee, preapproval is required from the Graduate School. Once known, students should communicate the General Exam Committee members' names to the Graduate Program Manager.

Note that the General Exam consists of three parts:

1. Research Paper (due by **September 1** of the **third year**)
2. Theoretical Paper / Literature Synthesis (due by **September 1** of the **third year**)
3. Oral Exam (**Late September / Early October** of the **third year**)

Year 3

September

General Exam Research Paper

Due by September 1. Students will write a research paper, which is ordinarily in the form of a finished research paper. However, it may also be in the form of a research progress report of the sort submitted to granting agencies. In either case, the paper should characterize the student's research activity in sufficient detail for the faculty to consider advancing them to candidacy for the Ph.D. degree.

NOTE: If a student submits a research paper that is under review or published in a journal, the student must be first author on the manuscript. The paper should contain a one-page abstract.

General Exam Theoretical Paper / Literature Synthesis

Due by September 1 of the third year. Students will write a theoretical paper / literature synthesis. Just as a qualifying exam would require students to have mastery over the relevant literature, a theoretical paper / literature synthesis should demonstrate a thorough understanding of the literature in the student's research specialty. This represents a broader review than the literature that will be covered by the General Exam research paper, and can take the form of meta-analysis of an area of research, a new theoretical question posed out of a larger review of previous theories, or a summary of theoretical developments across time in a sub-area. We recommend that students write this in the spring semester of the second year, but it is not formally due until September 1 of the third year.

Late September / Early October

General Exam

The oral exam must be completed prior to the November faculty meeting for full faculty review. The General Exam period is determined by the Graduate School and occurs in late September / early October. Students are responsible for scheduling the General Exam Committee to meet during this period. Students are responsible for notifying the Graduate Program Manager of when the oral exam will be held and when it has been completed.

Year 4

September

Dissertation Proposal Committee

Due by September 1 of the fourth year. By September, fourth-year students should develop their Dissertation Proposal Committee. This committee will generally consist of the same members as a student's General Exam Committee. In collaboration with the advisor, a student may elect to form a new committee. If a student wishes to do so, they must follow the same guidelines as the General Exam Committee. If the student and advisor wish to have a non-Princeton faculty member serve on the Committee, preapproval is required from the Graduate School. Once the Committee is known, students will notify the Graduate Program Manager. The Director of Graduate Studies will provide final approval of the Committee.

November and beyond

Dissertation Proposal Committee Meeting

Fourth-year students will begin to develop their thesis proposals with their Dissertation Proposal Committees. No less than one week prior to the first formal meeting of the committee to discuss the written dissertation proposal, students will submit an electronic copy of a draft or fully-written dissertation proposal to their committee and notify the Graduate Program Manager, along with the date, time, and location of the first formal Dissertation Proposal Committee meeting. A student will continue to meet (as necessary, but not less than once every twelve months) with their Dissertation Proposal Committee until the committee approves the dissertation proposal, at which time the student will notify the Graduate Program Manager of the dissertation proposal approval.

Year 5+

October and beyond

Dissertation Reading Committee

Due by December 1 of the fifth year. Students must submit the names of the Dissertation Reading Committee members to the Graduate Program Manager for DGS approval. This committee will generally consist of the same members as a student's General Exam and Dissertation Proposal Committees. If a student elects to form a new committee, they must follow the same guidelines as the General Exam Committee. If the student and advisor wish to have a non-Princeton faculty member serve on the Committee, preapproval is required from the Graduate School.

Dissertation Final Public Oral Committee

Due by December 1 of the fifth year. Students must also submit the names of the Dissertation Final Public Oral Committee members to the Graduate Program Manager for DGS approval. This committee will generally consist of a student's first advisor, an "in-area" faculty member, and an "out-of-area" faculty member. Only one member of the Dissertation Reading Committee may serve on the Dissertation Final Public Oral Committee. If the student and advisor wish to have a non-Princeton faculty member serve on the Committee, preapproval is required from the Graduate School.

January

Students are encouraged to meet with the Graduate Program Manager to discuss their timeline to the Final Public Oral defense.

March

Dissertation Draft

Due by March 1. A draft of the dissertation is due no later than March 1 to the Dissertation Reading Committee, with a copy to the Graduate Program Manager. This allows the student and the committee time to review the dissertation.

Dissertation Reading Committee Feedback

The Committee will provide revision feedback to the student by March 15 of the fifth year.

April

Final Dissertation

Due by April 1. A final version of the dissertation is due to the Dissertation Reading Committee for final review, and to the Graduate Program Manager by April 1. The student will formally distribute the dissertation to the Dissertation Final Public Oral Committee and copy the Graduate Program Manager.

Faculty Approval of Dissertation

The primary and/or secondary advisor will present the student's final dissertation during the April faculty meeting for review and approval from the full faculty.

Final Public Oral Scheduling

The student will work with the Dissertation Final Public Oral Committee to determine a date, time, and location for the Final Public Oral, typically within the last week of April or first week of May. The Office & Events Coordinator can assist with finding suitable locations. Once a date, time, and location are known, the student will inform the Graduate Program Manager.

Advanced Degree Application

Four weeks prior to the scheduled Final Public Oral defense, the student will begin to complete the Advanced Degree application through Tigerhub. This must be completed and submitted by the student and their advisor no later than two weeks prior to the FPO.

Late April / Early May

Final Public Oral

The Final Public Oral defense will be conducted with the Dissertation Final Public Oral Committee in the late part of April or early part of May, prior to the Graduate School's May degree deadline.

Post-Final Public Oral Processes

After a successful Final Public Oral defense, there are several steps that the student must complete in a timely manner in order to complete the program and University requirements. The Graduate Program Manager will send detailed instructions to the student. All steps must be completed prior to the Graduate School's May degree deadline in order to receive a Ph.D. in May. The Trustees will not award the Ph.D. degree until these steps are completed. Any delay in completing the steps may jeopardize the award of the degree.