



THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Department of Psychology

Graduate Student Handbook
2021-2022

Anita DeLongis – Associate Head, Graduate Affairs

Revised – September 2021

Table of Contents

Introduction	5
Disclaimer	5
.....
New Students	5
Important Names	6
MA Program	7
Supervisor	7
MA Committee	7
Registration	7
Completion of MA	7
MA Program Requirements	8
Courses	8
Quantitative Methods	10
Breadth	11
Core Program Requirements	12
Directed Studies (PSYC 547)	13
MA Specialization in Human–Computer Interaction	13
A Promise	13
Grades	13
PsychFest	13
MA Thesis	14
Schedule for Completion of MA Degree	15
Evaluation of MA Performance and Admission to the PhD Program	15
Application for Graduation	16
Application for Admission to the PhD Program	16
PhD Program	17
PhD Committee	17
Transfer Students	17
Research and CV	17
PhD Program Requirements	17
Courses	18
Quantitative Methods	18
Breadth	18
Core Program Requirements	18
A Promise	19
Minor	19
Synopsis of MA/PhD Course Requirements	19
Advancement to Candidacy	20
Comprehensive Examination	20

Behavioural Neuroscience	20
Clinical	21
Cognitive Science	23
Developmental	24
Health	26
Quantitative Methods	26
Social/Personality	27
PhD Dissertation Proposal	27
Behavioural Neuroscience	28
Cognitive Science	28
PhD Dissertation	28
Dissertation Approval Meeting	28
Final Doctoral Examination	29
Application for Graduation	29
Student Services & Supports	30
In Case of Problems	30
Graduate Advisor (Associate Head, Graduate Affairs)	30
Ombudsperson/Liaison to Graduate Advisor	31
Equity Committee	31
Mentorship Program	31
Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies	31
Support and Resources on Student Wellbeing	31
Publication-Related Disputes	31
Graduate Student Council	32
Departmental Resources	33
Information Technology	33
Methodological and Statistical Consulting	33
Student Evaluation & Annual Progress Report	34
Graduate Course Evaluations	34
Appeals	34
Student Offices	34
Mailboxes	34
Photocopying	35
Keys	35
Funding & Awards	35
Research Assistantship	35
Teaching Assistantship	36
Getting Paid	36
Quinn Exchange Fellowships (QXF Program)	36
Travel Grants	36

Miscellaneous Information	38
G+PS Regulations.....	38
Graduate Student Vacation Policy.....	38
Leave of Absence.....	38
Use of Degree Status Designations.....	38
Access, Privacy and Records Management	39
Respectful Environment	39
Plagiarism	39
International Students.....	39
Graduate Student Centre	40
Libraries	40
Student Travel Outside of Canada.....	40

Introduction

Dear Student:

You are ultimately responsible for making sure that you are aware of all the requirements for completion of your degree. The purpose of this *Handbook* is to provide current general information concerning the steps you must take to fulfill those requirements. This *Handbook* is thoroughly revised once a year and updated more frequently. Given this, it is unwise to assume your fellow students or all members of the faculty are aware of each rule. Because the requirements vary from program to program, students should carefully read the requirements of their own program and discuss them with their supervisor or area coordinator. You must read this *Handbook* (and refer to it frequently as you progress in your degree) to be sure that you have taken all the necessary steps.

Disclaimer

This *Handbook* tries to alert students to all requirements for successful completion of their studies. Nevertheless, the regulations of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) are imposed by, interpreted by, and enforced by the Faculty; the department's requirements merely supplement those of G+PS.

New Students

As soon as you arrive on campus, you should contact your research supervisor, area coordinator, Graduate Program Manager (Jackie Shaw), and the Department's Director of Administration (Tara Martin). The Department holds an orientation meeting for all new graduate students at the start of the term. In addition to this *Graduate Student Handbook* and the relevant sections of the [Psychology Graduate Program](#) website, good sources of information are your faculty advisor, senior students in your lab, your area or in the Department, and relevant sections of the [G+PS](#) website.

Current members of the Graduate Student Council (GSC), who will be pleased to advise you, are:

Co-Presidents	Ashley Battaglini, Jin-Hui Wen
Ombudsperson/Liaison to Graduate Director	Sophie Smit, Carly Parsons

For a list of Graduate Student Council Representatives for each area, please check the [GSC website](#).

Each graduate student is enrolled in one of seven areas:

- Behavioural Neuroscience
- Clinical
- Cognitive Science
- Developmental
- Health
- Quantitative Methods
- Social/Personality

There is another area within the department (Learning Enhancement), but graduate education is not offered in this area.

Important Names

The current area coordinators are:

Behavioural Neuroscience	Catharine Winstanley
Clinical	David Klonsky
Cognitive Science	Luke Clark
Developmental	Andrew Baron
Health	Frances Chen
Learning Enhancement	Catherine Rawn
Quantitative Methods	Victoria Savalei
Social/Personality	Mark Schaller

Other members of the department who have responsibility for various aspects of the graduate program, and who thus can be of assistance to you, are:

Department Head	Geoff Hall
Director, Administration	Tara Martin
Manager, Graduate Program	Jackie Shaw
Graduate Advisor/Associate Head for Graduate Affairs	Anita DeLongis
Graduate Program Policy and Coordination Committee Chair	Anita DeLongis
Graduate Student Progress Committee Chair	Anita DeLongis
Graduate Admissions Committee Chair	Todd Handy
Graduate Fellowships and Scholarships Committee Chair	Andrew Baron
Teaching Assistants Committee Co-Chairs	Jim Enns & Tara Martin
PsychFest Liaison	Rebecca Todd
Psychology Clinic Director and Director of Clinical Training	David Klonsky
Clinical Program Assistant	Bana Ashour
Executive Coordinator	Lawron Leung

The MA and PhD programs are designed as parts of one whole. Our hope is that in fulfilling the formal rules that we introduce below, students can acquire the competencies and accomplishments needed to pursue their intellectual interests as independent researchers.

MA Program

The MA is the first two years of a joint MA–PhD program, just long enough to accomplish the basic training required. Normally, each student spends two years in the MA and then moves on to the PhD in the third year.

Supervisor

The key person in the student's education is the research supervisor. In our department, the supervisor is a mentor to the student, providing much of the training through close collaboration. This training includes guiding the student in setting up a research program and in collecting, maintaining, analyzing, and interpreting data. The supervisor provides the student with most of the specific information needed to become an independent researcher. You should plan your courses with the support and approval of your supervisor. The primary supervisor must be a regular faculty member in a research area of this department. A faculty member from another department can act as a co-supervisor only if the primary supervisor from this department holds the rank of Professor. The student-supervisor relationship is spelled out in more detail in the G+PS [Supervising Graduate Students](#) page.

MA Committee

Incoming students are encouraged to form an MA Committee soon after entering the program in consultation with their research advisor. The MA Committee consists of at least three faculty members. One of the members is the research supervisor; at least two of the members must be in the department; and at least one of the members must be primarily affiliated with the student's program. For students in the Clinical program, the current Clinic Director, Dr. Ingrid Söchting, may serve on MA committees, although not as primary supervisor. (Should the Clinic Directorship change, the new Director's eligibility to sit on MA committees will be decided by the clinical faculty based on the individual's record of research activity and publications.) During their MA2 year, students should report the membership of their confirmed MA committee to the Manager of Graduate Program. If changes are made to the committee after it has been approved by G+PS, it must be reported via the [Change to Supervisory Committee form](#).

Registration

Course registrations are done on the [Student Service Centre \(SSC\)](#) site by logging in with your Campus Wide Login (CWL). Registration should be completed by the first week of classes. All MA students enroll in the thesis course (PSYC 549) plus, typically, 6-12 credits of coursework in each year. **You must register in the thesis course in the summer session as well, as that maintains your student status.** If a course is offered that you will need to take at some point during your graduate program, you are strongly urged to take that course upon first offering or as soon as possible. Not all courses are offered every year; some are offered only infrequently. Given the course may not be offered again for a number of years, delaying taking a needed course could be problematic. Note that most clinical area courses are restricted to clinical students. Clinical students wishing to register for these courses must complete the [Request to Force Registration in Clinical Courses](#) form.

Completion of MA

The MA program requires full-time resident study and should be completed in two academic years. The program was designed to ensure that this goal is reached. Delays beyond this deadline can sharply decrease a student's chances of admission to the PhD program and can constitute grounds for dismissal from the MA program. Note, as well, that financial support in the form of fellowships, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships is not likely beyond the second year for MA students.

The Department of Psychology reserves the right to specify deadlines, requirements, and limitations for particular students. Certain students may be required to complete additional courses or other undertakings because of deficiencies in their preparatory background. These requirements must be worked out by the program in coordination with the GSPC during the first term of the student's residence in the program. Dates given in this

Handbook assume that the student begins in September; adjustments are made for those who begin at other times.

Completion of the MA degree requires at least 30 credits (more in some programs). The requirements for the MA can be divided into the following four groups:

- thesis (18 credits)
- quantitative methods course(s) (3 or 6 credits, depending on the program)
- core program courses (6 or more credits, depending on the program), and
- breadth course (3 credits)

The same course cannot be used to satisfy different requirements. Courses taken while enrolled as an MA student but that do not fulfill any of these requirements can be used, where appropriate, to fulfill PhD requirements. In conjunction with their advisors, students are also encouraged to consider additional courses offered in our department or in other departments of the university.

MA Program Requirements

In addition to the 18-credit MA thesis (PSYC 549), the *minimum* coursework requirements (expressed in terms of course credits where a typical one-term course is weighted 3 credits) for each program are summarized below.

program	core program	quantitative methods	breadth
Behavioural Neuroscience (BNS)	6	3	3
Clinical (CLI)	20	3	3
Cognitive Science (COG)	6	3	3
Developmental (DEV)	6	3	3
Health (HLH)	6	3	3
Quantitative Methods (QM)	6	6	3
Social/Personality (S/P)	6	6	3

Courses

Graduate courses in the Department are grouped by program in the following table. Courses are classified as core program courses or as breadth courses for students in different programs. Note that breadth courses are further constrained for Clinical students; details are below. Other restrictions are also noted in the “comment” column. Note that only a subset of these courses is offered each year.

PSYC	course title	core program	breadth	comment
500	History of Psychology		✓	not a core course in any program; a breadth course for all PSYC grad students
508	Teaching of Psychology			not a core course in any program; not a breadth course
547	Reading and Conference	✓		can serve as a core program course; see below regarding PSYC 547
549	Master’s Thesis	ALL		continuous registration required in this course while an MA student
649	Doctoral Dissertation	ALL		continuous registration required in this course while a PhD student
516	Animal Learning, Memory, and	BNS	✓	

PSYC	course title	core program	breadth	comment
	Cognition			
517	Biopsychology of Motivation	BNS	✓	
520	Developmental Biopsychology	BNS	✓	
522	Drugs and Behaviour	BNS	✓	
523	Experimental Neuropsychology and Animal Models	BNS	✓	
524	Neural Models of Learning and Memory	BNS	✓	
574	Biopsychology I	N/A	✓	BNS students cannot take for credit; recommended breadth course for non-BNS students
592	Neuroethology	BNS	✓	
593	Neurophysiology and Cortical Plasticity	BNS	✓	
594	Psychoneuroendocrinology	BNS	✓	
595	Psychophysiology	BNS	✓	
530	Assessment: A Critical Survey	CLI		restricted to clinical students
531	Assessment: Clinical Applications	CLI		restricted to clinical students
532	Child Assessment	CLI		restricted to clinical students
533	Current Issues in Clinical Psychology	CLI		restricted to clinical students
534	Clinical Psychology Practicum	CLI		restricted to clinical students
535	Psychopathology of the Adult	CLI	✓	
536	Psychopathology of the Child	CLI	✓	
537	Ethical and Professional Issues in Clinical Psychology	CLI		restricted to clinical students
538	Clinical Neuropsychological Assessment	CLI		restricted to clinical students
540	Strategies of Psychological Intervention	CLI		restricted to clinical students
541	Introduction to Psychotherapy	CLI		restricted to clinical students
542	Cognitive/Behavioural Interventions	CLI		restricted to clinical students
556	Psychological Treatment of Childhood Disorders	CLI		restricted to clinical students
559	Clinical Psychological Internship	CLI		restricted to clinical students
560	Clinical Research Design	CLI	✓	
570	Cognitive Neuroscience	COG	✓	
571	Special Topics in Cognitive Neuroscience	COG	✓	
578	Perception	COG	✓	
579	Special Topics in Perception	COG	✓	
582	Cognition	COG	✓	
583	Special Topics in Cognition	COG	✓	
513	Special Topics in Developmental Psychology	DEV	✓	

PSYC	course title	core program	breadth	comment
584	Language Development in Infancy and Childhood	DEV	✓	
585	Special Topics in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience	DEV	✓	
586	Developmental Psychology	DEV	✓	
587	Cognitive Development	DEV	✓	
588	Special Topics in Social and Personality Development	DEV	✓	
589	Moral Development	DEV	✓	
521	Psycholinguistics	DEV / COG	✓	
501	Health Psychology	HLH	✓	
502	Research Methods in Health Psychology	HLH	✓	
503	Biological Basis of Health Psychology	HLH	✓	
504	Special Topics in Health Psychology	HLH	✓	
545	Advanced Statistics I		✓	required course for all students
546B	Analysis of Variance	QM	✓	
546D	Survey of Multivariate Methods	QM	✓	
546E	Multiple Regression	QM	✓	
546G	Factor Analysis	QM	✓	
546H	Measurement in Psychology	QM	✓	
546I	Statistical Tools for the Replication Crisis	QM	✓	Cannot be used towards basic 6-credit statistics requirement
546J	Multilevel Modeling	QM	✓	
546X	Applied Multivariate Statistics	QM	✓	
546Y	Structural Equation Modeling	QM	✓	
507	Cultural Psychology	S/P	✓	
512	Psychology of Emotion	S/P	✓	
525	Attitudes and Social Cognition	S/P	✓	
527	Interpersonal Processes	S/P	✓	
528	Advanced Methods in Social Psychology and Personality	S/P	✓	
529	Special Topics in Social Psychology	S/P	✓	
567	Personality Dimensions and Structure	S/P	✓	
569	Contemporary Conceptual Issues in Personality	S/P	✓	
590	Survey of Social Psychology I	S/P	✓	
591	Survey of Social Psychology II	S/P	✓	

Quantitative Methods

Six credits of graduate-level PSYC statistics courses are required over the course of the MA and PhD degrees combined. In the QM and S/P programs, 6 credits must be taken at the MA level. For the remaining programs, one course must be taken at the MA level with the other typically taken at the PhD level. For the first course, students

normally enroll in the 3-credit course PSYC 545 in Term 1 of their first year. For the second 3-credit course that completes the required 6 credits, students may choose any PSYC 546 statistics course (e.g., 546B, 546E) other than 546I. **Note: EPSE and STAT courses cannot be used to fulfill the basic 6-credit statistics requirements.**

Breadth

A breadth course is any substantive graduate course offered by our department outside the student's own program. By "substantive," we exclude courses focused on teaching or professional issues (e.g., PSYC 508) rather than on the substance of psychology. **Note that a Directed Studies course (PSYC 547) cannot be used to fulfill the breadth requirement. A breadth course cannot be one offered by another department – it must be from within the department but outside the student's program.** For the MA, 3 credits are required, depending on the program. (Recall that these 3 credits cannot also be used to fulfill any other requirement.)

Selection of a breadth course is left to the student (with approval of the supervisor), except for those students in the Clinical program. CPA accreditation standards stipulate that students in the Clinical program must develop foundational knowledge in the following content areas:

1. Biological bases of behaviour (e.g., physiological psychology, comparative psychology, neuropsychology, psychopharmacology)
2. Cognitive-affective bases of behaviour (e.g., learning, sensation, perception, cognition, thinking, motivation, emotion),
3. Social bases of behaviour (e.g., social psychology; cultural, ethnic, and group processes; sex roles; organizational and systems theory),
4. Individual behaviour (e.g., personality theory, human development, individual differences, abnormal psychology), and
5. Historical and scientific foundations of general psychology (this content area can be fulfilled with a one-semester, senior undergraduate course).

The individual behavior requirement (content area 4) is met through clinical coursework, and the options for meeting the historical and scientific foundations (content area 5) requirement are outlined on the department webpage (see [Curriculum & Requirements](#) for the Clinical Graduate Program).

Consistent with department requirements, clinical students need to take a minimum of two graduate PSYC courses outside of the clinical area. At least one of these must be taken during the MA. Clinical students typically use these departmental breadth courses (plus another graduate course) to cover content areas 1, 2, and 3. All relevant departmental graduate courses have been assigned as covering one or more of content areas 1, 2, and 3 (see list below). Recognizing that the content of some courses is designed to cover more than one domain, some courses have double designations. However, students may only use a given course to meet requirements in one content area.

It is possible for students to meet the clinical breadth requirements in one of the three content areas at the undergraduate level if they have earned an A grade in one 6-credit or two 3-credit senior level (i.e., 3rd or 4th year) undergraduate course(s) in the content area. These courses need to have been taken for credit at a recognized university. If students believe their undergraduate course(s) meet these criteria, they should send an email to the Director of Clinical Training providing this information and requesting breadth credits. The Clinical area faculty will evaluate the request.

We note that the requirements are consistent with CPA accreditation, but additional coursework or experiences might be needed to meet registration or licensing requirements of jurisdictions outside of Canada. Students are encouraged to talk with their faculty supervisor or the Director of Clinical Training if they have questions about breadth requirements.

Graduate Courses and Content Area Coverage

Content Area	Course
1	PSYC 503 Biological Basis of Health Psychology
3	PSYC 507 Cultural Psychology
2	PSYC 512 Psychology of Emotion
1	PSYC 514 Advanced Topics in Biopsychology
2	PSYC 516 Animal Learning, Memory, and Cognition
1, 2	PSYC 517 Biopsychology of Motivation
1	PSYC 520 Developmental Biopsychology
1, 2	PSYC 521 Psycholinguistics
1	PSYC 522 Drugs and Behaviour
1	PSYC 523 Experimental Neuropsychology and Animal Models
1, 2	PSYC 524 Neural Models of Learning and Memory
2, 3	PSYC 525 Attitudes and Social Cognition
3	PSYC 527 Interpersonal Processes
3	PSYC 529 Special Topics in Social Psychology
1, 2	PSYC 570 Cognitive Neuroscience
1, 2	PSYC 571 Special Topics in Cognitive Neuroscience
1	PSYC 574 Biopsychology I
2	PSYC 578 Perception
2	PSYC 579 Special Topics in Perception
2	PSYC 582 Cognition
2	PSYC 583 Special Topics in Cognition
1, 2	PSYC 585 Special Topics in Developmental Cognitive Neuroscience
2	PSYC 587 Cognitive Development
3	PSYC 590 Survey of Social Psychology I
3	PSYC 591 Survey of Social Psychology II
1	PSYC 592 Neuroethology
1	PSYC 593 Neurophysiology and Cortical Plasticity
1	PSYC 594 Psychoneuroendocrinology
1	PSYC 595 Psychophysiology

Students who are not in the Clinical program are restricted from taking clinical courses that involve ethical, assessment, or treatment issues. However, three clinical courses are available as breadth courses: PSYC 535 (*Adult Psychopathology*), PSYC 536 (*Child Psychopathology*), and PSYC 560 (*Clinical Research Design*).

Core Program Requirements

Each program requires 6 or more core program credits, as indicated below. Courses other than those listed (e.g., upper-level undergraduate courses, graduate courses offered by other departments or other universities) may be considered as meeting core program requirements, on a case-by-case basis, if approved in advance by the supervisor, area coordinator, and GSPC.

Behavioural Neuroscience: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC [514, 516, 517, 520, 522, 523, 524, 592, 593, 594, 595] or ANAT 516

Clinical: 20 credits – namely, PSYC 530, 531, 534, 537, 541, 542, and 560

Cognitive Science: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC [521, 570, 571, 578, 579, 582, 583] or MEDI 520

Developmental: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC 513, 521, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589

Health: 6 credits – PSYC 501 and one of 502, 503, 504

Quantitative Methods: 6 credits (beyond the basic 6 credits of required statistics) of PSYC 546. Up to 3 credits of 300- or 400-level undergraduate or graduate courses in the Department of Statistics (STAT; with the exception of STAT 545A or any STAT 547) may count toward this requirement.

Social/Personality: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC 507, 512, 525, 527, 528, 529, 567, 569, 590, 591

Directed Studies (PSYC 547)

The Directed Studies course for graduate students can serve as a core program course with the advance approval of the area coordinator and the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs. This course is an ideal vehicle for students to study with different faculty and to work in different labs during their stay in the department. The workload is similar to that in other courses, as is the expected grade. Some rules govern PSYC 547:

- (a) students cannot enroll in 547 with their research supervisor;
- (b) the grade assigned must be based, in part, on written work;
- (c) 547 cannot be used to fulfill the breadth requirement;
- (d) students can enroll in 547 only once.

To register for PSYC 547, students must submit the registration form (available from the Graduate Program Manager) and study plan, which should include a reading list and description of the intended research project as well as how the student's work will be evaluated.

MA Specialization in Human-Computer Interaction

The Department of Psychology, in cooperation with the [Media and Graphics Interdisciplinary Centre \(MAGIC\)](#) of the Department of Computer Science at UBC, offers a specialization in the field of Human-Computer Interaction (HCI). Students who meet the requirements will have "Specialization in Human-Computer Interaction" added to their diploma to recognize their special training in the interdisciplinary field of HCI.

Admission to the HCI Specialization Program must be approved by the Director of the HCI Specialization Program, usually once a student has a HCI thesis topic identified and approved by the HCI Specialization Committee coordinated by MAGIC. Under special circumstances, a student may be admitted to the HCI Specialization Program at the time of admission to a UBC graduate program. The thesis supervisor must be a MAGIC-affiliated faculty member.

Beyond the usual requirements of the MA in Psychology (3 credits of graduate statistics, 3 credits of breadth, and 18 credits for thesis), the HCI program requires 12 credits distributed as follows:

- (a) (i) one foundation of HCI course: CPSC 544
 - (ii) one empirical methods & analysis course: either PSYC 546A, EPSE 592, or EDUC 500
 - (iii) one design & evaluation course: either CPSC 543, EECE 518, or CPSC 554
- (b) One HCI elective – choose from CPSC 507, CPSC 514, CPSC 524, CPSC 533, CPSC 554, EECE 589, EECE 596, PSYC 578, PSYC 582, or PSYC 590
- (c) One major research project with an HCI focus (6 credits minimum)

Please refer to the [HCI Specialization requirements](#) page for more details.

A Promise

We do not want to hold up your progress when we cannot offer a particular course. If any required course is unavailable, the student's MA Committee may request a reasonable alternative course. Advance approval of the GSPC is required.

Grades

The department requires a mark of 68% or better in any course. Marks less than 68% are unacceptable, and the department may require repetition of the course or may view the mark as grounds for termination from the program.

PsychFest

In late April or early May of their second year, students must present their MA research to the department at our annual conference known as PsychFest. There are papers on empirical, theoretical, and professional topics, as well

as a featured speaker. The proceedings are usually accompanied by a luncheon and a post-conference party. All are expected to attend. All MA2 students, as well as PhD students who have transferred into the program from elsewhere, are required to make a presentation. More information is provided closer to the date, or you may ask senior students about their PsychFest experiences.

MA Thesis

Thesis Proposal

Between September and April of the first year, students should meet with their research supervisor to outline a plan for the master's thesis. Students from the Clinical area are required to hold a formal thesis proposal approval meeting. Students from Behavioural Neuroscience, Cognitive Science, Developmental, Health, Quantitative Methods and Social/Personality areas generally have an informal consultation with the committee members; in these areas, a formal thesis proposal approval meeting is optional but not required. Students should consult their supervisor and the supervisory committee in setting up the proposal approval meeting.

Thesis Document

The ideal thesis is one that leads to a paper publishable in a reputable journal. Our goal in establishing requirements about the thesis is to facilitate rather than hinder you in attaining this goal. The general requirement is a thesis written by the student on research carried out by the student while in the MA program at UBC. G+PS has mandated a structure and format to be followed for UBC theses and dissertation. See the G+PS [Thesis and Dissertation Preparation page](#) for more information.

A couple of points to note:

- (a) If you are incorporating one or more manuscripts into your thesis, you must be either the sole author or the senior co-author of the manuscripts.
- (b) In addition to the research chapter(s), the thesis must also have *substantial* introductory and concluding chapters.

Thesis Defense

Before the MA thesis defense, you should consult with the members of your MA Committee. After the research supervisor has agreed that the thesis is ready, you can schedule the formal MA thesis defense. At this meeting, the MA Committee makes an evaluation of the written document and of the oral presentation, and assigns a grade (the grade assigned partly determines admissibility to PhD program). The thesis does not at this point have to be in final form. The MA Committee can require changes, for example. Nevertheless, it is in the student's interest for the thesis to be as good as possible at this point because this is the document and presentation on which the grade is assigned and admissibility to the PhD program is decided.

At least 10 business days before the scheduled MA thesis defense, students must submit the thesis to the Graduate Program Manager for distribution to the committee. The thesis may be submitted by email if committee members prefer the PDF format, but the student must submit hard copies of the thesis for any committee members who prefer that format. (The Graduate Program Manager will not print or photocopy a thesis.) **If the thesis is not received at least 10 business days prior to the scheduled thesis defense meeting, the meeting will need to be rescheduled.** Students must also provide the Graduate Program Manager with information on the defense meeting (thesis title and date, time, and location of the defense) so that an announcement can be posted, inviting all graduate students and faculty members to attend. In consultation with the research advisor, the student should invite one of the members of the MA committee (other than the supervisor) to serve as the Chair of the MA Thesis Defense. **Note – due to on-going COVID-related disruptions, students have the option to hold the thesis defense meetings in-person, via zoom or in a mixed-format of both in-person and remote (zoom) participants. This will be determined based on the consensus of the supervisory committee.**

Submitting the Final Thesis

The Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies (G+PS) provides a pre-submission review of the thesis in order to ensure that the document meets the university's specifications. See details at their [Formatting Requirements](#) page.

If students are registered only in the thesis course during the final term (e.g., summer term) of the MA degree, then student status is terminated once the thesis is submitted to G+PS. This change in status may result in partial tuition refunds, partial scholarship repayments, and termination of TA and RA appointments. Student loans and student visas may also be affected. To avoid such difficulties, it is usually prudent to defer submission of the thesis to G+PS until early August. A detailed timeline and checklist for the MA thesis defense procedures can be found on [PSYC AIR](#) (on the Graduate Student Forms page).

Schedule for Completion of MA Degree

Here are the steps and deadlines for completion of the thesis in the second year of the MA program for those students who intend to continue on for the PhD. (Exceptions occur in cases in which the GSPC has set alternate deadlines.) **You are encouraged to make every effort to defend your thesis by June 30 of your second year in the MA program.** This will permit sufficient time for you to make any required revisions and submit the thesis in early August to avoid disruptions in your transition to the PhD program. Any circumstance that jeopardizes your ability to complete your MA on schedule should be discussed with your supervisor as soon as possible. If you think you will have difficulty meeting the deadlines for whatever reasons, then other committee members or the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs can be consulted.

December 1 of MA2 year	Deadline for online application to G+PS for admission to PhD program to begin the following fall.
------------------------	---

April 1 of MA2 year	Final date for department to notify G+PS and student of admission to PhD. Offer of admission is conditional upon satisfactory completion of the MA degree, having attained grade of at least 80% on PSYC 549 (the MA thesis).
Mid April	Inform the Graduate Program Manager of your confirmed Supervisory Committee membership so information can be updated on SISC for G+PS approval
later April or early May	PsychFest presentation. Students should have collected and analyzed their data by this time. Students submit their annual progress report.
mid May	Annual evaluation of students by department.
June 30	Recommended deadline for MA thesis defense described above. (Recall that the committee can at this time require changes. For this reason there are more deadlines.)
August	To maintain student status and for admission to the PhD program, we strongly encourage students to submit the final thesis between August 1 and August 20. Please note that submitting the thesis later than August 25 will delay your Winter term funding disbursement.

Evaluation of MA Performance and Admission to the PhD Program

Admission to the PhD program is a privilege, not a right. Admission requires that the student has done more than simply meet the minimal requirements for an MA degree. It requires (a) the student's demonstration of significant progress toward becoming an independent researcher, (b) a positive evaluation from the program the student seeks to enter, (c) a willing supervisor, and (d) financial support. The assumption is that most students will move onto a PhD track and will start PhD courses in their third year. Some students, however, may be put on a terminal MA track. Of course, the GSPC also has the right to request a student's withdrawal from the MA program.

Application for Graduation

Students must apply for graduation (i.e., receive a degree) regardless of whether the student plans to attend convocation. An application for graduation should be submitted through the UBC Student Service Centre well in advance of the projected date of graduation. Visit the G+PS [graduation](#) page for details.

Application for Admission to the PhD Program

Students must apply to be admitted to the PhD program. Admission does not occur automatically when the MA has been completed. Although we only admit students into the MA program who intend to complete the PhD, admission is contingent upon the quality of the MA work. Application for admission to the PhD program must be submitted online by the deadline of December 1 in the MA2 year.

Students continuing from the MA to the PhD program in our department typically receive an offer of admission to the PhD program that is conditional upon satisfactory completion of the MA degree (e.g., achieving a grade of at least 80% for the MA thesis) by August 31 of the MA2 year. Students would then begin the PhD program on September 1 of the same year.

Graduate students are expected to be engaged in research during their entire MA–PhD program. The time between completion of the MA thesis and the beginning of the PhD should be spent on research, preparing and submitting the MA research publication, and beginning new research.

PhD Program

PhD Committee

In consultation with their advisors, students are advised to form a dissertation supervisory committee as early as possible after entering the program, but in practice this step is usually delayed until the topic of the dissertation has been clearly identified. The supervisory committee consists of at least three faculty members, including the research supervisor, who must be a regular research-stream faculty member of this department. At least two of the committee members must be in our department, at least one primarily affiliated with the student's area, and at least one primarily affiliated with another area in the department. Note that the composition of the PhD committee differs from that of the MA committee. With the approval of the research supervisor and the Graduate Student Progress Committee (GSPC), the student can make changes to the committee after it is formed. Where helpful, the student may add additional members. A faculty member from another department can act as a co-supervisor only if the primary supervisor from this department holds the rank of Professor. An Emeritus Professor from this department can act as primary supervisor only in conjunction with a co-supervisor who is a regular research-stream faculty member of this department.

Transfer Students

The GSPC, in consultation with the area coordinator and student's supervisor, determines whether the student's MA program was similar to ours in terms of requiring a written thesis, statistics, and other coursework. Some students might be required to complete our MA program, with certain requirements waived as appropriate. Others would begin the PhD program with the requirement that certain deficiencies be made up, with sufficient time allotted for that purpose. All transfer students must make a PsychFest presentation within the first 2 years of beginning the program. Furthermore, all transfer students must take a minimum of 12 credits of coursework during the UBC doctoral program regardless of their prior coursework at other universities.

Research and CV

The principal job of the PhD student is research. To this end, each PhD student is required to prepare a curriculum vitae (CV) by the spring of the PhD1 year and to keep it up to date. The CV will list publications, conference presentations, and other evidence of the kind of professional activity that ultimately determines what kind of position the student will obtain. The CV will be examined during the annual student progress review or when the student is considered for a fellowship, a prize, and the like. Its principal purpose, however, is to document the student's work toward establishing a record of professional accomplishments.

The PhD program is designed to emphasize research and to allow students to finish their degree in a timely fashion. The Department of Psychology reserves the right to specify deadlines and requirements and limitations for particular students. For example, certain students may be required to complete additional courses or other undertakings because of deficiencies in their preparatory background. These requirements must be worked out by the program in coordination with the GSPC during the first term of the student's residence in the program.

PhD Program Requirements

Completion of the PhD degree requires coursework (which varies across programs), a comprehensive examination, and a dissertation. The required coursework entails both core program courses and breadth courses as detailed in the following table. The same course cannot be used to complete different requirements. With approval of the GSPC, courses taken while enrolled as an MA student (but that did not fulfill any MA requirement) can be used, where appropriate, to fulfill PhD requirements. In consultation with their supervisor, students are also encouraged to consider additional courses offered in our department or in other departments of the university.

Note that full academic year residency is required for PhD students until the attainment of candidacy. Exceptions require written approval of the GSPC and are typically granted only for brief periods for academic (rather than personal) reasons.

Courses

In addition to the PhD dissertation (PSYC 649), the minimum coursework requirements (expressed in terms of course credits where a typical one-term course is weighted 3 credits) for each program are as summarized below.

program	core program	quantitative methods	breadth
Behavioural Neuroscience (BNS)	6	3	3
Clinical (CLI)	12	3	3 or 6
Cognitive Science (COG)	6	3	3
Developmental (DEV)	6	3	3
Health (HLH)	6	3	3
Quantitative Methods (QM)	9	0	3
Social/Personality (S/P)	6	0	3

Quantitative Methods

Six credits of graduate-level statistics courses are required over the course of the MA and PhD degrees combined. In the QM and S/P programs, these required 6 credits are taken at the MA level. For the remaining programs, one course must be taken at the MA level while the other can be taken at the PhD level. For the second 3-credit course that completes the required 6 credits, students may choose any PSYC 546 statistics course (e.g., 546B, 546E) other than 546I. **Note: EPSE and STAT courses cannot be used to fulfill the basic 6-credit statistics requirement.**

Breadth

A breadth course is any substantive graduate course (including QM courses) offered by our department outside the student's own program area. By "substantive", we exclude courses focused on teaching or professional issues (e.g., PSYC 508) rather than on the substance of psychology. Note that Directed Studies (PSYC 547) cannot be used to fulfill the breadth requirement. A breadth course cannot be one offered by another department – it must be from within the department but outside the student's program. For the PhD, 3-6 credits are required, depending on the program. (Recall that these 3-6 credits cannot also be used to fulfill any other requirement).

Note that the Clinical program has more complex breadth course requirements due to accreditation. For more detailed information, refer to pages 11-12 of the Graduate Student Handbook.

Core Program Requirements

Each program requires 6 or more credits of its students, as indicated below. Courses other than those listed (e.g., upper-level undergraduate courses, graduate courses offered by other departments or other universities) may be considered as meeting core program requirements, on a case-by-case basis, if approved in advance by the supervisor, area coordinator, and GSPC.

Behavioural Neuroscience: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC [514, 516, 517, 520, 522, 523, 524, 592, 593, 594, 595] or ANAT 516

Clinical: 12 credits – 3 credits from each of the following categories:

- (a) 3 credits of practicum (PSYC 534B);
- (b) 3 credits of psychopathology (PSYC 535 or 536); and
- (c) 3 credits of advanced treatment (PSYC 533, 540A, 556, 557, or another advanced treatment course)
- (d) 3 credits of advanced assessment (PSYC 532, 538, or another advanced assessment course)

Note that one of the courses from the above three categories must focus on children.

In addition, clinical students are required to complete at least one community-based practicum and an

accredited clinical internship (PSYC 559), both at approved settings. The clinical program requires additional competencies before students are eligible and approved to apply for internship. Details of these competencies and requirements can be found on the [Curriculum & Requirements](#) section of the Clinical program's webpage and in the [Practicum and Internship Policies and Procedures Handbook](#).

Cognitive Science: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC [521, 570, 571, 578, 579, 582, 583] or MEDI 520

Developmental: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC 513, 521, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589

Health: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC 502, 503, 504

Quantitative Methods: 9 credits – chosen from PSYC 546. Up to 3 credits of selected EPSE courses (528, 594, 581C, 682, 684); and up to 3 credits of 300- or 400-level undergraduate or graduate STAT courses (with the exception of STAT 545A or any STAT 547) may apply toward this requirement.

Social/Personality: 6 credits – chosen from PSYC 507, 512, 525, 527, 528, 529, 567, 569, 590, 591

A Promise

We do not want to hold up your progress when we cannot offer a particular course. If any required course is unavailable, the student's PhD Committee may request a reasonable alternative course. Advance approval of the GSPC is required. However, please note that it is students' responsibility to enroll in a required course during the term it is offered during their graduate training. Please do not assume the course will be offered again during your time in the program.

Minor

Students who take 12 credits in a program outside their own may declare that program a minor, on approval of the area in which the minor is declared and the GSPC. The credits for the minor may be accumulated over the MA and PhD programs. Courses taken to satisfy the breadth requirements (except for students in the clinical program) can count toward these 12 credits. Note that minors are not reflected on the transcripts.

A minor in Quantitative Methods requires 12 credits **beyond the basic 6 credits required of all students; please consult QM area coordinator if you have any questions**. These 12 credits may be chosen from among the PSYC 546 options; up to 3 credits of selected EPSE courses (528, 594, 581C, 682, 684); and up to 3 credits of 300- or 400-level undergraduate or graduate STAT courses (with the exception of STAT 545A or any STAT 547) may apply toward this requirement.

Synopsis of MA/PhD Course Requirements

Over the MA and PhD programs combined, the table below outlines the minimum number of different types of courses (core program, quantitative methods, and breadth) required in different areas of specialization. Courses taken while enrolled as an MA student that did not fulfill any MA requirement can be used, where appropriate, to fulfill PhD requirements. This table outlines the requirements in terms of number of courses, in contrast to earlier tables (pp. 8 and 17), which outlined the requirements for each degree program separately in terms of number of credits.

program	core program	quantitative methods	breadth
Behavioural Neuroscience (BNS)	2 + 2 = 4	1 + 1 = 2	1 + 1 = 2
Clinical (CLI)	7 + 3 = 10	1 + 1 = 2	1 + (1 or 2) = (2 or 3)
Cognitive Science (COG)	2 + 2 = 4	1 + 1 = 2	1 + 1 = 2
Developmental (DEV)	2 + 2 = 4	1 + 1 = 2	1 + 1 = 2
Health (HLH)	2 + 2 = 4	1 + 1 = 2	1 + 1 = 2
Quantitative Methods (QM)	2 + 3 = 5	2 + 0 = 2	1 + 1 = 2
Social/Personality (S/P)	2 + 2 = 4	2 + 0 = 2	1 + 1 = 2

Advancement to Candidacy

The department expects that students will typically aim to advance to doctoral candidacy (i.e., complete all required coursework, comprehensive exam, and an approved dissertation proposal) on completion of a 2-year residency period (i.e., by the end of PhD2). Advancement to candidacy is not automatic and students must complete the [Recommendation to Advance to Candidacy form](#). Advancement to candidacy is noted on the student's university transcript. Note that **G+PS requires students to advance to candidacy no later than 3 years from the date of initial registration (i.e., by the end of PhD3)**. This requirement is enforced, although it is possible to apply for an extension in unusual circumstances. In such cases, a memo, timeline, and medical note (if applicable) must accompany a completed [Request for Extension to Time Allowed for Advancement to Candidacy form](#). G+PS requires all PhD students to complete their degree within 6 years (not including time in the MA program).

Comprehensive Examination

Comprehensive examinations are normally completed by the end of the PhD2 year and *must* be completed by the end of the PhD3 year. Exact timing and format are set by each program, as detailed below.

Behavioural Neuroscience

Purpose and Timing: The purpose of the comprehensive examination is to ensure that candidates have a comprehensive knowledge in their area of specialization and related fields of behavioural neuroscience. The comprehensive examination is an oral examination on material relevant to the dissertation research. For the comprehensive examination, the student will initiate the process by informing the BNS area coordinator and setting up the preliminary meeting for the comprehensive examination. The initial meeting is to establish the scope of topics to be covered in the exam. The second meeting is the comprehensive exam. The area coordinator (or his/her representative) will chair all oral examinations and may attend the preliminary meeting. (However, if the area coordinator is unavailable, the preliminary meeting may proceed without him/her).

Format and Description: The process is initiated by contacting the members of the candidate's PhD committee and setting up a preliminary meeting. (The composition of the dissertation supervisory committee and the comprehensive examination committee can be the same if so desired by the student and the supervisor.) The student will submit a title and one-page summary of the research proposal at least 1 week before this initial meeting. At the preliminary meeting the student will give an oral presentation on the scientific background and any research accomplished to date. The committee members will use the one-page summary and the student's oral presentation on the project to date to guide them in suggesting relevant research topics/areas that are deemed important for the proposed research. At this meeting the student will record the topics suggested and will produce a written report (to be sent to the committee members within 7 days of the meeting), outlining the areas to be covered in the oral examination. The student may be questioned on any aspect of the research outlined and will be asked to elaborate upon or defend issues arising from the readings/topics agreed upon at the preliminary meeting. The range of questioning may include topics that are not specifically part of the proposed research but that are deemed relevant by individual members of the committee.

The purpose of the oral examination is to have the student demonstrate to the committee that s/he has a solid understanding of those areas of behavioural neuroscience relevant to the research area in which they are working, can expand upon and defend those ideas verbally, and has attained sufficient intellectual understanding of the subject matter to proceed with primary research likely to lead to submission of a competent PhD dissertation. In the event that the student has not achieved an average of >80% in coursework while in the graduate program, the scope of the comprehensive examination may be wider. Under such circumstances, the examination committee has a mandate to determine whether the student has sufficient breadth and depth of understanding of general topics in psychology to permit advancement to PhD candidacy. In this case, additional member(s) may be added to the committee to cover areas of weakness.

The examination will normally consist of a 20-30 minute presentation by the student and then include a round of 20-minute questioning from each examiner, followed by another round of questioning, as appropriate. The Chair

may ask questions at his/her discretion. At the end of questioning, the student is requested to leave the room while the examination committee makes a decision as to the outcome of the exam. The candidate can be judged (a) to have passed the exam, (b) to have passed the majority of the exam, however specific remediation (determined by the committee) is required, or (c) to have failed the exam. In the case of failure, a student will be given one opportunity to re-sit the examination. If re-examination is required, it must take place within 6 months of the first attempt, and normally before the same committee. No student is permitted to sit this examination more than twice. The majority of the committee members must vote for a pass in order for the student to pass. The chair can cast a deciding vote when necessary.

Clinical

Purpose and Timing: The comprehensive examination is required of all doctoral students. The broad purpose of comprehensive examinations at UBC is to assess whether the student has developed strong analytical, problem-solving, and critical thinking abilities; sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge and skills of the discipline; the academic background required for the specific doctoral research to follow; potential ability to conduct independent original research; and the ability to communicate knowledge of the discipline.

Format: The comprehensive examination requirement is fulfilled by completing a paper, which may take one of several formats (see Description below). The formats have been constructed to require comparable time and effort. Students should choose the option that best addresses their particular career and professional goals. Students may consult with their research supervisor, the Director of Clinical Training, or other clinical faculty regarding the most appropriate format.

Deadline: The department expects the comprehensive examination to be passed by the end of the PhD2 year. Meeting this deadline requires that you begin work on your comprehensive examination well in advance.

Description: The clinical comprehensive examination can be fulfilled through writing a review or conceptual paper of relevance to clinical psychology. The paper can take one of many forms, including: (a) a narrative review of empirical research that integrates or consolidates information in a manner that substantively benefits the field, (b) a meta-analysis of empirical research, (c) a conceptual paper that offers a new or revised theoretical perspective based on a body of empirical research, or (d) written essay responses to four essay questions.

For options a through c, the paper should take the format of those published in journals such as *Psychological Bulletin*, *Psychological Review*, *Clinical Psychology Review*, *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice*, or other similar journals. Examples of papers consistent with options a through c can be provided by the student's research advisor or other clinical faculty. The paper should be written with the aim of making a substantive and potentially publishable contribution to the literature. A proposal must be approved by the examiners (see Committee below) before the paper is written.

For option d, the written examination consists of four essay questions corresponding to each of four clinical breadth topics: (a) clinical research methods, (b) measurement and psychopathology, (c) intervention, and (d) ethics/professional issues. A large pool of questions corresponding to each topic has been generated to address both child and adult domains. For each topic students will select one question at random from an envelope containing several possible questions. Students then have 3 weeks to conduct a literature review and complete an 8-12 page written response. Only one question is completed at a time. Therefore, total time to complete the written examination is 12 weeks; however, students may allow as little or as much time as they like between essays, as long as all four essays are completed by the deadline (end of PhD2 year). Each essay is submitted to the examiners when it is completed, but the paper will not be considered complete and ready for evaluation until all essays are completed and submitted to the examiners. Unlike options a, b, and c, essays written for option d are expected to be in exam format rather than a potentially publishable format.

Differentiation from Dissertation: Differentiation from the dissertation is a concern for those choosing a review paper format falling under options a, b, or c. The comprehensive examination may address the same topic as the student's dissertation or a different topic. However, the paper produced must be more than the Introduction section to a dissertation or empirical paper. Whereas an Introduction sets the stage for a study, a

review/conceptual paper offers a more substantive contribution. For example:

- A narrative review (option a) may systematically summarize an empirical literature that has not yet been reviewed or that would benefit from an updated review and thereby provide an authoritative statement on what is known and not known in that area.
- A meta-analysis (option b) can establish with precision the direction and size of a given effect or association, as well as variables that influence the effect.
- A conceptual paper (option c) can offer a theoretical advance by proposing a new or revised conceptual model to parsimoniously account for a variety of empirical findings, and/or by comparing the abilities of different conceptual models to account for existing empirical findings.

Committee: The Examination Committee consists of a Principal Examiner and an Examiner; the Chair of the Comprehensive Exam Committee serves as the Chair ex officio (without vote). The Principal Examiner must be a primary clinical faculty member and will be appointed at random by the Comprehensive Exam Committee Chair. The student, in consultation with the Principal Examiner, will recruit an Examiner, who must be a UBC faculty member. The current Clinic Director, Dr. Ingrid Söchting, may serve in the role of second examiner. Should the Clinic Directorship change, the new Director's eligibility to sit as an examiner will be decided by the clinical faculty based on the individual's record of research activity and publications. Neither the Principal Examiner nor the Examiner may be the student's research supervisor. In case of an unresolvable difference in judgment between the two examiners, a third examiner selected from among the core clinical faculty may be consulted for resolution. After the Examiners make their final evaluation, the Principal Examiner should notify (email is sufficient) both the Director of Clinical Training and the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs.

Role of Student's Research Supervisor: For options a, b, and c, the student's research supervisor may act in a consultative role to the student up until the point at which the proposal is submitted. In this capacity, the research supervisor can help the student select a topic and format that meet the guidelines for the clinical comprehensive examination paper. The supervisor can also be helpful in ensuring that the scope and aims of the proposed paper will offer a potentially substantive contribution to the literature that is more than an Introduction section to a dissertation or empirical paper. However, the student's contribution must be sufficiently original and independent to clearly warrant first-authorship on a published version. Although the supervisor can play a consultative role leading up to the proposal, and can play a co-authorship role in a publication-version once the comprehensive exam is completed, the student should complete the paper independently once an appropriate topic has been selected and approved.

Steps for Completing the Requirement: After requesting that the Chair of the Comprehensive Exam Committee select Examiners, students selecting options a, b, or c must submit a two-page proposal for the comprehensive examination paper for approval by the Examination Committee. The proposal should include an explanation regarding how the topic is distinct from a literature review that would comprise the Introduction section of a paper or dissertation. The proposal is reviewed by the Committee and approved in writing within 2 weeks (e-mail from the Principal Examiner is sufficient) as an indication that the proposed paper appears to meet the requirements. Upon approval of the proposal, students will have a period of 3 months to complete and submit their paper. Students should plan to submit the comprehensive examination paper sufficiently early that it can be resubmitted if necessary to pass before the end of the second year of the PhD program. The Examination Committee must provide a decision on the paper within 2 weeks of submission (which means the student must gain committee members' agreement on a submission date well in advance).

For option d, after requesting that the Chair of the Comprehensive Exam Committee select examiners, the Chair allows the student to select the first of the four topics to be addressed, and arranges a time at which the student can select a question at random from a large pool of potential questions on that topic. The student then has 3 weeks to complete the response. The process is repeated for the next three topics. After all four essays are completed, they are assembled into a single document, and submitted to examiners for review. Examiners must provide a decision on the examination within 2 weeks of submission. Because examiners have just 2 weeks from the date of submission to complete their evaluation, the student must obtain committee members' agreement on a submission date well in advance.

Evaluation: When the student submits the clinical comprehensive examination paper, the Principal Examiner and

Examiner confer with each other to assign an outcome of Pass, Revise-and-Resubmit, or Fail. The Principal Examiner will communicate the decision and any feedback to the student.

A decision of Pass is given for exams that would warrant a numerical grade of 68 or higher out of 100. This means that the paper demonstrates passing analytical, problem-solving, and critical thinking abilities; passing breadth and in-depth knowledge of clinical psychology as it pertains to the areas of inquiry addressed by the paper; and passing ability to communicate knowledge of the discipline using professional standards.

A decision of Revise-and-Resubmit is given for exams that would warrant a numerical grade of between 50 and 67 out of 100. This decision does not allow the student to pass the requirement, but does allow the student to revise and resubmit the paper. In this case the committee will provide written feedback to the student about which elements of the paper need revision in order to rise to the level of passing. The revised paper is then resubmitted (maximum of two resubmissions) to the same committee within 30 days. A decision of Revise-and-Resubmit can also be utilized for papers that are otherwise above threshold for passing but that are not sufficiently different from an Introduction section to a dissertation or empirical paper. In this case the committee will provide guidance regarding the addition of content or analysis required to achieve a passing grade.

A decision of Fail is given for exams that would warrant a numerical grade below a 50. This decision indicates that the student has failed and must redo the comprehensive examination. If a student also receives a failing grade on the second attempt, he or she does not advance to doctoral candidacy. Failing grades are reserved for those papers that fall far short of the mark of demonstrating breadth and in-depth knowledge of the discipline, that show an inadequate academic background required for doctoral research to follow, and that signal serious lack of potential ability to conduct independent original research, which is required for completion of the doctoral degree.

Cognitive Science

Overview: The comprehensive exam is required of all doctoral students. The purpose of the comprehensive exam is to demonstrate that the student possesses sufficient breadth and depth of knowledge and methods in cognitive psychology, including critical thinking abilities and the ability to communicate this knowledge via a written paper. Normally, the exam takes place in the PhD2 or PhD3 year. Typically, students set aside 3 months to prepare the paper for their comprehensive exam, which may then be followed by a round of revisions (see Evaluation).

The comprehensive exam is fulfilled through writing a paper of relevance to cognitive psychology. The paper may take several formats: (a) a novel organizing framework (as in a *Psychological Bulletin* article) that offers a new or revised theoretical perspective on a topic (b) a narrative review that integrates or consolidates empirical research in a manner that advances the understanding of a topic (as in *Annual Review of Psychology*), (c) a systematic review or meta-analysis on a topic. In each case, the main text (i.e., without references) of the review paper would often be 30-50 pages in length (double-spaced). Upon special request, a 10-page (single-spaced) grant proposal may be submitted, but only after the format and scope of the proposal have been agreed to by all members of the Cognitive Science area.

The paper is expected to make a novel contribution to the field (e.g., by offering a novel theoretical perspective, by critically assessing the strengths and weaknesses in existing research, by articulating connections between previously separate areas of research) and should be written with the aim of making a substantive and potentially publishable contribution to the literature. Examples of the various formats can be provided by the student's research supervisor or other cognitive faculty.

Steps for Completing the Requirement:

- The comprehensive exam process is initiated by the student informing their supervisor.
- The candidate, in consultation with the research supervisor, chooses a topic, decides on the format for the paper, and identifies two further 'readers' for the paper. The supervisor is typically the third reader. The readers should be members of the Cognitive Science area, and may or may not overlap with the student's PhD committee. When scheduling your comprehensive exam and identifying readers, please keep in mind (and check in advance) readers' availability at the expected times of the proposal and full paper submission.
- The candidate must submit a 1-2 page proposal (including bibliography) for the paper to the readers. The

proposal should include an explanation regarding how the topic is distinct from the literature review that is anticipated in the Introduction for the PhD dissertation (see below). The proposal is reviewed by the readers and should be approved in writing within 2 weeks (over e-mail) as an indication that the proposed paper appears to meet the requirements.

- Upon approval of the proposal, the candidate will typically have a period of 3 months to complete and submit their paper.

Evaluation: Upon submitting the paper to the supervisor, the evaluation of the comprehensive exam will be coordinated by the supervisor. The supervisor will send the paper to all members in the area with an invitation to provide comments, and the three readers will be specifically named by the supervisor in this invitation. The three readers must provide a decision on the examination within 2 weeks (10 working days) of submission.

- An evaluation will be made after each of the three readers has provided comments. The supervisor will propose an outcome of Pass, Revise-and-Resubmit, or Fail for approval by the cognitive area faculty. Therefore, in cases where there are differences in judgment between readers, or where there is the possibility of a Fail decision, the supervisor will reach an outcome through consultation with the cognitive area faculty. Once approved by the area faculty, the supervisor will communicate the decision and any feedback (including any comments by non-readers in the area) to the student.
- Many comps papers will receive a Revise-and-Resubmit decision. Revisions are a natural part of the peer review and publication process. In this case, the supervisor will collate the written feedback to the student about which elements of the paper need revision, in order for the comprehensive exam to be passed. The revised paper is then resubmitted (maximum of two resubmissions) to the same readers within 30 days.
- A failing grade indicates that a paper does not meet the standard for demonstrating breadth and in-depth knowledge of the discipline, or shows an inadequate academic background required for completion of the doctoral degree; and that the readers judge that these deficiencies could not be satisfactorily resolved within one month via a Revise-and-Resubmit decision. If a candidate is judged to have failed the comprehensive exam, they must redo the comprehensive exam on a different topic. If the candidate receives a failing grade on the second attempt, they do not advance to doctoral candidacy.
- Following the final evaluation, the supervisor should notify (by email) the Area Coordinator and the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs.

Differentiation from Dissertation: Differentiation from the PhD dissertation is an important consideration for those choosing a review paper format, and should be mentioned in the proposal document. The ideal topic is one that benefits the student's knowledge of their chosen field without simply articulating the expertise they already possess. The comprehensive exam may address a topic that overlaps with the student's dissertation, or a different topic. The paper produced must be more than the Introduction section to the dissertation. Whereas the objective for the dissertation introduction is to set the stage for the research, the paper for the comprehensive exam should stand alone and offer a contribution that is both novel and substantive. Material from the comprehensive paper may ultimately become integrated into the dissertation or feature as a discrete chapter.

Role of Supervisor: The student's supervisor will ordinarily act in a consultative role to the candidate up until the point at which the proposal is submitted. In this capacity, the supervisor can offer guidance on selecting a topic and format, feasibility of the scope and aims within the time window, and the differentiation from the dissertation. Although the supervisor can play a consultative role leading up to the proposal, and may be a co-author in pursuing any subsequent journal publication, once the proposal has been approved by the readers, the student should work independently, and the supervisor should not comment on the written document until the final version is submitted. (It is acknowledged that informal discussions may be inevitable within labs over the 3-month period). As a minimum, the student's contribution must be sufficiently original and independent to clearly warrant first authorship on a published version.

Developmental

Overview: The goal of the comprehensive exam is to ensure that the student demonstrate breadth and depth in developmental psychology. Normally, the exam will take place at the end of the first year of the PhD program. The entire process, from start to finish, should take no more than three months. The exam may follow one of two

formats: (1) One is a comprehensive review of the literature on a topic chosen by the candidate, in consultation with available primary faculty members of the developmental area. The review may take the form of either a novel organizing framework (as in a *Psychological Bulletin* article) or a state-of-the-art summary of a topic (as in *Annual Review of Psychology*). The candidate is expected to go beyond simply reviewing existing work by making novel contributions to the body of knowledge (e.g., by offering a novel theoretical framework through which to synthesize previous research, critically assessing the strengths and weaknesses in past research, identifying important issues that research has left unresolved, thereby directing future research, developing connections between previously separate areas of research). The review should be a maximum of 30 double-spaced pages of text in length. (2) The other possible format is a 10-page (single-spaced) grant proposal. To show depth of knowledge of the literature, the grant proposal should contain an expanded literature review, while still providing sufficient detail of the methodology to demonstrate clearly how the hypotheses will be tested. Regardless of which format the student chooses, the topic, plan and scope of the comprehensive exam are to be determined in consultation with available primary members of the developmental area. The distance of the proposed topic with respect to the candidate's own program of research shall be determined in consultation with the candidate's primary research supervisor (but also must be agreed upon by all available primary members of the developmental area). In all cases, evaluation of the comprehensive exam will involve an oral examination by available primary members of the developmental area.

Procedures for Preparing the Written Comprehensive Exam:

1. Candidates will choose one of the two formats for the exam paper.
2. Before beginning to write the paper, candidates will schedule individual consultations with all available primary developmental faculty members. Available members are those who are not on leave. The goal of these consultations is to ensure that the topic/plan/scope of the review or the grant proposal are judged acceptable to all faculty members. Candidates will prepare a brief (roughly 1 to 2 page single-spaced) outline of the proposed exam paper to bring to these consultation meetings or to circulate beforehand. In addition, candidates should also include a statement (a few sentences) in the initial outline indicating/justifying how the proposed topic differs in scope from their own program of research. It is acceptable for the candidate to receive some feedback on this 1 to 2-page outline from their primary advisor prior to distributing it to the remaining area faculty.
3. After holding these consultations, candidates will send an e-mail message to all faculty members to inform them that the consultation process is complete. This e-mail should contain a brief (roughly 1-paragraph) outline of the proposed exam paper, revised (if necessary) to take into account suggestions made during the consultation process.
4. Faculty members will respond promptly to the candidate's e-mail message, stating whether they judge the proposed exam paper to be acceptable. Faculty members may recommend further revisions to the proposal if they judge that their suggestions were not taken properly into account.
5. After receiving a judgment of "acceptable" from all faculty members, candidates may begin to write the exam paper.
6. When candidates have completed the written comprehensive exam, they will distribute copies to all faculty members. The candidate must distribute the written comprehensive exam at least 7 calendar days prior to the scheduled oral defense otherwise the oral defense will need to be rescheduled. It is permissible for the candidate to receive some general feedback from their primary advisor on the written document before distributing it to all faculty members, but the work should reflect the independent intellectual efforts of the candidate.
7. The entire process, from start to finish, should take no more than three months.

Procedures for the Oral Comprehensive Exam:

1. Candidates will schedule their own oral exam by contacting all available primary developmental faculty members. Available faculty members are those who are not on leave. Candidates will schedule a 2-hour time slot for the oral.
2. When a day and time have been set, candidates will book a room for the exam (through the Head's secretary) and inform all faculty members via e-mail of the day/time/location.
3. At the oral exam, the area coordinator will serve as chair. If the candidate is the area coordinator's own

student, faculty members will choose another chair.

4. Candidates will begin the oral exam by providing a brief (approximately 20-minute) overview of the comprehensive exam paper via a PowerPoint presentation (or similar program such as Keynote).
5. Faculty members will then ask candidates questions related to the exam paper. The chair will ensure that the questioning proceeds at an appropriate pace so that all faculty members have a chance to ask questions in the allotted time.
6. After the questioning, candidates will be asked to withdraw and faculty members will deliberate. Faculty members will vote on whether the comprehensive examination (written and oral together) is a PASS (unconditional or conditional) or FAIL. If a candidate receives a conditional pass the specific conditions required to achieve a pass (e.g., re-writing some parts of the written document), and the deadline by which to do so, will be outlined by the examining committee. If candidates are judged by the majority to FAIL, they will be given one more opportunity to pass the comprehensive exam. They will be asked to (1) revise or rewrite the written exam paper, (2) re-take the oral exam, or (3) both. The deadline by which to do so will be outlined by the examining committee, no later than 3 months from the initial exam.
7. Candidates will be invited back to the examination room and told of the decision of the examining committee in the presence of all members.

If the candidate has any questions about the procedures related to the Comps, they should contact the Area Coordinator.

Health

Students should prepare either a *Psychological Bulletin* style literature review or a grant proposal. This should be decided in conjunction with the research supervisor. In consultation with the supervisor, a second committee member (another faculty member from the health area) should be invited to serve on the committee. Both the supervisor and the second committee member must approve the completed document. If a candidate fails, they are given another opportunity to submit a second comps paper at some point within the following year. If they fail again, then they do not advance to doctoral candidacy.

Quantitative Methods

Purpose, Timing, and Format: The comprehensive examination is required of all quantitative doctoral students and is fulfilled by completing a paper. The department expects the comprehensive examination to be passed by the end of the PhD2 year. Meeting this deadline requires that you begin work on your comprehensive examination well in advance.

Description: The quantitative comprehensive examination paper is typically a scholarly review of a substantial area of methodology (e.g., longitudinal growth modeling, survival analysis, missing data) plus discussion of issues and future directions and should be a maximum of 30-40 double-spaced pages of text in length. The student, in the process of developing the paper, becomes an expert in the area and the paper is often the basis of the doctoral dissertation. In developing the comprehensive paper, the student works in close conjunction with a research advisor as well as potentially additional faculty members. The paper should take the format of those published as book chapters or journals such as *Psychological Methods* (occasionally) or the *Annual Review of Psychology*. Examples of papers can be provided by the student's research advisor or other quantitative faculty. The paper should be written with the aim of making a potentially publishable contribution to the literature. A proposal must be approved by the Examination Committee (see Process for Completing the Requirement below) before the paper is written.

Differentiation from Dissertation: The comprehensive examination may address the same topic as the student's dissertation or a different topic. However, the paper produced must be more than the Introduction section to a dissertation or empirical paper. Whereas an Introduction in a Dissertation sets the stage for a study or novel methodological development, a review/conceptual paper offers a more substantial contribution. For instance, a narrative review may systematically summarize a methodological literature that has not yet been thoroughly reviewed or that would benefit from an updated review and thereby provide an authoritative statement on what is known and not known in that area and what future research and development should focus on.

Role of Student's Research Supervisor: The student's research supervisor may act in a consultative role to the student up until the point at which the proposal is submitted. In this capacity, the research supervisor can help the student select a topic and format that meet the guidelines for the quantitative comprehensive examination paper. The supervisor can also be helpful in ensuring that the scope and aims of the proposed paper will offer a potentially substantive contribution to the literature that is more than an Introduction section to a dissertation or empirical paper. However, the student's contribution must be sufficiently original and independent to clearly warrant first-authorship on a published version. Although the supervisor can play a consultative role leading up to the proposal, and can play a co-authorship role in a publication-version once the comprehensive exam is completed, the student should complete the paper independently once an appropriate topic has been selected and approved.

Process for Completing the Requirement: Before commencing the comprehensive paper, students must submit a two-page proposal for the comprehensive examination paper for approval by the Examination Committee, which consists of the primary quantitative psychology faculty. Evaluation of the comprehensive exam will involve an oral examination by available primary members of the quantitative area.

The majority of the committee members must vote for a pass in order for the student to pass. If a candidate fails, they are given another opportunity to submit a second comps paper at some point within the following year, normally before the same committee. If they fail again, then they do not advance to doctoral candidacy. No student is permitted to sit this examination more than twice.

Social/Personality

At the end of the PhD1 year, students will complete a 3-day take-home exam. This exam will include several essay questions drawing on an official area reading list, which will be provided to students when they enter the program. During the exam, students will be allowed to refer to the readings, although they may not discuss their answers with anyone else. In the case that the student does not receive a passing grade on all of the questions, they will be allowed to take the exam one additional time (with a different set of questions) at some point within the following year.

PhD Dissertation Proposal

At least 10 business days before the scheduled proposal meeting, students must submit the dissertation proposal to the Graduate Program Manager for distribution to the committee. The proposal may be submitted by email if committee members prefer the PDF format, but the student must submit hard copies for any committee members who prefer that format. (The Graduate Program Manager will not print or photocopy a proposal.) **If the dissertation proposal is not received at least 10 business days prior to the scheduled proposal meeting, the meeting will need to be rescheduled.** Students must also provide the Graduate Program Manager with details on the proposal meeting (working title for the thesis and date, and time of the proposal meeting). **Note – due to on-going COVID-related disruptions, students have the option to hold the dissertation proposal approval meetings in-person, via zoom or in a mixed-format of both in-person and remote (zoom) participants. This will be determined based on the consensus of the supervisory committee.**

After the oral presentation, the student's PhD supervisory committee and the other faculty members present will discuss the acceptability of the proposal. The committee will then reach a decision and communicate it to the student. If the committee deems the proposal to be unacceptable, the committee chooses a course of action. An approved proposal is one of the milestones required for advancement to doctoral candidacy and thus *must be* achieved by the end of the PhD3 year. A detailed timeline and checklist for the PhD program procedures can be found on [PSYC AIR](#) (on the Graduate Student Forms page).

G+PS expects that the dissertation supervisory committee will meet with the student at least once every year that the student is in residence to discuss the dissertation and to ensure that satisfactory progress is being made.

Behavioural Neuroscience

The purpose of the proposal defense is to ensure that the candidate has a viable research project that would lead to an acceptable PhD dissertation. For the proposal defense, the candidate will meet with his or her supervisory committee to outline the parameters of the research project and get the go-ahead to write the proposal. Once the proposal has been submitted, the candidate will orally defend the proposal in a meeting that is open to the department. The composition of the BNS comprehensive examination committee and the dissertation supervisory committee can be the same if so desired by the student and the supervisor. The comprehensive examination and the proposal defense should occur in close conjunction with one another.

The format of the dissertation proposal will be in the form of a grant application according to the format of a Canadian Institutes of Health Research Operating Grant Application (CV, Budget and Research Proposal; does not have to be topic-appropriate for CIHR, just the format). The process is initiated by contacting the members of the candidate's PhD committee and setting up a preliminary meeting. The student will submit a title and one-page summary (subject to modification) of the research proposal at least 1 week before this initial meeting.

Cognitive Science

The dissertation proposal is a summary of the completed and planned research that will ultimately comprise the PhD dissertation. It is typically organized in the expected chapter order of the final dissertation. Sections on completed experiments (with which the committee are likely to be already familiar) can be brief, particularly for any published research. More detailed explanation is required for the research that is ongoing or planned, to complete the dissertation. The overall document is typically 20-50 pages in length (double spaced, without bibliography). It should include a clear description of which material (if any) is published or submitted for publication.

The proposal meeting is typically scheduled as a 2 hour meeting. The meeting begins with the student giving an oral presentation (with slides) lasting around 20 minutes, which summarizes the proposal. Following the oral presentation, the committee discuss and ask questions on the quality, sufficiency and feasibility of the dissertation proposal. Following the discussion, the candidate may be asked to leave the room, for the supervisory committee to discuss the acceptability of the proposal and reach a decision to communicate to the student.

PhD Dissertation

G+PS has mandated a structure and format to be followed for UBC theses and dissertations. See the G+PS [Thesis and Dissertation Preparation](#) page for more information.

A couple of points to note:

- (a) If you are incorporating one or more manuscripts into your dissertation, you must be either the sole author or the senior co-author of the manuscripts; and
- (b) In addition to the "research chapters" of the thesis, you must also have substantial introductory and concluding chapters. More importantly, your dissertation must be of appropriate [scope](#) and must follow the guidelines set for the [structure of a doctoral dissertation](#) and the inclusion of published material. The G+PS [Dissertation Preparation](#) page has a lot of helpful information.

Dissertation Approval Meeting

The Dissertation Approval Meeting (DAM) is conducted by the dissertation supervisory committee. The purpose of this meeting is to certify that the dissertation is ready for independent appraisal by the external examiner and that the candidate is ready for the university oral defense conducted by G+PS. **The DAM is mandatory for all students.** At least 10 business days before the scheduled DAM, students must submit the dissertation to the Graduate Program Manager for distribution to the committee. The dissertation may be submitted by email if committee members prefer the PDF format, but the student must submit hard copies of the dissertation for any committee members who prefer that format. (The Graduate Program Manager will not print or photocopy a dissertation.) **If the dissertation is not received at least 10 business days prior to the scheduled meeting, the meeting will need to be rescheduled.** In consultation with the supervisor, the candidate should invite one member of the committee

(other than the research supervisor) to serve as the Chair of the meeting. **Note – due to on-going COVID-related disruptions, students have the option to hold the dissertation approval meetings in-person, via zoom or in a mixed-format of both in-person and remote (zoom) participants. This will be determined based on the consensus of the supervisory committee.**

The format of the meeting is determined by the supervisor, following consultation with the supervisory committee and the candidate. It may be structured like a traditional dissertation defense, or it may be a more informal discussion. Regardless of format, all members of the committee are expected to read the dissertation in advance of the meeting, pose questions to the candidate, and offer critique or suggestions as appropriate. At the end of the meeting, the candidate will be asked to leave the room, and the committee will discuss the meeting. The committee members will then decide on the acceptability of both the dissertation and the candidate's performance, in terms of whether the document is ready for external examination and the student is ready to proceed to G+PS final doctoral examination.

Final Doctoral Examination

Students should consult the G+PS website well in advance and especially consult the section on the [Final Doctoral Exam](#) for details regarding regulations, time-line, and forms. (Note that a detailed timeline and checklist for the PhD program timeline & procedures can be found on [PSYC AIR](#) (on the Graduate Student Forms page). Refer to the [Formatting Requirements](#) page as you are preparing the document. G+PS provides a pre-review of the format of the dissertation to ensure that the document meets the University's specifications prior to sending it for external examination.

An external examiner (outside the university) will be appointed by G+PS in consultation with the student's primary supervisor and the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs (aka Graduate Advisor). Arrangements for an external examiner must be made well in advance (allow over 3 months) of the projected final doctoral examination date. The process needs to be started (note the form involved for nominating external examiners) well in advance of the Dissertation Approval Meeting (DAM). After the supervisory committee approves of the document as ready to proceed to external examination (i.e., successful DAM and completion of any required revisions) and G+PS approves the format of the document, an electronic copy is submitted to G+PS, along with a memo from the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs confirming that the department approves the dissertation being forwarded. G+PS then sends the document to the external examiner for evaluation. (A hard copy of the dissertation may also be required, depending on the External Examiner's preference). A minimum of 6 weeks lead-time must be given for external examiner to review the document before the final doctoral examination (i.e., oral defense).

For the final doctoral exam, two university examiners must be appointed, one from the Department of Psychology (who is familiar with the discipline but who has not previously communicated with the student about the thesis) and one from another UBC department. These university examiners, along with the members of the PhD supervisory committee and a non-Psychology university appointee chairing the defense, form the University Examining Committee. For detailed instructions regarding the final defense and various forms to download as well as deadlines for submitting them, see the G+PS [Final Doctoral Examination Guide](#) page.

Application for Graduation

Please note that students must apply for graduation (i.e., receive a degree) regardless of whether they intend to participate in graduation ceremonies. An application for graduation should be submitted through the UBC Student Service Centre well in advance of the projected date of graduation. The G+PS website has full details regarding [graduation](#).

Student Services and Supports

In Case of Problems

We hope we have created a program that minimizes troubles, but occasionally they arise. When they do, for whatever reason, you have a variety of options. Your supervisor is normally the first person to whom you should turn. The President(s) or Ombudsperson of the Graduate Student Council (GSC), your area coordinator, and the members of your MA or PhD committee are also there to help you in whatever way they can. Specific problems can also be brought to the attention of the Chair of the relevant graduate program committee. Any one of these individuals should be able to offer help or to re-direct you to someone who can.

If, for whatever reason, you do not or cannot receive help in this way, or if you simply would prefer, you may go directly to the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs (Anita DeLongis). Part of her job description concerns dealing with students' problems, and you should always feel free to contact her. Alternatively, you may also reach out directly to the Manager of the Graduate Program, who serves as the liaison between you, the Associate Head of Graduate Affairs and G+PS. You can be assured that whatever issue you raise will be considered seriously and in confidence. If, for whatever reason, you still have not been able to find a solution to your satisfaction, you can approach the Head of the Department. In addition, other offices on campus exist to handle specific problems. The Associate Head for Graduate Affairs and the Manager of the Graduate Program can help you locate the appropriate office.

The problems we have had in mind so far have been individual problems. Graduate students also are encouraged to voice more collective concerns about any aspect of the graduate program. In the past, suggestions, proposals, and complaints by graduate students have initiated reforms, some small and some large, in the way the graduate program is run. Again, the GSC, the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs, and the Head of the Department welcome your input.

Graduate Advisor (Associate Head for Graduate Affairs)

The Graduate Advisor in our department, working with the Graduate Program Manager, has the following responsibilities:

- advise students and faculty members regarding departmental and university requirements, including impending deadlines;
- approve all changes in registration;
- approve the enrollment of undergraduate and unclassified students in graduate PSYC courses;
- evaluate students' coursework at other institutions for possible transfer credits;
- ensure students meet conditions set for continuation in the program;
- check grades in all graduate courses to ensure satisfactory performance;
- review students' annual progress reports;
- ensure that a comprehensive formal evaluation of each student's progress (in coursework, research, and other activities) is provided annually and that appropriate actions are recommended to the department;
- submit grades for theses, changes in standing, and SDs and Ts;
- serve as a liaison with G+PS;
- attend meetings of the Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies;
- represent the Graduate Student Progress Committee on the department's Graduate Program Policy & Coordination Committee and make recommendations regarding possible changes in the graduate program;
- handle requests for graduate student leaves-of-absence (medical, compassionate, parental);
- handle requests for extensions of time-limits for fulfilling degree requirements;
- complete forms for student funding purposes;
- solicit nominations for and coordinate adjudication of student awards;
- maintain and update graduate student database and paper records;
- approve members of the PhD supervisory committee and ensure that proposal oral defense and the dissertation approval meeting are properly scheduled and attended;
- approve students for graduation and serve as a liaison with Enrollment Services;

- handle appeals of grades and program requirements; and
- mediate conflicts between students and supervisors.

Ombudsperson/Liaison to Graduate Advisor

The ombudsperson meets privately with graduate students who have concerns about some aspects of the graduate program, including but not limited to their supervisors, teaching assistantship/course instructors, colleagues, and other graduate students or staff. The ombudsperson's role is to act as a sympathetic ear in cases where the student is unsure or uncomfortable about bringing an issue directly to the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs. With consent from the students involved, the ombudsperson will discuss graduate student concerns with the Associate Head.

Equity Committee

The [Equity Committee](#) in UBC's Psychology Department strives to foster a community that is equitable, inclusive, and supportive to its members. The committee mainly works to address larger structural equity issues impacting department climate. The weekly equity coffee hour provides a drop-in opportunity for UBC Psychology faculty, staff, graduate or undergraduate students to chat about equity or diversity. If students have specific equity concerns or complaints, the committee connects students with resources and support at the university level.

Student Mentorship Program

The purpose of the Department's mentorship program is to provide MA level students (and transfer PhD students) with a PhD student mentor to provide guidance and support for those who are starting out in the program. How the mentorship program is conducted varies by area, so if you are interested in a mentor, please contact your area representative, who can be found on the [Psychology Graduate Student Council website](#). Your area representative will then try to match you with a volunteer mentor.

Faculty of Graduate and Postdoctoral Studies

The G+PS website has many resources for current students, including those related to [Health, Wellbeing, and Safety](#); expectations and responsibilities and roles for [students and supervisors](#); aspects of [professional development](#) that go beyond your coursework and participation in conferences; offices on campus that provide support and advocacy related to [conflict resolution](#); and very important information on policies and procedures related to the major milestones of your degree requirements, such as [advancement to doctoral candidacy](#), procedures for the [final doctoral examination](#), and [preparation and submission of your thesis or dissertation](#).

The UBC-Vancouver Academic Calendar describes [academic regulations](#) relevant to graduate students, including leaves of absence, parental accommodation, and vacation policies.

Support and Resources on Student Wellbeing

There are several options for reaching out to helpful resources at UBC when you are feeling distressed. For a more comprehensive list of resources both on and off-campus, refer to the [G+PS Health, Wellbeing, and Safety](#) page.

- Speak with a wellness advisor at the [UBC Counselling Services](#).
- Consider a broad range of support resources on the UBC website for [assisting students in distress](#) or additional support provided specifically for [graduate students in distress](#).
- Read the [Grad Well-being Resource Folder](#) (in the Graduate student resources section below). This resource, assembled by the department's Graduate Student Well-Being representatives, includes grad student-tailored suggestions for well-being resources on campus, off campus, and online.
- Try out some of the opportunities for [mindfulness/meditation at UBC](#).

Publication-Related Disputes

Occasionally, a disagreement develops over the publication of collaborative research. Although such disagreements are rare, they are potentially serious when they do occur. If you encounter such a problem that cannot be otherwise resolved, contact the Associate Head for Graduate Affairs. The best policy is, of course, not to let such disputes develop. Both advisors and students should have explicit conversations about the expectations and contingencies with respect to publication – order of authorship being the most frequent source of discord – prior to the collection of data. Students are also expected to write up their research for publication in a timely manner. Conflicts with former (and present) supervisors can usually be avoided if such matters are negotiated beforehand.

Graduate Student Council

The [Graduate Student Council \(GSC\)](#) of the Department of Psychology at UBC is composed of graduate students across different areas of the department. The Council's general aim is to serve the graduate students in the department by acting as a bridge between the faculty/staff and the graduate students.

Specifically, the GSC works to improve the overall experience of graduate students in the Department, promote social interaction and sense of community in the Department, enhance quality of graduate student teaching, and assist with regular department functions through committee membership. The GSC liaises with UBC's [Graduate Student Society](#). The GSC organizes PsychFest, the annual conference in which second year graduate students present their research to the department, and the annual Recruitment weekend. Importantly, the GSC also serves an advocacy function to raise important issues about inequality regarding graduate students as a whole. If you wish to find out more about the GSC, contact the GSC President(s).

Departmental Resources

Information Technology

A large portfolio of computer services is available to you on campus, jointly provided by UBC IT, Arts ISIT and Psychology IT, with the [Psychology IT Helpdesk](#) acting as the first point-of-contact for most services. This includes (but is not limited to):

Email: Perhaps most important to you, UBC IT provides all students with free email services:

Faculty and Staff Email (FASMail) - You are eligible for a UBC Faculty and Staff account, known as FASmail, which will be set up as cwlusername@mail.ubc.ca. This is the account most commonly used by department members. Your FASmail profile will also be setup to have a firstname.lastname@ubc.ca and a name@psych.ubc.ca alias. Your FASmail will only be active as long as you have an active appointment with the Department/University. Our Psychology IT Helpdesk team will be in touch with more information once your FASmail profile is setup.

UBC Student Webmail - Every student registered at UBC is eligible to have a cwlusername@student.ubc.ca email, which changes to cwlusername@alum.ubc.ca upon graduation. This email is required to take advantage of the free UBC Office 365 license for students. If you are not currently registered in any courses, you will have to wait to set this up until you are registered. You can also set this up as an email forwarding address. This replaces the former @alumni.ubc.ca email system.

We recommend signing up for the @student.ubc.ca forwarding address as it's your address for life. However, to sign up for the graduate student mailing list a FASmail (@mail.ubc.ca) address is required. Note that FASmail accounts are de-provisioned once you leave UBC, and the department alias (@psych.ubc.ca) accounts will normally only be kept active during your studies at UBC.

The department communicates to students through a departmental email mailing list. This is how we inform students about deadlines, awards, teaching assistantship positions, workshops, etc. We strongly recommend that you join this list. To join, email our [Psychology IT Helpdesk](#) with your CWL username.

PSYC AIR: Our department uses an intranet portal called AIR (Arts Internal Resources) to host important internal documentation. To access our AIR site you will need to have an active CWL that is connected to your status as a graduate student. Our AIR site can be found at <https://psyc.air.arts.ubc.ca>. If you cannot log in, please contact [Psychology IT helpdesk](#).

Internet Connectivity: To access the campus-wide high-speed wireless network, users require a UBC [Campus-Wide login \(CWL\)](#) account. Information about configuring your device to use the wireless network is available [here](#). You may also plug into the wired ports available in any of the department's buildings. If you cannot connect, please contact the [Psychology IT helpdesk](#).

Research Computing Support: If your research involves handling large data sets, working with scripts, or you just want access to high-performance computing tools, please inquire with the [Psychology IT helpdesk](#).

Software: There are several software packages available for you to use on your personal computer. Please see [PSYC AIR](#) site for more information or contact [Psychology IT helpdesk](#) for available technology resources and services.

Methodological and Statistical Consulting

In addition to the usual sources of information on the statistical methodology used in your research (e.g., other students, your supervisor, previous articles in the lab or on similar questions, textbooks and software manuals), the department has a Methodological Consulting Committee (consisting of faculty members) and, under the direction of this committee, a group of graduate-student statistical consultants (the latter working out of the

Statistical Consulting Lab). The membership of the faculty Methodological Consulting Committee changes from year to year, but the committee's composition and the specializations of the faculty members on the committee are announced each fall. The graduate student statistical consultants also change from year to year, and the particular students performing this assignment in a given year are announced in the fall.

You may make an appointment with a faculty methodological consultant throughout the year; student consultants are available from September to April. The departmental consultants provide free assistance in experimental design, and choosing, implementing, and interpreting appropriate statistical and psychometric methodology. All faculty and graduate students are eligible to receive assistance on actual research problems, but it should be noted that this is not a tutorial service for students with respect to their statistical coursework.

Student Evaluation & Annual Progress Report

The department evaluates the progress of each student annually in consultation with the faculty members in the student's area and the Graduate Student Progress Committee (GSPC). This evaluation is based on the student's progress outlined in the Annual Progress Report that is completed each April. Thus, it is important that each student completes this form accurately and submits it on time. The Annual Progress report includes a current CV, and both students and area coordinators should keep copies for their files. The completed forms should be forwarded to the Graduate Program Manager.

Although the exact assessment criteria may vary somewhat from area to area, ultimately all evaluations are based on the student's demonstrated ability to carry out high-quality independent research and, if relevant, engage in related professional activity. It should be emphasized that adequate performance in course work in the absence of demonstrated research and relevant professional ability is not sufficient to guarantee continuation in the program. In May of each year, each student will receive a letter from the department summarizing the results of the assessment. Each student should discuss this letter with her or his supervisor.

Graduate Course Evaluations

The evaluation forms that are completed at the end of each course are principally a communication between students and professor, although they also form part of the instructor's personnel file. If you, as a student in a course, believe that a problem exists, then you might want to discuss that problem with the instructor, or secondarily, with your fellow students. If the problem is not resolved in this way, you might want to discuss the problem with the Chair of the Teaching Evaluation Committee, the GSC Presidents, Associate Head for Graduate Affairs, or the Head of the Department.

Appeals

Appeals of program or degree requirements, including permission for not meeting a particular requirement by the specified date, must be submitted in writing by the student. In most cases, appeals related to program requirements will require approval of the research supervisor; in some cases, area approval is also required. Permission for not meeting a degree requirement on time must be obtained and approved by the GSPC prior to the deadline.

Student Offices

Student offices are assigned by research area. Students will be provided information by their supervisor or area chair on their office assignment. To report any problems with your office (light burnt out, temperature issues, etc), please complete the online form on [PSYC AIR](#), or contact the front office in Kenny 2509. Offices are shared with other students - be respectful and maintain your office in good order. Contact the department administrator if you have questions about storing materials, removing unused furniture, or custodial concerns.

Mailboxes

Graduate student correspondence can be picked up in the mailroom (Room 2506) between the hours of 8:30am

and 4:30pm on weekdays. Please request a key to the mailroom for access outside of these hours. Mailboxes are organized in alphabetical order according to students' last names. Stamped mail can be left in the outgoing mail baskets in the Main Reception Office (Room 2509) or in any Canada Post box on campus. If you require stamps, they can be bought from the UBC Bookstore. You are strongly encouraged to use your home address for all personal mail. You will likely receive mail quicker if it doesn't go through the campus delivery system.

Photocopying

The photocopiers are located in Room 2506 and are accessed using your CWL. All active TAs will have access to print to a teaching account, but if you would like to use the copiers for research or other purposes, your PI will need to fill out our print service form to add you to their account. Your PI will be billed on a regular basis for photocopying charges. More information on the UBC Psychology print system can be found [here](#). (Note: you will need to have a Campus-wide Login in order to access this page as it contains some secure information.)

Keys

Key requests for offices and labs require approval by a department faculty member. Your UBC student ID card can be used for building access outside of regular office hours. Please see the front office (Kenny 2509), or reception@psych.ubc.ca for any questions regarding access. Take along picture ID and at least \$20 for the refundable deposit if you are picking up your first UBC Key. (Note that the Access desk can be very busy the first few weeks in September).

Funding & Awards

Graduate students in the Department of Psychology receive financial support at levels comparable to those at other major universities. Graduate students receive a minimum guaranteed level of support for the first two years of the MA and the first four years of their PhD (currently a minimum of \$23,000 per year), unless other arrangements are made at the time of admission. Support is in the form of some combination of fellowships, awards, teaching assistantships, and research assistantships. Students are expected to apply for awards during their studies here. Financial support is contingent on maintaining high academic standing and making satisfactory progress toward their degree completion. Funding is available to both domestic and international graduate students. Refer to the Department of Psychology [Funding & Awards](#) page and the G+PS [Awards Opportunities](#) page to learn more about other internal and external funding opportunities. Note that unlike fellowship awards, teaching assistantships and research assistantships are processed on a payroll schedule (on a bi-weekly or hourly basis).

Research Assistantship

Research assistantships are desirable because they involve students directly in work that is relevant to their research interests. It is quite common for a student to be supported by a combination of research and teaching assistantships (RAs and TAs). RAs are arranged directly with the faculty member concerned, who is usually, but not always, the student's supervisor.

It is important to remember that RAs, TAs, or a combination of the two, should not involve work for more than an average of 12 hours per week during the months September through April. This is a G+PS recommendation. In some cases, fellowship or union rules preclude additional hours of work. This means that students should consult with the department administrator prior to taking on any extra work. RAships are given at the discretion of the faculty member concerned and may be granted for as long as the faculty member wishes.

Graduate students who are working as RAs are entitled to 3 weeks (15 working days) of vacation from their academic obligations per academic year outside of vacation time taken between Christmas and New Year statutory holidays. For further details surrounding this policy, please visit the [Graduate Student Vacation Policy page](#).

Teaching Assistantship

Teaching assistantships are paid employment opportunities offered to students registered in the graduate program. If the student is receiving no other funding support, then the TA position may be for 12 hours per week. A student with a fellowship may apply for a part-time TA appointment. TA assignments are coordinated by the department administrator in consultation with the Teaching Assistant Committee.

TA policies and procedures are governed by a collective agreement between [CUPE 2278](#) (TA union) and the university. This agreement sets out rules regarding application for TA positions, work conditions, preference for re-hiring, hourly pay rates, and so on. A full-time, 12 hours per week TAship for an academic term (September to December or January to April) totals 192 hours and pays approximately \$6,010 for MA students and \$6,245 for PhD students. TA appointments for fewer hours per week are prorated accordingly.

Questions concerning financial support through RA or TA assignments should be directed to the department administrator.

Getting Paid

Payroll must be set up for direct deposit to your bank account. Normal TA pay dates are the 15th and last day of each month. You must complete a form (available at Financial Services or from the departmental Executive Coordinator) to arrange direct deposit. A TA position is paid as 80% “regular” earnings and 20% “fellowship” earnings. An RA position is fully paid as “fellowship” earnings. This can be confusing when you view your pay statement, as the amounts shown will reflect these types of earnings and not your job titles. For example, you will see REG and FEL earnings, instead of RA and TA earnings; just make sure that the total is what you expect. You are always welcome to ask the department administrator if you have questions about your pay.

UBC offers an online system for viewing payroll information and to update your personal information. Go to the [UBC Human Resources Self-Service portal](#). Note that you may not be able to log in to this portal from off campus unless you are using a [VPN](#). You should also fill out the form to set your tax deduction level. If you hold a fellowship, taxes usually have not been deducted.

If you receive travel or expense reimbursement through the university, it will usually be paid to you through direct deposit to your bank account. You can also see the detail regarding these reimbursements on the expense reimbursement tab of the UBC Human Resources Self-Service portal.

Quinn Exchange Fellowships (QXF Program)

Purpose: The purpose of this travel fund is to enhance research opportunities for students pursuing a graduate degree in Psychology at UBC by sponsoring short-term exchanges with graduate students in universities outside of British Columbia. In addition to direct benefits to the exchange students, this program fosters new ties with foreign academics, creates opportunities for innovative research collaborations, and may broaden job prospects for our graduates. Funding for this program is provided by an extraordinary gift to the department from the estate of a distinguished alumnus, Dr. Michael J. Quinn (1917-2005).

Funding Available: Depending on the distance and duration of the trip, up to \$3,000 each will be provided for both partners in an exchange (the host and the visiting student).

For Further information on the Quinn Exchange Fellowships, please refer to the [Endowment Initiatives website](#).

Travel Grants

G+PS provides travel support for both MA and PhD students who will be presenting a paper or poster at an official conference. Students must claim any G+PS Travel Awards for which they are eligible before claiming a Travel Grant from the Department of Psychology. See the G+PS [Scholarships, Awards, and Funding](#) page for complete details and application procedures.

The Department of Psychology also has Graduate Student Travel Grants to help defray the expenses of Psychology graduate students who will be traveling either (a) to an academic conference for the purpose of presenting a paper or poster or (b) to attend an advanced training (e.g., statistical) workshop, but who in either case do not qualify for a travel grant from G+PS. Up to two travel grants from the department can be claimed over the course of students' graduate education.

The maximum grant for each conference or workshop is \$500. There is no deadline for submission; students may submit an application for a Department of Psychology Graduate Student Travel Grant at any time. Once the application for a Department of Psychology Graduate Student Travel Grant has been approved, submit the approval, along with original receipts, using the online [travel expense reimbursement form](#).

Miscellaneous Information

G+PS Regulations

Students should carefully read the section in the UBC Calendar pertaining to G+PS or see the G+PS website for university regulations regarding preparation of theses, deadlines for graduation, awards, and other matters relevant to the graduate program. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of and follow these regulations.

In addition to these regulations, the [G+PS Policies and Procedures](#) page contains information about promoting positive supervisory relationships, student responsibilities, awards/funding, and additional policies

Graduate Student Vacation Policy

Graduate students are entitled to 3 weeks (15 working days) of vacation from their academic obligations per academic year outside of vacation time taken between Christmas and New Year statutory holidays. For further details surrounding this policy, please visit the [Graduate Student Vacation Policy page](#).

Leave of Absence

For information on leave of absence and parental accommodation, refer to the [G+PS Leave of Absence](#) page. If you are a Tri-Agency award holder or are paid via your supervisor's Tri-Agency grant, you are also entitled to paid parental leave. The Agencies will provide parental leave supplements paid out of grants within six months following the child's birth or adoption to eligible students who are paid out of agency grants and who are primary caregivers for a child.

The supplement will be paid to students as per their current agency-funded salary/stipend for up to twelve months. If both parents are supported by grant funds, each parent may take a portion of the leave for a combined maximum of twelve months. The supplement will be pro-rated if the student is being trained in research on a part-time basis.

If you are paid as an RA via your supervisor's active Tri-Agency grant, you will be paid at your usual rate via the supervisor's grant, and your supervisor's grant will be refunded by the agency for the amount paid to you, covering the cost of the leave. For more information, refer to the Tri-Agency [administrative matters](#) page.

Use of Degree Status Designations

As a matter of academic integrity, students should correctly represent their degree program status and credentials. Students should not use designations that are not officially sanctioned by the University nor should they use acronyms that might be misunderstood by members of the public who are not well versed in academic requirements. The G+PS website has more information on UBC policies on [academic honesty and standards](#) that are relevant for graduate students.

Students in master's programs should not identify themselves as degree candidates (e.g., MA candidate) because candidacy is not an officially recognized degree program status at the master's level, although it is at the doctoral level. The appropriate designation is to merely identify as a student (e.g., MA student in Psychology). Students in doctoral programs may identify themselves as doctoral candidates only when they have officially advanced to candidacy (by completing all required coursework, passing comprehensive examinations, and having an approved dissertation proposal), and not before. This degree program status should be expressed in words (e.g., PhD candidate, PhD all-but-dissertation) and not using acronyms that might be misunderstood by non-academics. In particular, acronyms such as PhD(c) or PhD (ABD), for example, should not be used, as they could be mistaken for a conferred degree with some specialization.

Access, Privacy and Records Management

UBC must collect use and disclose personal information in a lawful and appropriate manner, following the regulations set up by the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA). The Act protects personal privacy by prohibiting unauthorized collection, use, or disclosure of personal information and also ensures that the public has a legislated right of access to government records.

As a teaching or research assistant you may have access to private information. Student names, ID numbers and email addresses are personal information (PI). You are responsible for understanding how to securely store and transmit personal information. Some basic responsibilities include ensuring that devices used for UBC business are encrypted, that personal information is not stored outside of Canada (i.e., Dropbox), and that any paper records containing personal information, including exams, are stored securely. Exams are to be stored by the course instructor for one year; the department arranges for confidential shredding of exams each winter and spring. Contact the Department Administrator if you have any questions about private information or records management.

UBC's [Access and Privacy](#) website contains important information about access and privacy issues. Our department website also has resources available around [password and PI protection](#), FIPPA and Access and Privacy.

Respectful Environment

The [UBC Respectful Environment Statement for Students, Faculty and Staff](#) sets out expectations of everyone who is a member of the UBC community. Bullying and harassment are not acceptable and are not tolerated at UBC. All faculty, students and staff should review the policies, reporting procedures and resources regarding prevention of [Bullying and Harassment](#). All UBC employees are required by BC Workers Compensation Act to receive [training](#) about the workplace bullying and harassment policies and how to recognize, prevent, and address workplace bullying and harassment.

Plagiarism

Students are strongly advised to avoid plagiarism in their coursework, theses and dissertations, and manuscripts. The consequences of engaging in plagiarism, even inadvertently, can be significant. Students are responsible for educating themselves about academic integrity and what qualifies as plagiarism. The G+PS [Dealing with Plagiarism by Graduate Students](#) page provides useful information on academic honesty and standards, as well as the disciplinary procedures to follow when it is detected.

International Students

At the time of registration, graduate students from outside Canada will be requested to obtain medical coverage if they have not already done so.

International students who intend to work (including TA and RA positions) must obtain a Canadian Social Insurance Number (SIN) card. You must submit a copy of your SIN card and student permit to the Executive Coordinator. Your SIN has an expiry date, coinciding with the expiry date on your study permit. You should apply for an extension well ahead of that expiry date to ensure that there is no disruption to your payroll. UBC will not pay someone who lacks a valid SIN, and the department is unable to enter a payroll appointment that extends beyond the expiry date of the SIN.

It is important for students to maintain an active student visa as some visas might expire before the program completion. To renew your visa, you will need: (a) proof of financial support during the next year, (b) proof of registration, and (c) a valid passport. Proof of support can be demonstrated by a letter from the University describing your future TA and RA support (see the Department Administrator), a fellowship notice, a bank statement, or all three. The level of support necessary for renewal changes each year, but a full TA plus summer RA support has always been sufficient.

If you also filed a claim with Customs, you must renew your Customs claim after each visa renewal. You should be able to renew your claim at the downtown Vancouver office. Take your Customs forms and your renewed visa. Contact the [International Student Advising](#) for more information.

Graduate Student Centre

The Graduate Student Centre is located at the far northwest corner of the campus in the same building as G+PS.

Libraries

Libraries on campus that contain relevant materials for psychology students include:

- Koerner (most materials dealing with psychology)
- Barber (some older materials dealing with psychology)
- Woodward (most materials dealing with psychiatry, neurology, and medicine)
- Education (Scarfe Building)
- David Lam Management Research Library (Sauder School of Business)

Student Travel Outside of Canada

The University's student travel policy, [Policy #69](#), is intended to facilitate safe travel experiences for student travelers. The policy applies to all graduate and undergraduate student travel outside of Canada in connection with a university activity including, for example, the Quinn Exchange Fellowship (or similar attendance at a university outside Canada), clinical practicum or internship, data collection or other research-related activity, conferences or workshops (if there is any reimbursement from funds administered by the University).

All UBC students who intend to travel outside of Canada in connection with a university activity must register online with the [Student Safety Abroad Registry](#), managed by UBC's [Go Global](#) office; and all students with Canadian citizenship are required to also register with the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) Registration of [Canadians Abroad](#) system. Students with other citizenships may register with the DFAIT system but may also wish to register with the consulate of their home country.

The Student Safety Abroad Registry will indicate what level of travel advisory is indicated for your destination and what procedures to follow as determined by the level of travel advisory. For example, travel to a destination with a Level 1 ("exercise normal security precautions") travel advisory merely requires registration and completion of an online pre-departure health and safety checklist. Travel to a destination with a Level 2 travel advisory requires, in addition, signing a student mobility agreement. Travel to a higher-risk destination with a Level 3 or 4 travel advisory requires, among other things, authorization from the Head of the Department, the Dean of Arts, or the Dean of G+PS (depending on the nature of the activity), completion of an in-person briefing, and compliance with various other procedures.

The [Go Global](#) Office provides resources and support services regarding travel, and students should avail themselves of the services provided by this office.