

**PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCES  
Ph.D. AND M.A. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS**

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## Preface

Welcome to graduate school! You are about to begin one of the most exciting, rewarding, and demanding phases of your adult life. Between now and graduation, you will develop from an enthusiastic and ambitious student into a professional scientist with highly specialized technical and substantive knowledge, a professional who is capable of functioning independently as a researcher, teacher, and colleague. Few other times in your life offer you the opportunities you will encounter in the next several years. Take advantage of them. Remember, you are preparing for a successful career in a competitive job market, not merely to obtain a degree. You will want to leave here as well-prepared as you can be.

Think of this Psychological Sciences Policies and Procedures manual as your manual for successfully navigating through your graduate student career here at UC Merced. It contains a wide variety of information, ranging from milestone requirements (e.g., pre-candidacy thesis, dissertation) to expected coursework to training as a teacher. Read the Handbook right away to get an overview of what will happen in the next several years and refer back to it regularly as you encounter questions about what you need to do. Bring questions to your advisor and discuss with him or her how, within this structure, you can reach your goals with excellence. Ask your fellow graduate students about their experiences. They can provide useful guidance on getting through the program. Use this manual to help you keep track of your own progress against the milestones and expected timelines for completion of your doctoral degree. By the time you graduate, your copy should be well-worn and annotated.

Graduate work is highly demanding. Graduate students quickly come to learn that far more is expected of them now than when they were undergraduates. You will likely be more successful if you adjust your expectations for your own performance from the start. Here are some examples.

- Commonly, you will need to work 60-70 hours a week to do:
  - Coursework. Coursework provides a foundation for core areas of your learning, an opportunity to become familiar with research literature, and a forum for creatively exploring your own research ideas. Your investment and success in classroom learning is critical to your success as a graduate student. You will read much more than you are probably used to for some courses, and in other courses you will work on several larger assignments that will require consistent, high-quality work over weeks
  - Assistantships. Teaching and research assistantships provide hands-on opportunities to engage in scholarly work. You should expect to devote up to 20 hours per week on average, sometimes more in any given week, sometimes less.
  - Service. Service opportunities, such as organizing talks or serving on committees, provide the chance to more fully engage in our academic community. You will be expected to be involved in some aspect of service, although first year graduate students are exempted from this. The amount of time this will take varies by task, but you should put in the time needed to achieve excellent results in your service work.

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- Research. Unlike many undergraduates who simply strive to “get the requirements done,” as a graduate student you are expected to become an expert in your chosen field, to know your literature deeply, to be able to use the methods in your field independently, and to establish your research vita with publications, conference presentations, and grants. It is absolutely not enough only to meet the milestone research requirements; you need to accomplish considerably more than that. It is not possible to spend too many hours on your research. In addition, you should plan to work most of the semester breaks. This is prime time to spend on your research development. Talk to your advisor about how much they worked as graduate students – indeed, how much they still work today.
- Make your milestones, as outlined here. As an undergraduate, a student often has the freedom to go slow, to take 5 or 6 or 7 years to finish. You are expected to move through your graduate training on schedule because part of being a professional is being able to meet the many demands of professional life. Finish the Pre-Candidacy Thesis by the end of your second summer. Advance to Candidacy by the end of your third summer. Finish your dissertation by your fourth or fifth summer. Although some variation in this timeline among students is expected, justifications for failing to make the milestones will be highly scrutinized.
- If an undergraduate did not think he or she would do well in a course, the student could just drop it. As a graduate student, dropping a course is generally strongly discouraged, especially if the reason is that the student is not doing well in the course. The courses that graduate students take are the ones the faculty has judged are essential for you to develop as a professional. If a graduate student has to drop a course, it calls into question whether the student can master the needed professional skills. Of course, there will always be exceptions to this, especially under extraordinary circumstances. If that is happening to you, go talk to your advisor, your course instructor, the graduate group chair or any faculty member you trust. They will likely be able to help you.

The first year of graduate school, especially the first semester, is often the most difficult for graduate students. The adjustment demands are steep. You will take more courses than at any other time in graduate school, and some of them like statistics and research methods are difficult for many students. You are learning new skills in teaching and research that you may not have much prior experience with. Be patient and work hard. Support each other. By your second year, you will take fewer courses, and towards the end of your graduate career, you may not take any courses at all. If you want a sense of your likely course load, look at the sample program listed in this manual.

Most of all, remember that the faculty are here to help you. The other graduate students are here to help you. Work together when it is appropriate. Talk to senior graduate students. Talk to the faculty. We want you to succeed, or we would not have granted you admission. Don't let problems fester. If you are struggling in a task, whether it is in a course or teaching or research, don't hesitate to get help. Everyone at UC Merced wants you to succeed in getting your doctorate!

# Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

## A. Introduction

### 1) Aims and Scope:

Doctoral study in Psychological Sciences focuses on acquiring the conceptual and methodological skills necessary to operate as an independent researcher. At UC Merced, this is accomplished through a mentorship model in which students work closely with a supervising Faculty Advisor who has primary responsibility for overseeing that student's training. At the same time, students may broaden their research training through involvement in research programs conducted by other faculty. In addition, there are numerous specific requirements. For example, students must complete a program of coursework, a Pre-Candidacy Thesis, a Candidacy Exam portfolio demonstrating professional skills in the discipline, and an empirical Doctoral Dissertation involving original research that contributes to knowledge in the field. These are only the major requirements and are not meant to be exhaustive. It is also expected that graduate students will contribute to and generate additional research and add to the intellectual and organizational life of the department.

The Doctor of Philosophy degree is not granted by the University of California merely for the fulfillment of technical requirements. Rather, the recipient of a Ph.D. degree is understood to possess thorough knowledge of a broad field of learning, have demonstrated evidence of distinguished accomplishment in that field, and evidence critical ability and powers of imaginative synthesis. The degree also signifies that the recipient has presented a doctoral dissertation containing an original contribution to knowledge in his or her chosen field of study.

In addition to this manual of Policies and Procedures for Graduate Students in Psychological Sciences, important information for graduate students is also contained in Graduate Division's Graduate Faculty Advisor's Handbook<sup>1</sup>, and the UC Merced Catalogue<sup>2</sup>.

### 2) Admissions Requirements:

Consideration for graduate group admission requires a bachelor's degree, three letters of recommendation, official transcripts, GRE scores, TOEFL or IELTS score (if applicable) and submission of the graduate online application with fee by the stated admission deadline. A minimum GPA of 3.0 is required. Admission decisions are made on a case-by case basis. Meeting some or all of these criteria does not guarantee admission, but merely eligibility. The decision to recommend admission to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education will be made by the Graduate Group Admissions Committee on the basis of available space and the competitiveness of applicants compared to the eligible pool.

<sup>1</sup> [http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/files/documents/PDFs/grad\\_adv\\_handbook\\_revjune2013.pdf](http://graduatedivision.ucmerced.edu/files/documents/PDFs/grad_adv_handbook_revjune2013.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/>

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**a) Prerequisites:**

There are no other prerequisites for admission into the program.

**b) Deficiencies:**

Coursework deficiencies should be made up by the end of the first academic year following initial enrollment by earning a letter grade of "B" or better.

**3) General Committees:**

**a) Executive Committee:**

The Graduate Group Executive Committee (GGEC) shall consist of the Psychological Sciences Sections' Area Heads, who are elected to two-year terms by the members of each area and hold voting privileges on the GGEC. The GGEC will be chaired by the Graduate Group Chair.

It is the responsibility of the Graduate Group Chair to voice the results of GGEC deliberations to pertinent academic and research administrative units, and the Dean of the Graduate Division. The GGEC may choose not to constitute a particular committee described below as a separate body, in which case the GGEC will assume the responsibilities of that committee. Committee formation and appointments will be reviewed on an annual basis.

A special duty involving the GGEC will be to hear student grievances. When hearing student grievances the GGEC will add one tenured UC Merced faculty member not associated with the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group to participate in the process and all votes pertaining to the grievance. This is to enhance the impartiality of a process when grievances are filed about a colleague of members of the GGEC. The Graduate Group Chair will propose five such external candidates and the student filing the grievance may choose to remove up to two candidates from further consideration. A GGEC member who is a member of a committee against which a student is filing a grievance will recuse himself or herself from the review process, but may be interviewed by the remaining committee members as part of the information gathering process.

Students have the right to pursue grievances with the GGEC, which will assemble, review pertinent information, and provide a written summary to the Graduate Group Chair within 30 calendar days of the student grievance. Extensions may be granted in writing by the Graduate Group Chair when warranted by key parties on either side of the grievance (e.g., extended travel obligations, illness). The GGEC will rule on the case. Students have the right to appeal this ruling to the Dean of the Graduate Division within 30 calendar days. The Dean of the Graduate Division may request that the Lead Dean and/or other appropriate parties investigate the student's concerns or grievances and determine appropriate resolutions. Ultimately, the final resolution of all disputes

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lies with the Dean of the Graduate Division as described in UC Merced's Graduate Advisors Handbook. In the event that the dispute involves the Dean of the Graduate Division in her/his role as a faculty member, then the final resolution of all disputes resides with the Executive Vice Chancellor.

### **b) Admission Committee:**

The Admissions/Fellowships Committee shall consist of the Heads of the Developmental, Quantitative, and Health Areas. Area Heads may choose to delegate this responsibility to a faculty member in the Area, subject to approval of the GGEC. This committee is charged with reviewing recommendations for admissions made by the Areas, making recommendations for admissions to the Dean of the Graduate Division, and exploring graduate student support mechanisms.

The Admissions/ Fellowships Committee also recommends the allocation of intramural financial assistance to the GGEC, who makes the final decisions or recommendations to an awarding body as appropriate. Recommendations for new and continuing student fellowships are also made to the Admissions/Fellowship Committee by Area Heads with the assistance of faculty in that Area. The Admissions/Fellowship Committee forwards its recommendation to the GGEC, who makes the final decisions.

### **c) Education Policy Committee:**

The Graduate Curriculum and Education Policy Committee shall consist of the Heads of the Areas, and a student representative selected by the Psychological Sciences' graduate students. Area Heads may choose to delegate this responsibility to a faculty member in the Area, subject to approval of the GGEC. One of these Committee members is chosen by the members of the Committee to be the Graduate Curriculum Committee Chair for a one year term at a time.

The function of the Graduate Curriculum and Education Policy Committee will be to take whatever action is necessary to act on behalf of the Graduate Group during the year to define and implement the program leading to the Ph.D. degree. The Committee is charged with establishing and maintaining documentation on the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group curriculum, and the Committee will periodically prepare for system reviews of the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group, including the seven-year review.

The Committee, in consultation with the Graduate Group Faculty, will coordinate and document proposed changes in programmatic requirements of the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group program, and present proposed changes to the voting body, and the Graduate Council if required. All changes to the programmatic requirements of the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group curriculum and associate requirements must be approved by vote of the eligible Graduate Group Faculty.



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### **B. Master's Degree Requirements**

As an *en route* degree, the M.A. degree will have the same foundational curriculum as the Psychological Sciences Ph.D. degree. The recipient of the M.A. degree is understood to possess knowledge of a broad field of learning that extends well-beyond that attained at the undergraduate level, but is not expected to have made a significant contribution to knowledge in the field.

#### **1) Degree Plan I- Thesis:**

A minimum of 24 semester units in coursework is required for the M.A. degree. These courses include five core courses (required) and one elective course, which is usually in the student's chosen area: developmental, quantitative, or health psychology. Students must also complete and successfully defend a thesis.

#### **a) Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):**

The Psychological Sciences MA Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are:

- i. *Core Knowledge:* Graduate students will demonstrate advanced knowledge in a specialized area of Psychological Sciences of their choosing.
- ii. *Statistics and Methods:* Graduate students will demonstrate skills in the use of the basic data gathering methods and statistical techniques used for typical analyses in conducting research in the Psychological Sciences.
- iii. *Pedagogy:* Graduate students will participate in classroom pedagogy used in undergraduate education.
- iv. *Communication Skills:* Graduate students will demonstrate effective communication skills appropriate for the field of psychology. These include written communication (clear expression, compliance with APA style) and oral communication (effective oral explanation of disciplinary material for both lay and scientific audiences).
- v. *Professionalism:* Graduate students will know and participate in the intellectual and organizational aspects of the profession of psychology.
- vi. *Independent Research:* Graduate students will conduct independent research resulting in an original contribution to knowledge in Psychological Sciences, including all steps from generating an original question to writing a manuscript describing all aspects of the study.

#### **b) Course Requirements - Core and Electives (minimum total of 24 units)**

The Psychological Sciences Graduate Group faculty has established a minimum requirement of six 4-unit courses of graduate (200 series) coursework for the M.A., which must be met during at least four semesters of full-time (defined as enrolled in 12 units minimum) academic residence at UC Merced. These six

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courses do not include PSY 286 through PSY 299. Courses taken toward a graduate degree at another institution cannot be transferred for credit toward a M.A. at UCM. However, a course requirement may be waived if a similar course was taken at another institution. The General Petition form should be used for all requests for waivers of course work.

### i) Core Courses (total of 20 units)

The following core courses are required for the M.A. degree:

| Course Number | Course Name                                      | Units |
|---------------|--|-------|
| PSY200A       | Proseminar for 1 <sup>st</sup> Year PhD students | 4     |
| PSY200B       | Proseminar for 1 <sup>st</sup> Year PhD students | 4     |
| PSY202A       | Advanced Psychological Statistics I              | 4     |
| PSY 202B      | Advanced Psychological Statistics II             | 4     |
| PSY 204       | Research Design and Methodology                  | 4     |

Students may petition to substitute a different statistics class for PSY 202B. Such a class must cover some part of linear models (e.g., regression, structural equation models, hierarchical linear models) and must be approved by the faculty. Students must receive a passing grade (higher than B-) in all core courses. Students receiving a failing grade (B- or lower) in these courses must repeat the course and receive a passing grade.

### ii) Elective Courses (total of 4 units required)

In addition to the core courses, students must complete one elective course that is not within the PSY 286 through PSY 299 sequence. PSY 286 through PSY 299 courses can be taken to fulfill the UCM requirement that students enroll in a minimum of 12 units per semester. The elective courses include:

| Course Number | Course Name                                      | Units |
|---------------|--|-------|
| PSY202C       | Multivariate Analysis                            | 4     |
| PSY203        | Multilevel Modeling                              | 4     |
| PSY205        | Measurement Theory and Psychometrics             | 4     |
| PSY206        | Quantitative Methods for Reviewing Research      | 4     |
| PSY 207       | Linear Structural Modeling                       | 4     |
| PSY 209       | Longitudinal Data Analysis & Bayesian Extensions | 4     |
| PSY 210       | Item Response Theory                             | 4     |

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|         |   |   |
|---------|---|---|
| PSY 212 | Special Problems in Psychological Statistics        | 4 |
| PSY 213 | Mathematical Toolbox for Quantitative Psychologists | 4 |
| PSY 214 | History of Psychology                               | 4 |
| PSY 220 | Health Psychology                                   | 4 |
| PSY 221 | Issues in Health Psychology                         | 4 |
| PSY 222 | Introduction to Psychoneuroimmunology               | 4 |
| PSY 224 | Health Disparities                                  | 4 |
| PSY 225 | Health Risk and Decision Making                     | 4 |
| PSY 228 | Intervention Strategies in Health Psychology        | 4 |
| PSY 230 | Developmental Psychology I                          | 4 |
| PSY 231 | Developmental Psychology II                         | 4 |
| PSY 234 | The Nativism Empiricism Debate                      | 4 |
| PSY 235 | Language Acquisition                                | 4 |
| PSY 236 | Cognitive Development                               | 4 |
| PSY 237 | Conceptual Development                              | 4 |
| PSY 238 | The Development of the Social Mind                  | 4 |
| PSY 239 | Cognitive Development and Education                 | 4 |
| PSY 280 | Human Behavioral Genetics                           | 4 |
| PSY 286 | Presentation of Psychological Materials             | 4 |
| PSY 289 | Psychology Colloquium                               | 4 |
| PSY 290 | Special Topics Course                               | 4 |
| PSY 294 | Individual Studies                                  | 4 |
| PSY 296 | Research Topics in Psychology                       | 4 |
| PSY 297 | Research for Ph.D. Dissertation                     | 4 |
| PSY 298 | Directed Group Study                                | 4 |
| PSY 299 | Directed Individual Research Study in Psychology    | 4 |

**iii) Summary:**

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In total, 24 units are required before the M.A. degree can be awarded. Typically, 20 of these units will come from the five required courses and 4 will come from an elective course in the student's selected area.

Students may, in collaboration with their Faculty Advisor, determine the pace of coursework that is appropriate. However, the core requirements must be met in the first two years of residence at UC Merced unless a required course is not offered during the first two years. In addition, Graduate Division requirements are that full-time graduate students must be enrolled in at least 12 units of upper division or graduate-level units per semester. Registration in PSY 286 through 299 may be used to fill this requirement in any given semester. Students are expected to attend at least the colloquium relevant to their area. Courses that fulfill any of the program course requirements may not be taken S/U. Per UC regulations, students cannot enroll in more than 12 units of graduate level courses per semester.

**c) Special Requirements:**

N/A.

**d) Advancement to Candidacy:**

Before advancing to candidacy for the Master's degree, a student must have satisfied all plan requirements set by the graduate program and must have maintained a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all course work undertaken. Normally, students can advance to candidacy by the end of the third semester. The student must file the appropriate paperwork (Application for Advancement to Candidacy for the Master's Degree Form and Conflict of Interest Form).

**e) Thesis Requirements:**

The thesis is a written manuscript describing an empirical research project in which the student has actively participated in all steps from the conceptualization stage through to study design, data collection as required, and analysis. The defense includes an oral presentation and an oral examination. The skills and knowledge expected of an M.A. degree recipient are described in the Program Learning Outcomes. The student need not be the originator of most of these steps, but must be an active participant in all of them. However, the write-up of the thesis must be sole authored by the student; other authors may be added to a later published version of the paper, as appropriate, and the order of authorship on such a subsequent paper may change if it is consistent with the guidelines of the American Psychological Association.

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The thesis is normally completed by the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year, as determined in collaboration with the Faculty Advisor. The thesis project will be conducted in close collaboration with the Faculty Advisor; students should ensure that the Advisor concurs with decisions made at all stages of the project. Students will normally form their Master's Thesis Committee (MTC) by one semester prior to thesis submission. The final thesis will be a written paper in the format of an empirical journal article. The student prepares the thesis under the supervision of the Faculty Advisor, who requests revisions until s/he judges the work is ready to be reviewed by MTC members.

The student then circulates the thesis among MTC members, who should provide crucial comments, possibly leading to another revision before the final submission and the scheduling of the Master's Thesis Defense; MTC members should provide these comments in a timely fashion. The complete thesis must be provided to the MC members at least 14 days prior to the defense. MTC members must evaluate the thesis within 28 days.

The Master's Thesis Defense consists of a 30-minute oral presentation of the thesis by the student, followed by questions and answers by the MTC. At the conclusion of committee questions, the student is excused and the MTC deliberates and votes on whether to pass the thesis.

The MTC recommendation is by majority vote with no more than one dissenting vote. The MTC may request minor revisions prior to a final decision without a second meeting if agreed to unanimously by all members of the MTC. When a majority of members of the MTC agree that the revisions are satisfactory, all of the MTC members will sign the title page and pertinent forms indicating the student has passed before the thesis is submitted electronically to the Graduate Division for final approval.

If the MTC decides that substantial revisions are required, the student will have six weeks to make and submit those revisions, the MTC will then have four weeks to review the revisions. A second meeting must then be held, and the MTC makes a recommendation whether to pass the student on the Master's Thesis Defense. Should the committee determine that the thesis is unacceptable, a recommendation to disqualify the student will be made to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education.

All theses submitted in fulfillment of requirements for advanced degrees at UCM must conform to certain University regulations and specifications with regard to format and method of preparation. The UCM Thesis and Dissertation Manual are available at the Graduate Division website. The Master's Thesis Committee certifies that the completed thesis is satisfactory through the signatures of all Committee members on the signature page of the completed thesis. The MTC chair is responsible for the content and final presentation of the manuscript.

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Filing instructions are found in the UCM Thesis and Dissertation Manual. The advanced degree manuscript is expected to be submitted by the deadline in the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. The end of the semester is the deadline for submitting theses during each semester. A schedule of dates for filing the thesis in final form are published on the Graduate Division website in the calendar and deadlines section. Those students who complete requirements and submit theses after the end of the semester and prior to the start of the subsequent semester will earn a degree for the following semester, but will not be required to pay fees for that semester. In accordance with UC and UCM policy, all approved thesis/dissertation manuscripts automatically become available for public access and circulation as part of the UC Libraries collection.

### **2) Degree Plan II- Non-thesis:**

Psychological Sciences does not offer Degree Plan II- Non-thesis for the Master's degree.

### **3) Degree Plan- Professional Master's**

Psychological Sciences does not offer a Professional Master's Degree.

### **4) Advising Structure and Mentoring:**

The Faculty Advisor is the faculty member who supervises the student's research and thesis. The Faculty Advisor must be a member of the Psychological Sciences faculty and the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group. The student's selection is approved by the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group Chair. The student and the Faculty Advisor will interact intensely and together develop research projects that will lead to a focus to be pursued in the student's thesis. The Faculty Advisor, in the role of a mentor, plans strategies that will support the development of required competencies and provides ongoing informal feedback regarding the student's progress. In addition, the Faculty Advisor conducts a formal evaluation of the student's progress in the program at least semi-annually. The Faculty Advisor will normally serve as Chair of the student's Faculty Advisory Committee and Masters Thesis Committee.

The UC Merced Mentoring Guidelines can be found at:

<http://senate.ucmerced.edu/sites/senate.ucmerced.edu/files/public/UCM%20Mentoring%20Guidelines-%20GC%20approved%209%2023%2014.pdf>

### **5) Master's Degree Committees:**

#### **a) Faculty Advisory Committee**

Additional mentoring of a student is provided by a Faculty Advisory Committee, which is chaired by the Faculty Advisor. This Committee is established jointly by the

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Faculty Advisor and student, prior to the end of the spring semester of the 1st year in the program. The student and members of this Committee can meet as often as is desired to provide the appropriate mentoring and/or guidance. This Committee is also charged with formally evaluating the student's progress in the Graduate Group at least annually, following the completion of each spring semester.

The Faculty Advisory Committee must include at least 3 faculty members, at least 2 of whom must be faculty members in Psychological Sciences, including the Faculty Advisor. Members of the Faculty Advisory Committee may be replaced by agreement among the student, Faculty Advisor, and the committee member being replaced, or if such consensus is not possible, by vote of the faculty in Psychological Sciences. The Faculty Advisory Committee may be replaced by the Master's Thesis Committee once it has been formed. Regardless, a student will have a committee of faculty providing mentoring and/or guidance and conducting formal evaluations throughout the completion of the M.A. degree.

### **b) Master's Thesis Committee**

The Master's Thesis Committee (MTC) is charged with determining the readiness of the student to proceed with the Master's Thesis Defense. The MTC does so by ensuring the student has completed all other requirements and is ready to complete the Master's Thesis Defense. The MTC then conducts and evaluates the Master's Thesis Defense.

The MTC must be composed of no fewer than three members of the UC Merced Psychological Sciences faculty. An additional outside member (e.g. of another UC Merced administrative unit) can serve as a MTC member if approved by the other members of the committee and the Graduate School. The student should initially propose a MTC to her/his Faculty Advisor; if supported by the advisor, the student should contact the desired members and invite them to join the MTC. Students should be aware that faculty members may in some instances be unable or unwilling to serve on a MTC. The members of a student's MTC are approved by the Chair of the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group. These nominations are then submitted to the Graduate Division for formal appointment in accordance with Graduate Council policy. The MTC then becomes the student's Faculty Advisory Committee. The MTC may differ in membership from the original Faculty Advisory Committee to accommodate changes in the student's research interests and available faculty expertise. No special procedures need be followed to change membership.

- 6) Normative Time to Degree:** Normative Time is the elapsed time (calculated to the nearest semester) that a student would need to complete all requirements for the degree, assuming that they are engaged in full-time study and making adequate progress. The student must advance to candidacy and complete the degree within the limitations established by the Graduate Group and approved by the Graduate Council.

## Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template

While time to completion of the degree will vary, a general expectation is that students will complete the Master's Thesis by the end of their 2nd or 3rd year of study. Completion beyond that date requires the approval of the Faculty Advisory Committee and the Graduate Group Chair.

### 7) Typical Timeline and Sequence of Events:

The goals and needs of individual students vary considerably, and no single plan will accommodate all students. Therefore, the following program of study should be considered as a general guide only. In particular, the following example illustrates a 2-year program of study, which may not be appropriate for all students.

| Fall Semester  | Spring Semester   |
|--|---|
| <i>1<sup>st</sup> Year</i>   |   |
| PSY200A Proseminar   | PSY200B Proseminar  |
| PSY202A Advanced Psychological Statistics  | PSY202B Advanced Psychological Statistics   |
| PSY204 Research Design and Methodology   | Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)  |
| <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Year</i>   |   |
| Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)   | Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)  |
| Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)   | Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)  |
| PSY295 Graduate Research (semi-independent research culminating in the Pre-Candidacy and Master's Theses); formation of Master's Thesis Committee and Advancement to Candidacy | PSY295 Graduate Research (semi-independent research culminating in the Pre-Candidacy and Master's Theses) |

### 8) Sources of Funding:

Students are typically supported through two mechanisms: teaching assistantships (TAs) and graduate student research (GSR) positions. TAs are more common than GSR positions, which are generally funded through grants obtained by faculty advisors. TAs are for the 9-month academic year and include tuition, fees, and a monthly stipend (approximately \$2000 a month). Graduate students cannot be funded through TAs for more than 12 semesters. GSRs are appointed on a semester basis and also include tuition, fees, and a monthly stipend (approximately \$2000, depending on experience).

Graduate students are also strongly encouraged to seek out grant funding to support their research. The UC Merced Graduate Division web site maintains a list of some such opportunities, and other examples include Ford Foundation Fellowships and NSF National Research Service Awards.

## C. Doctoral Degree Requirements



## Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

### 1) Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

The Psychological Sciences PhD Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are:

- i. *Core Knowledge:* Graduate students will demonstrate advanced knowledge in a specialized area of Psychological Sciences of their choosing.
- ii. *Statistics and Methods:* Graduate students will demonstrate skills in the use of the basic data gathering methods and statistical techniques used for typical analyses in conducting research in the Psychological Sciences.
- iii. *Pedagogy:* Graduate students will participate in classroom pedagogy used in undergraduate education.
- iv. *Communication Skills:* Graduate students will demonstrate effective communication skills appropriate for the field of psychology. These include written communication (clear expression, compliance with APA style) and oral communication (effective oral explanation of disciplinary material for both lay and scientific audiences).
- v. *Professionalism:* Graduate students will know and participate in the intellectual and organizational aspects of the profession of psychology.
- vi. *Independent Research:* Graduate students will conduct independent research resulting in an original contribution to knowledge in Psychological Sciences, including all steps from generating an original question to writing a manuscript describing all aspects of the study.

### 2. Course Requirements - Core and Electives (minimum total of 48 units)

The Psychological Sciences Graduate Group faculty has established a minimum requirement of twelve 4-unit courses of graduate (200 series) coursework for the Ph.D., which must be met during at least four semesters of full-time (defined as enrolled in 12 units minimum) academic residence at UC Merced. Regular courses do not include PSY 286 through PSY 299. Courses taken toward a graduate degree at another institution cannot be transferred for credit toward a Ph.D. at UCM. However, a course requirement may be waived if a similar course was taken at another institution. The General Petition form should be used for all requests for waivers of course work.

#### a) Core Courses

The following core courses are required for the Ph.D. degree:

| Course Number | Course Name                                      | Units |
|---------------|--|-------|
| PSY200A       | Proseminar for 1 <sup>st</sup> Year PhD students | 4     |
| PSY200B       | Proseminar for 1 <sup>st</sup> Year PhD students | 4     |
| PSY202A       | Advanced Psychological Statistics I              | 4     |
| PSY 202B      | Advanced Psychological Statistics II             | 4     |
| PSY 204       | Research Design and Methodology                  | 4     |

## Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template

Students may petition to substitute a different statistics class for PSY 202B. Such a class must cover some part of linear models (e.g., regression, structural equation models, hierarchical linear models) and must be approved by the faculty. Students must receive a passing grade (higher than B-) in all core courses. Students receiving a failing grade (B- or lower) in these courses must repeat the course and receive a passing grade.

### b) Elective Courses

In addition to the core courses, 28 additional units of regular elective courses are required—typically seven regular graduate courses at 4 units each. The elective courses include:

| Course Number | Course Name   | Units |
|---------------|---|-------|
| PSY202C       | Multivariate Analysis                               | 4     |
| PSY205        | Measurement Theory and Psychometrics                | 4     |
| PSY206        | Quantitative Methods for Reviewing Research         | 4     |
| PSY 207       | Linear Structural Modeling                          | 4     |
| PSY 209       | Longitudinal Data Analysis & Bayesian Extensions    | 4     |
| PSY 210       | Item Response Theory                                | 4     |
| PSY 212       | Special Problems in Psychological Statistics        | 4     |
| PSY 214       | History of Psychology                               | 4     |
| PSY 215       | Mathematical Toolbox for Quantitative Psychologists | 4     |
| PSY 220       | Health Psychology                                   | 4     |
| PSY 221       | Issues in Health Psychology                         | 4     |
| PSY 222       | Introduction to Psychoneuroimmunology               | 4     |
| PSY 224       | Health Disparities                                  | 4     |
| PSY 225       | Health Risk and Decision Making                     | 4     |
| PSY 228       | Intervention Strategies in Health Psychology        | 4     |
| PSY 230       | Developmental Psychology I                          | 4     |
| PSY 231       | Developmental Psychology II                         | 4     |
| PSY 234       | The Nativism Empiricism Debate                      | 4     |
| PSY 235       | Language Acquisition                                | 4     |

## Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

|         |  |   |
|---------|--|---|
| PSY 236 | Cognitive Development                            | 4 |
| PSY 237 | Conceptual Development                           | 4 |
| PSY 238 | The Development of the Social Mind               | 4 |
| PSY 239 | Cognitive Development and Education              | 4 |
| PSY 280 | Human Behavioral Genetics                        | 4 |
| PSY 286 | Presentation of Psychological Materials          | 4 |
| PSY 289 | Psychology Colloquium                            | 4 |
| PSY 290 | Special Topics Course                            | 4 |
| PSY 294 | Individual Studies                               | 4 |
| PSY 296 | Research Topics in Psychology                    | 4 |
| PSY 297 | Research for Ph.D. Dissertation                  | 4 |
| PSY 298 | Directed Group Study                             | 4 |
| PSY 299 | Directed Individual Research Study in Psychology | 4 |

### c) Summary:

In total, 48 units are required before the Ph.D. degree can be awarded. Typically, 20 of these units will come from the five required courses and 28 will come from electives. Of the elective courses, up to two 4-unit courses (or any combination of such courses adding up to 8 units) may be selected from a discipline outside of Psychological Sciences; however, such courses must be approved by the Psychological Sciences faculty if they are to fulfill this requirement.

Students may, in collaboration with their Faculty Advisor, determine the pace of coursework that is appropriate. However, the core requirements must be met in the first two years of residence at UC Merced unless a required course is not offered during the first two years. At least ten 4-unit courses (or 40 units), including all core requirements, must be completed before advancing to candidacy.

In addition, Graduate Division requirements are that full-time graduate students must be enrolled in at least 12 units of upper division or graduate-level units per semester. Registration in PSY 286 through 299 may be used to fill this requirement in any given semester. Students are expected to attend at least the colloquium relevant to their area. Courses that fulfill any of the program course requirements may not be taken S/U. Per UC regulations, students cannot enroll in more than 12 units of graduate level courses per semester.

## Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

Courses taken toward a graduate degree at another institution cannot be transferred for credit toward a Ph.D. at UCM. However, a course requirement may be waived if a similar course was taken at another institution. The *General Petition form* should be used for all requests for waivers of course work. To obtain a waiver, the student should submit the *General Petition* along with a full description of the course, the syllabus, and a copy of the student's transcripts to the student's Faculty Advisor for approval. The Faculty Advisor then submits it to the Psychological Sciences graduate group faculty for their approval. In the case of a course proposed to meet a UC Merced course requirement, that specific request must also be approved by the UC Merced faculty member teaching the course requirement (e.g., when a statistics course from another university is proposed to fill a UC Merced statistics requirement, the request must be approved by the UC Merced faculty member who teaches the statistics requirement). The *General Petition*, memo, and the copies of transcripts (official copies are not necessary), and syllabi are then submitted to the Graduate Division for review and approval.

### 3. Special Requirements:

#### a) Pre-Candidacy Thesis:

Research skills in Psychological Sciences are best acquired through hands-on participation in empirical science. Thus, before advancing to candidacy, graduate students are expected to complete the Pre-Candidacy Thesis (PCT), which consists of an empirical research project<sup>3</sup> taken from the stage of conceptualization through to study design, data collection as required, analysis, and write-up.

The student need not be the originator of most of these steps, but must be an active participant in all of them. However, the write-up of the PCT must be sole authored by the student; other authors may be added to a later published version of the paper, as appropriate, and the order of authorship on such a subsequent paper may change if it is consistent with the guidelines of the American Psychological Association.

The project should be completed in the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year, as determined in collaboration with the Faculty Advisor. However, it must be completed and submitted for review prior to commencement of the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the program (i.e., by the end of the summer following the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of graduate study), and it must be completed before advancing to candidacy. Note that a Faculty Advisor may expect that a student is involved in more research than that leading to the completion of the PCT.

<sup>3</sup> Empirical projects include primary, secondary, or meta-analysis of data.

## **Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template**

The PCT will be conducted in close collaboration with the Faculty Advisor; students should ensure that the Advisor concurs with decisions made at all stages of the project. The final form of the project will be a written paper in the format of an empirical journal article. The written project must then be approved by the Faculty Advisor as well as a second reader from the Psychological Sciences faculty chosen jointly by the student and the Faculty Advisor, with the Chair of Psychological Sciences making the final decision if the student and faculty member do not agree. Upon submission of the final paper, the readers have at least 14 but no more than 28 days to evaluate the paper and make a recommendation as to whether the PCT requirement has been satisfied.

In the event that the PCT is judged inadequate by one or both readers, a written request for revisions will be provided to the student. Students will be expected to undertake the requested revisions and resubmit the paper to the two readers within 6 weeks. Failure of this second draft must be addressed in the student's next Semi-annual Review, which must then involve the student's entire Faculty Advisory Committee.

Students who have completed a Master's Thesis or similar project at another university may wish to have that project count as the UC Merced PCT. The student should prepare a memo describing the request, and attach a copy of the project to be transferred. The request must be approved by the student's Faculty Advisory Committee, who may consider both the quality and the appropriateness of the topical content to the student's UC Merced specialty area.

### **b) Teaching**

The Psychological Sciences Ph.D. program presents numerous opportunities for graduate students to gain teaching experience. To ensure that students acquire a range of relevant experiences, serving as a teaching assistant (TA) is a requirement for earning the PhD. Please see the Academic Appointment and Graduate Student Employment in the Graduate Policies and Procedures Handbook for definitions, responsibilities, and requirements related to the teaching assistantship as well as other teaching titles.

A student meets the teaching requirement by serving as a TA for no fewer than two semesters. This does not need to be through a funded teaching assistantship, but can be as a volunteer. Students who have advanced to candidacy may also satisfy two semesters of serving as a TA by teaching one full course of their own design (see below). It is expected that many students will, in fact, exceed these minimums and thus accrue even more teaching experience. A student may request a waiver of the TA requirement, partially or completely, by petitioning his/her Faculty Advisory Committee that they

## **Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template**

have completed an alternative equivalent teaching experience (e.g., TA at prior institution, community college instructor).

After advancing to candidacy (i.e., passing the Candidacy Exam), a student may serve as Teaching Associate (the Instructor of Record) for pay (in which case they may also be eligible for certain other benefits described in the Graduate Advisor's Handbook). Having advanced to candidacy does not guarantee an assignment as a Teaching Associate as this depends on the availability of courses to teach. Moreover, to be prepared to serve as a Teaching Associate and teach a full course in Psychological Sciences, the student must complete and pass the requirements for the Teaching Preparation option of the Candidacy Exam. This includes completing the standard series of teaching-related workshops offered by the Center for Research on Teaching Excellence and preparing an annotated course syllabus, as per the Candidacy Exam instructions.

Teaching a course requires a significant investment of time and effort, and yields corresponding gains in acquiring relevant skills. Therefore, teaching a full course can fulfill the equivalent of 2 semesters of TA activity; that is, a student who teaches a full course as a Teaching Associate fulfills the teaching requirement.

The Graduate Division has specific rules that affect when a graduate student may serve as a Teaching Associate (or a Teaching Fellow<sup>4</sup>). The graduate student will typically be a Teaching Associate or Fellow for a lower division course. However, on an exception basis<sup>5</sup>, a graduate student, upon recommendation from an academic unit, may be assigned an upper-division course or course section with the written approval of the Graduate Dean and the UCM Academic Senate's Undergraduate Council. Such approval must be obtained in writing prior to the student beginning their assignment and appointment. A graduate student will also typically be a Teaching Associate or Fellow for a summer course so as not to unduly interfere with their academic year studies. Again, however, exceptions may be granted. The total length of service rendered by a graduate student in any one or any combination of the Teaching Assistant or Teaching Fellow (Associate In) titles may not exceed six years (12 academic semesters), regardless of the actual appointment percentage (summer appointments are excluded from these limits). A 13<sup>th</sup> semester will not be approved.

### **c) Opportunities for Service Experiences:**

From time to time, faculty may request that graduate students assist in activities that facilitate the organizational functioning of the Graduate Group. Three key activities are assisting the instructor of PSY 289 Psychology

<sup>4</sup> The title Teaching Fellow has not yet been activated by Academic Personnel at UC Merced.

<sup>5</sup> See the UC Merced Graduate Division Graduate Advisor's Handbook for procedures for granting exceptions.

## **Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template**

Colloquium; organizing, maintaining and updating the Psychological Sciences website; and running the SONA Research Participant Pool.

Examples of additional activities include serving on search committees, serving as a representative in graduate student governance organizations, and participating in outreach activities. Such service activities are voluntary, not required. Students doing such activities should include them in their semi-annual evaluation reports.

In addition, graduate students are expected to make efforts to involve themselves in the wider intellectual community by attending regional and national professional conferences, and where possible presenting their own original research at these venues. Graduate students are also expected to present on at least a yearly basis in a departmental forum such as an area talk series; e.g. the Developmental, Health, or Quantitative seminar series.

Graduate students should also discuss with their Faculty Advisor the advisability of participating in service and scholarly activities associated with professional associations. Examples would be serving as a reviewer for submitted paper proposals, and serving on committees of those associations.

We encourage students to regularly discuss additional ways to be involved in the community with their Faculty Advisor. The above list is not meant to be exhaustive.

### **d) Other Requirements:**

Students who wish to use graduate work at another university (e.g., past teaching assistant duties) to receive credit for any other UC Merced requirement (e.g., UC Merced teaching assistant requirements) should prepare a memo describing the request. The request must be approved by the Major Advisor, and then by the Psychological Sciences graduate group faculty.

### **e) Procedures for Requesting a Waiver of a Formal Requirement :**

All requirements outlined in this document must be met by graduate students before the Doctoral Committee (DC) will pass the Dissertation and recommend the awarding of the Doctoral Degree. However, under some circumstances, the student may believe that circumstances have made a requirement included in this document unnecessarily burdensome. Under such circumstances, the student may request that requirement be waived or modified. Doing so requires drafting a request letter, which must provide specific reasons why the waiver or modification should be granted. The request should be discussed with and must then be approved by the Faculty Advisor. If approved by the Advisor, the request must be approved by the

## **Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template**

Psychological Sciences Graduate Group or designated graduate sub-committee. In the event that the change involves a candidacy or dissertation requirement, approval must also be granted by the relevant Candidacy or Doctoral Committee. There is no guarantee that requests will be granted.

If the Faculty Advisor does not approve a request for a waiver of a formal requirement, the student may appeal the request to the appropriate committee or to the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group. However, students would be well-advised to consult with other faculty prior to filing such an appeal to determine if an appeal has grounds and a likelihood of success.

### **4. Dissertation Plan:**

In accordance with University of California policy, a minimum of four semesters in academic residence is required prior to awarding the Ph.D. Typically, a longer period of study, four to six years, is required for completion of all degree requirements. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Group to inform the student upon admission to the program of the expected degree time. All graduate students are considered resident graduates not candidates for a degree, unless admitted to candidacy after completion of all candidacy requirements and approval by the Graduate Division after formal application. A student advances to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon successfully demonstrating a high level of scholarship at the Ph.D. level, and upon completing all preparatory work and demonstrating readiness to proceed to the dissertation phase.

In overview, the dissertation process starts with the establishment of the Doctoral Committee (DC), which is done when recording advancement to candidacy. The Doctoral Candidate then submits a dissertation proposal to the DC, and defends the proposal at an oral proposal defense meeting. This should usually be done within six months of advancing to candidacy. If the proposal is passed by the DC, the student undertakes and completes the proposed research. Having completed the research, the student must submit a final written copy of the Dissertation to the DC, and defend the Dissertation at a final oral defense meeting. At the conclusion of the oral defense, the DC votes on whether to approve the Dissertation. These stages are presented in more detail in Section 9.

### **5. Advising Structure and Mentoring:**

#### **a) Faculty Advisor and Advisory Committees**

All students admitted to the graduate program in Psychological Sciences must have an assigned Faculty Advisor and must maintain an advisor while enrolled in the program. It is expected the student will immediately upon entry begin engagement in graduate study under the guidance of that Faculty Advisor. At the same time, the student is encouraged as early as possible to explore research interests and a possible focus for research, beginning with the PCT and culminating with the Dissertation,



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not only with the Faculty Advisor but also with a range of faculty within, and possibly outside, Psychological Sciences.

The Faculty Advisor must be a member of the Psychological Sciences faculty and the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group. The student's selection is approved by the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group Chair. The student and the Faculty Advisor will interact intensely and together develop research projects that will lead to a focus to be pursued in the student's Doctoral Dissertation. The Faculty Advisor, in the role of a mentor, plans strategies that will support the development of required competencies and provides ongoing informal feedback regarding the student's progress. In addition, the Faculty Advisor conducts a formal evaluation of the student's progress in the program at least semi-annually. Therefore, each graduate student must have a recognized Faculty Advisor at all times who agrees to take on this important role. A match in terms of research interests with a Faculty Advisor is crucial for progress towards the degree. The Faculty Advisor will normally serve as Chair of all the student's committees, including the Faculty Advisory Committee, the Candidacy Committee, and the Doctoral Committee.

The UC Merced Mentoring Guidelines can be found at:

<http://senate.ucmerced.edu/sites/senate.ucmerced.edu/files/public/UCM%20Mentoring%20Guidelines-%20GC%20approved%209%2023%2014.pdf>

The faculty recognizes that under certain circumstances there may be valid reasons for a graduate student to want to change Faculty Advisor. Examples may include lack of funding, personality conflict, changes in research interests, and resignation of the Faculty Advisor from the faculty. If a student requests a change in Faculty Advisor, the faculty members in Psychological Sciences are expected to ensure a smooth transition that takes into account the needs of both the student and the faculty involved.

If assistantships or fellowships are connected to a specific faculty member, for example if a student is funded as a research assistant on the Advisor's grant, a change of advisor may result in a change in or loss of financial support. Likewise, a change in research direction that is likely to result from a change of Faculty Advisor may result in increased time required to complete the Ph.D. degree. Therefore, it is often useful for a student contemplating a change in Faculty Advisor to discuss this informally with one or more impartial faculty members, such as other faculty in Psychological Sciences or the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group Chair.

When a student decides a change in Faculty Advisor is in his/her best interest, he/she must obtain a clear commitment by the new Faculty Advisor to take on this responsibility. The student then needs to inform the former Faculty Advisor and the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group Chair of this change.

### **b) Evaluation of Student Progress**

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Student progress will be evaluated on a semiannual basis. To this end, the student prepares a cumulative Progress Report prior to the end of each semester. The Progress Report for the fall semester can be reviewed by the Faculty Advisor alone, although the Faculty Advisor or student may request that the review be conducted by the student's Faculty Advisory Committee. On or about April 15<sup>th</sup> of each Spring Semester, the Graduate Group faculty will meet to discuss the evaluation of graduate students. The Progress Report for the spring semester is then completed and must be reviewed by the student's Faculty Advisory Committee, which is chaired by the Faculty Advisor. Semi-annual Faculty Review continues until the student has completed an approved Doctoral Dissertation.

A meeting is convened with the student and faculty member(s) conducting the review prior to the end of the semester, in which feedback is provided to the student both orally and in writing. As part of each review, a determination must be made whether the student's progress on the whole is More Than Satisfactory, Satisfactory, Potentially Unsatisfactory, or Unsatisfactory. This determination is then clearly communicated in written form and signed (with either electronic or manual signatures) by the faculty member(s) who completed the review. The student also signs the evaluation indicating understanding of the evaluation and is given one copy. The original is placed in the student's file.

Satisfactory progress is determined on the basis of both the student's recent academic record and overall performance. Satisfactory Progress is more than simply avoiding displaying any of the specific behaviors listed below as indicative of Unsatisfactory Progress. It is a subjective judgment made by the Faculty Advisor and members of the Faculty Advisory Committee based on the quality, quantity, and timeliness of performance in research as well as the other activities described in the Graduate Program Policies and Procedures. The Faculty Advisor is expected to communicate his/her standards in these respects on a continual basis. These standards also provide the framework for the Semi-annual Reviews.

Unsatisfactory academic progress is in part determined on the basis of explicit requirements, including those outlined in the UC Merced Graduate Division's Graduate Advisor Handbook and reproduced here.

- An overall grade point average below 3.0; or
- A grade point average below 3.0 in two successive semesters; or
- Fewer than 8 units completed and applicable toward the advanced degree requirements in the last two semesters; or
- Failure to complete required courses or examinations satisfactorily within the period specified by the Graduate Group; or
- Failure to pass Candidacy or Dissertation Final Examination in two attempts; or
- Failure to progress academically within the Normal Time to Degree framework specified for the student's Graduate Group; or

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- The appropriate faculty committee's evaluation that there has not been satisfactory progress toward completion of the thesis or dissertation.

Note however, that the professional judgment of the faculty assigned the role to evaluate the student, upon review of all graduate work undertaken by that student, is paramount. Faculty may establish more restrictive criteria than the above minimum criteria.

A judgment of Unsatisfactory Progress can have significant negative consequences for a graduate student.

1. A student who has a GPA less than 3.0 in a single semester is at risk of being disqualified from getting an assistantship unless the employing unit wants them to continue to be employed; in that case, the Graduate Group Chair asks the Dean of the Graduate Division to make an exception.
2. A student who has a D or F in a single course is disqualified from getting an assistantship. A grade of B-in a single course is disqualifying unless the employing unit wants them to continue to be employed; in that case, the Graduate Group Chair asks the Dean of the Graduate Division to make an exception.
3. A graduate student who has not demonstrated satisfactory academic progress by any of the other criteria listed above is not eligible for any academic appointment or employment, such as a Teaching Assistantship, and may not receive fellowship support or other awards.

The Graduate Division delegates the monitoring of student performance regarding these rules to the Graduate Group and the Registrar.

It is important to give students an early warning of unsatisfactory progress. The Semiannual Review specified above is a minimum. In addition, Faculty Advisors are encouraged to be direct in communicating orally, and in writing as necessary, with students demonstrating difficulties as soon as possible and on a continual basis. For example, course instructors are encouraged to engage in this communication, and to inform the Faculty Advisor when a student is experiencing difficulties during a course, and not wait until the end.

It is useful for the Faculty Advisor to keep a written record of all such communications. When notices of unsatisfactory progress are provided in writing to the student, a copy should also be retained in the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group files and another copy sent to the Graduate Dean. The written communication should include specific details on areas that require improvement, provide an outline for future expectations of academic progress, and set meeting dates to maintain continuity in advisement. The purpose of the notice of unsatisfactory progress is to provide the student with a reasonable period of time (usually at least one academic semester) in which to make the necessary improvement in their academic status, and successfully complete their graduate study.

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In the case of a formal determination of Unsatisfactory Progress following a Semiannual Review, criteria must be specified in writing detailing what the student will need to achieve to be removed from this status and the timetable for doing so. This is included in the written feedback provided to the student as part of the formal review. Whenever a student has been deemed to make Unsatisfactory Progress, the student's whole Faculty Advisory Committee needs to review progress at the end of the time period equivalent to at least one semester and determine status at that time. The professional judgment of the Faculty Advisory Committee, upon review of all graduate work undertaken by that student, is paramount in determining whether the student can or cannot be removed from Unsatisfactory Progress status. While it is expected that the Faculty Advisor will communicate with the student when in this status to provide guidance and feedback on efforts to meet the specified criteria, it is ultimately the student's responsibility to achieve progress that can be deemed Satisfactory Progress.

### **6. Doctoral Degree Committees:**

#### **a) Faculty Advisory Committee**

Additional mentoring of a student is provided by a Faculty Advisory Committee, which is chaired by the Faculty Advisor. This Committee is established jointly by the Faculty Advisor and student, prior to the end of the spring semester of the first year in the program. The student and members of this Committee can meet as often as is desired to provide the appropriate mentoring and/or guidance. This Committee is also charged with formally evaluating the student's progress in the Graduate Group at least annually, following the completion of each spring semester.

The Faculty Advisory Committee must include at least 3 faculty members, at least 2 of whom must be faculty members in Psychological Sciences. Members of the Faculty Advisory Committee may be replaced by agreement among the student, Faculty Advisor, and the committee member being replaced, or if such consensus is not possible, by vote of the faculty in Psychological Sciences. The Faculty Advisory Committee may be replaced by the Candidacy Committee and later by the Doctoral Committee once they have been formed. Regardless, a student will have a committee of faculty providing mentoring and/or guidance and conducting formal evaluations throughout the completion of the Ph.D. degree.

#### **b) Candidacy Committee**

The Candidacy Committee (CC) is charged with determining the readiness of the student to proceed with the Doctoral Dissertation. The CC does so by ensuring the student has completed all other requirements and is ready to complete the Candidacy Examination. This CC then conducts and evaluates the student's Candidacy Examination. The CC must be composed of no fewer than three members of the UC Merced Psychological Sciences faculty. An additional outside

## **Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template**

member (e.g. of another UC Merced administrative unit or from another university) can serve as a CC member if approved by the other members of the committee and the Graduate School. The student should initially propose a CC to her/his Faculty Advisor; if supported by the advisor, the student should contact the desired members and invite them to join the CC. Students should be aware that faculty members may in some instances be unable or unwilling to serve on a CC. The members of each student's CC are approved by the Chair of the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group and the Dean of Graduate Studies prior to the start of its examination. The CC then becomes the student's Faculty Advisory Committee.

The membership of the student's CC is listed on the Graduate Division form Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy –Plan A. The CC may differ in membership from the original Faculty Advisory Committee to accommodate changes in the student's research interests and available faculty expertise. No special procedure need be followed to change membership other than filling out this form.

### **c) Doctoral Committee**

The Doctoral Committee (DC) is chaired by the student's Faculty Advisor. The DC then becomes the Faculty Advisory Committee for the student. The membership of the student's DC is listed on the Graduate Division form Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy –Plan A. The DC may differ in membership from the original Faculty Advisory Committee and from the Candidacy Committee to accommodate changes in the student's research interests and available faculty expertise. No special procedure need be followed to change membership other than filling out this form.

The DC must be composed of no fewer than three members of the UC Merced Psychological Sciences faculty. An additional outside member (e.g. of another UC Merced administrative unit or from another university) can serve as a DC member if approved by the other members of the committee and the Graduate School. The student should initially propose a DC to her/his Faculty Advisor; if supported by the advisor, the student should contact the desired members and invite them to join the DC. Students should be aware that faculty members may in some instances be unable or unwilling to serve on a DC. Once the DC has been agreed upon, the student must secure signatures of all members and submit Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy –Plan A<sup>6</sup> to the Psychological Sciences faculty and the Graduate School. Changes to the composition of the DC after its initial formation must be approved by the Faculty Advisor, the Psychological Sciences faculty as a whole, and the Graduate School.

### **7) Advancement to Candidacy:**

<sup>6</sup> The student should check with the Graduate Division to be sure the most current forms are used.

## **Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template**

All graduate students are considered resident graduates, not candidates for a degree, unless admitted to candidacy by the Graduate Division after formal application. A student advances to candidacy for the Ph.D. upon successfully demonstrating a high level of scholarship in full-time study (12 units minimum per semester including research hours, colloquia hours, and other courses approved by the Psychological Sciences faculty) at the Ph.D. level with a minimum grade point average of 3.0, upon completing all preparatory work, and upon demonstrating readiness to proceed to the dissertation phase. The latter is demonstrated by passing the Candidacy Exam. All aspects of the Candidacy Exam, including the oral component, are to be completed prior to beginning the 4<sup>th</sup> year of graduate study and in time for advancement to candidacy paperwork to be submitted to Graduate Division. This deadline is typically in the second week of July, but students should check with Graduate Division for the exact due date for each academic year. Exceptions must be approved by the FAC and the Graduate Group Chair. Failure to complete all aspects of the Candidacy Exam prior to the deadline must be addressed in the student's next Semi-annual Review (described below), which must then involve the student's entire Faculty Advisory Committee.

Graduate students are nominated for Advancement to Candidacy for the Ph.D. degree by the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group faculty. Students are admitted to candidacy if they pass with no more than one dissenting vote a Candidacy Examination administered by a Candidacy Committee and meet other requirements set forth in this document. Prior to convening a student's Candidacy Committee, the Faculty Advisor, the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group Chair, and the graduate student must sign the Statement on Conflict of Interest form that is included in the Graduate Division form Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy –Plan A.

### **8) Qualifying Examination Requirements:**

In Psychological Sciences, a portfolio of activities is completed by the student as his/her Candidacy Exam, as specified below. The list of activities represents the kinds of skills that a research psychologist must master as part of a successful career. A student's particular choice of activities should be made in consultation with his/her Faculty Advisor and CC. When all elements of the portfolio are completed, it is submitted to the CC. Completion and approval of these activities constitutes the written portion of the Candidacy Exam.

#### **a) The Candidacy Portfolio**

Students are required to demonstrate written and oral mastery of their field of specialization by completing one of the following (i-iii). Option selection must be made in consultation with the CC and approved by the CC.

i. *Interpretive or review article/chapter.* This paper is expected to be longer than a typical seminar paper, represent the student's field of specialization, and it should be of publishable quality. The paper should be 35 to 45 double-spaced pages in length. Students are encouraged to connect this paper to their planned dissertation. The article must be sole authored by the student when submitted to

## Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

the CC; other authors may be added to a later published version of the paper, as appropriate. Before writing the paper, the student must prepare and obtain approval for a proposal of approximately 5-8 double-spaced pages (not including references). This proposal should present the objectives of the paper, the rationale for why the paper is needed, and an outline of the sections planned for the paper, including a list of the most relevant references. The proposal is disseminated to the members of the CC, who then meet with the student as a committee to discuss the proposal. The proposal must be approved by the CC before the student commences writing the paper. The student is encouraged also to disseminate a close-to-final draft of the paper prior to the final oral exam to seek input before finalizing the paper to be submitted as part of the written Candidacy Exam. Providing this input, however, is at the discretion of members of the CC. The oral exam may result in the student being asked to complete additional work on the paper before it can be approved.

ii. *Methodological research paper.* This is an innovative contribution to the methodological literature either through illustration of sophisticated data analysis techniques or through creation and assessment of a new method. Ideally, this would be suitable for publication in a venue such as *Psychological Methods*. It is expected that students with a strong interest in quantitative psychology will satisfy the candidacy paper requirement in this way. In all other respects, the paper should be similar in scope and procedures to the interpretive or review article/chapter requirements (see part i).

iii. *Written exam.* The purpose of the candidacy exam is to ascertain the breadth of the student's comprehension of fundamental facts and principles that apply in the major field of study and to determine whether the student has the ability to think incisively and critically about the theoretical and practical aspects of the field of study. Students must prepare a brief (1-2 page) proposal that identifies the area of focus for their exam. Students are encouraged to connect this proposal to their planned dissertation. The proposal should be accompanied by a reading list that is prepared in consultation with the CC. The final proposal is disseminated to the members of the CC for approval. At this stage the student must also propose the date for the written and oral portions of the candidacy exam. For the written portion of the exam, students will receive a set of questions from their CC. Students will have two days to write and submit their responses to these questions. The format of the written and oral exam is at the discretion of the CC.

In addition, three of the following activities must be completed:

1. *Journal Article.* First- or second-authored published or in press journal article. This does not need to be critically reviewed by the CC, but may be discussed in the oral exam. Alternatively, it may be a first- or second-authored article submitted for publication to a peer-reviewed journal, which must be passed by the CC. If written in the format of an empirical journal article, a Master's thesis

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completed at another institution may fulfill this requirement, but must be passed by the CC. If a Pre-Candidacy Thesis (PCT) is subsequently published, that publication may meet this requirement even if it has already been used to meet the PCT requirement.

2. *Chapter*. First- or second-authored published or in press chapter. This does not need to be critically reviewed by the CC, but may be discussed in the oral exam. Alternatively, it may be a first- or second-authored chapter submitted for publication in a contracted edited volume, which must be passed by the CC. Chapters should be planned to be published by reputable academic publishing houses or university presses. If written in the format of a review chapter, a Master's thesis completed at another institution may fulfill this requirement, but must be passed by the CC. Encyclopedia entries do not fulfill this requirement.
3. *Conference Presentation*. First- or second-authored conference oral or poster presentation, which must be presented by the student at a national or regional conference that reviews proposals prior to acceptance. The abstract, conference announcement, and notification of acceptance must be provided to the CC. The abstract does not need to be critically reviewed by the CC, but may be discussed in the oral exam. An example of a regional conference is the Western Psychological Association; equivalent regional conferences must similarly cover a large region of the nation. Local conferences, such as a local research conference of graduate students attended by students from a few schools in a limited geographic area, do not meet this requirement. The faculty have final authority to decide what counts to meet this requirement.
4. *Journal Review*. An official review of a submission to a journal. This does not need to be critically reviewed by the CC, but may be discussed in the oral exam. Alternatively, a review of a submitted or already published standard-length empirical report, approved by the CC, which must then be passed by the CC.
5. *Grant Proposal*. This could be a grant for a new research project written with a faculty member, where the student is first or co-author, or it could be a grant to obtain support for the student's dissertation work or other research. The grant proposal must be at least similar in scope to a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship Proposal. In the case of a co-authored grant, the student must have contributed substantially to the writing of the grant, as detailed in a report by the faculty member, and be listed in a named role on the grant (Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator, Investigator, Consultant, Research Assistant). The student's Faculty Advisor determines the appropriateness of the granting agency, and the CC determines the acceptability of the role the student plays. If not already funded, the proposal must be passed by the CC.
6. *Teaching Preparation*. Two elements must be completed. (1) Complete the standard series of teaching-related workshops offered by the Center on Research



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on Teaching Excellence (see <https://crte.ucmerced.edu/ta-services/workshops>); and (2) Complete an annotated syllabus. The syllabus must: (a) report a plan for each day's class session in brief form, (b) a week by week paragraph-long summary of what is covered during the week and what kinds of activities will be done, (c) sample assignments and/or activities that are to be implemented, (d) all essential elements regarding student related policies, (e) measurable learning objectives and outcomes according to WASC standards, and (f) grading criteria. The syllabus must cover a 3-4 credit hour course at this university. The syllabus must be passed by the CC. Completing this option of the Candidacy Exam is required for students who want to serve as a Teaching Associate and teach a full course (serve as Instructor on Record) in Psychological Sciences after becoming a Doctoral Candidate.

### **b) Qualifying Examination**

The Graduate Division's Application for Qualifying Examination form must be submitted at least one month prior to the final oral exam. The timing of the oral exam depends on the option selected for part 1 of the candidacy portfolio:

1. *Review or methodological paper*: The CC has at least 14 but no more than 28 days to review the work, and then meets with the student for the oral portion of the examination.
2. *Written exam*: The oral exam will be at least 5 days but no more than 10 days after the completion of the written exam.

The CC will discuss the completed activities with the student during the oral exam. The student is expected to be able to answer questions on all aspects of the activities he/she has submitted, and should be prepared to provide a 5-minute oral summary of the paper or written exam and its major conclusions if requested at the start by the CC.

Following the completion of the oral exam, the CC makes a recommendation whether to pass the student on the Candidacy Exam:

1. *Review or methodological paper*: The CC may request minor revisions prior to a final decision without a second meeting if agreed to unanimously by all members of the CC. When all members of the CC agree that the revisions are satisfactory, the CC will sign the pertinent forms indicating the student has passed. However, if the CC decides that substantial revisions are required, the student will have 6 weeks to make and submit those revisions, and the CC will then have at least 14 but no more than 28 days to review the revisions. A second meeting must then be held, and the CC makes a recommendation whether to pass the student on the Candidacy Exam. A failure to pass this second oral exam must be addressed in the student's next Semi-annual Review Progress Report (see below), which must then involve the student's entire Faculty Advisory

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Committee. Any further examination must have the approval of the UC Merced Graduate Dean.

2. *Written exam*: The CC will make separate recommendations for the written and oral portions of the exam. If the *written* portion is deemed unsatisfactory, the student will have 7 days to revise the written responses and submit them to the CC. The CC will then have 7 days to determine whether the revisions are satisfactory. If the *oral* portion is deemed unsatisfactory, the student must schedule a second oral exam. This exam will be scheduled within 7 days of the original exam. If both portions are deemed unsatisfactory, the student will have 7 days to revise the written responses and the student must schedule a second oral exam within 7 days of submitting the revised written responses. Following a second oral exam, the CC will determine whether to pass the student on the Candidacy Exam. A failure to pass the second written or oral exam must be addressed in the student's next Semi-annual Review Progress Report (see below), which must then involve the student's entire Faculty Advisory Committee. Any further examination must have the approval of the UC Merced Graduate Dean.

When the Candidacy Exam is passed, both the written and oral portions, the student is recommended for Advancement to Candidacy as reported to the Graduate Division on the Candidacy for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy—Plan A. This form must be signed by all Candidacy Committee members. This form is submitted even if the student failed the examination. If the recommendation of the Candidacy Committee is favorable, the student must pay the Advancement to Candidacy Fee to the campus Cashier's Office, which will validate the Candidacy Form. The student must then submit the Candidacy Form to the Graduate Division (Attn: Enrolled Student Affairs Officer). The date the student submits the signed and validated Candidacy Form will be the official date of advancement. The candidate and Graduate Group will be notified of formal advancement and the appointment of a Doctoral Committee.

### 9) **Dissertation Requirements:**

The Doctoral Dissertation is the culmination of the Ph.D. program, in which the Doctoral Candidate demonstrates the capability to conduct research independently that makes an original contribution to knowledge of a quality that can be published in a reputable scientific journal. The planning and completion of the Dissertation is supervised by the Doctoral Committee Chair, who usually is the Candidate's Faculty Advisor.

#### a) **The Dissertation Proposal**

The Doctoral Committee (DC) approves the Dissertation Proposal (DP) and evaluates whether it has been completed in accordance with high scientific standards. The DP serves three primary functions. First, it reviews the relevant literature and in so doing defines the area of inquiry of the proposed Dissertation. Second, it provides a clear statement of actionable research questions that will be

## **Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template**

addressed in the Dissertation. Third, it outlines the methodological and analytic approach that will enable the proposed research to answer the research questions.

The DP should be approximately 20 double-spaced pages, not including references and appendices. It is advisable for a student to work with the Faculty Advisor until the student and the advisor deem the DP of sufficient quality to pass to the DC. Optionally, the student is well-advised to submit the DP to members of the DC informally for their feedback and revisions prior to finalizing the DP. DC members should make every effort to provide such feedback in a timely fashion, but should inform the student promptly if they will be unable to provide such informal feedback. When the finalized DP is submitted, the DC should have at least 7 but no more than 14 days in which to review the DP prior to the Proposal Defense Meeting.

The procedures for the Proposal Defense Meeting are as follows. The student must consult with the DC to schedule a proposal defense meeting, at which all members of the committee must be present in person (or via conference call under extenuating circumstances such as a DC member being on sabbatical or at a distant site). The student should schedule a minimum two-hour block of time for the meeting, though the meeting has no time limit. At the conclusion of the Proposal Defense Meeting, the student will be asked to leave and the DC will deliberate on whether to pass the proposal. The committee makes one of the following recommendations:

***Pass:*** The proposal is passed and the student may commence with the proposed research.

***Minor Revisions:*** The proposal is passed pending minor revisions, which must be approved by the Faculty Advisor and any committee member wishing to review such changes.

***Major Revisions:*** The proposal is not passed because major substantive or methodological issues need to be addressed. The student must revise the proposal in light of committee feedback and resubmit the proposal within three months. At that time, the student must reschedule the proposal defense and complete it satisfactorily before undertaking any dissertation research. Failure to complete it satisfactorily at a second defense must be addressed in the student's next Semi-Annual Review, which must then involve the student's entire Faculty Advisory Committee.

### **b) The Dissertation**

The format of the Dissertation manuscript should be approved by all members of the DC, subject to any requirements by the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group, the Graduate School, and the University Archives. The Candidate prepares the Dissertation under the supervision of the Faculty Advisor, who requests revisions until s/he judges the work is ready to be reviewed by DC members.

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The Candidate then circulates the Dissertation among DC members, who should provide crucial comments, possibly leading to another revision before the final submission and the scheduling of the Dissertation Defense; DC members should provide these comments in a timely fashion. The complete Dissertation must be provided to the DC members at least 14 days prior to the defense.

### **c) The Dissertation Defense**

The defense of the Dissertation is a capstone event in the student's graduate career. It consists of a 30-minute oral presentation of the Dissertation, followed by questions and answers. At the discretion of the Doctoral Committee (DC) this portion of the meeting can be open to the public or involve only the Candidate and the DC members. If the oral presentation is to be open to the public, then an announcement of the oral defense time and location will be made in appropriate forums such as an email list serve or a Psychological Sciences Section bulletin board. At the conclusion of the public portion of the defense, the Candidate and the DC will excuse the public in order to discuss the Dissertation with the Candidate in private.

At the conclusion of committee questions, the Candidate is excused and the DC deliberates and votes on whether to pass the Dissertation. The completed Doctoral Dissertation must be approved by the DC, who then recommends, by submission of Ph.D. Form II, the conferral of the Ph.D., subject to final submission of the approved Dissertation for deposit in the University Archives (see the UCM Thesis and Dissertation Manual). The DC recommendation must be unanimous.

The DC may request minor revisions prior to a final decision without a second meeting if agreed to unanimously by all members of the DC. When a majority of members of the DC agree that the revisions are satisfactory, all of the DC will sign the pertinent forms indicating the student has passed before it is submitted to Graduate Division for final approval. If the DC decides that substantial revisions are required, the student will have six weeks to make and submit those revisions, the DC will then have four weeks to review the revisions. A second meeting must then be held, and the DC makes a recommendation whether to pass the student. A failure to pass this second oral exam must be addressed in the student's next Semi-annual Review, which must then involve the student's entire Faculty Advisory Committee.

All dissertations submitted in fulfillment of requirements for advanced degrees at UCM must conform to certain University regulations and specifications with regard to format and method of preparation. The UCM Thesis and Dissertation Manual are available at the Graduate Division website. The Doctoral Committee certifies that the completed dissertation is satisfactory through the signatures of all Committee members on the signature page of the completed dissertation. The doctoral committee chair is responsible for the content and final presentation of the manuscript.

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Filing instructions are found in the UCM Thesis and Dissertation Manual. The advanced degree manuscript is expected to be submitted by the deadline in the semester in which the degree is to be conferred. The end of the semester is the deadline for submitting dissertations during each semester. Those students who complete requirements and submit dissertations after the end of the semester and prior to the start of the subsequent semester will earn a degree for the following semester, but will not be required to pay fees for that semester. In accordance with UC and UCM policy, all approved thesis/dissertation manuscripts automatically become available for public access and circulation as part of the UC Libraries collections.

### 10) Normative Time to Degree:

Normative Time is the elapsed time (calculated to the nearest semester) that students need to complete all requirements for the degree, assuming that they are engaged in full-time study and making adequate progress. There are two parts to Normative Time: Normative Time to Advancement to Candidacy and Normative Time in Candidacy. The first represents the number of semesters needed to complete all of course requirements and pass any required Qualifying Exams. This may be different for students entering with master's degrees versus those who pursue the Ph.D. directly after the bachelor's degree. The second represents the remaining semesters that are recommended for completion of the dissertation. In all instances, end of year is to be interpreted as the end of the summer (prior to the start of Fall Semester) of that year.

While time to completion of the degree will vary, a general expectation is that students will complete the Pre-Candidacy Thesis by the end of their 2nd year of study, and coursework and advancement to candidacy by the end of the 3rd year of study. The application for advancement to candidacy is due approximately 30 days prior to the exam. The Normative Time for Advancement to Candidacy is therefore 3 years. The Normative Time in Candidacy, during which time the Doctoral Dissertation is completed, is 1-2 years. The total time to completion of the Ph.D. is thus approximately 4-5 years. Longer time periods are not unusual depending on the nature of the research the student conducts. Under exceptional circumstances, a student may be allowed to exceed six years, subject to university regulations and the approval of the Psychological Sciences Graduate Group faculty.

### 11) Typical Timeline and Sequence of Events

The goals and needs of individual students vary considerably, and no single plan will accommodate all students. Therefore, the following program of study should be considered as a general guide only. In particular, the following example illustrates a 5-year program of study, which may not be appropriate for all students.

| Fall Semester              | Spring Semester    |
|----------------------------|--------------------|
| <i>1<sup>st</sup> Year</i> |                    |
| PSY200A Proseminar         | PSY200B Proseminar |

## Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template

|  |  |
|--|--|
| PSY202A Advanced Psychological Statistics  | PSY202B Advanced Psychological Statistics  |
| PSY204 Research Design and Methodology   | Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)                                   |
| <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Year</i>   |  |
| Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)                                   | Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)                                   |
| Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)                                   | Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)                                   |
| PSY295 Graduate Research (semi-independent research culminating in Pre-Candidacy Thesis) | PSY295 Graduate Research (semi-independent research culminating in Pre-Candidacy Thesis) |
| <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Year</i>   |  |
| Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)                                   | Elective graduate course (typically in specialty area)                                   |
| PSY295 Graduate Research (semi-independent research supervised by Faculty Advisor)       | PSY295 Graduate Research (semi-independent research supervised by Faculty Advisor)       |
| Begin candidacy portfolio  | Complete candidacy exam, including oral defense  |
| <i>4<sup>th</sup> year</i>   |  |
| PSY295 Graduate Research (semi-independent research supervised by Faculty Advisor)       | PSY295 Graduate Research (begin dissertation research)                                   |
| Complete dissertation proposal   | Elective graduate course   |
| <i>5<sup>th</sup> Year</i>   |  |
| PSY295 Graduate Research (dissertation research and writing)                             | PSY295 Graduate Research (complete and oral defense of dissertation)                     |

### 12) Sources of Funding:

Doctoral students are typically supported through two mechanisms: teaching assistantships (TAs) and graduate student research (GSR) positions. TAs are more common than GSR positions, which are generally funded through grants obtained by faculty advisors. TAs are for the 9-month academic year and include tuition, fees, and a monthly stipend (approximately \$2000 a month). Graduate students cannot be funded through TAs for more than 12 semesters. GSRs are appointed on a semester basis and also include tuition, fees, and a monthly stipend (approximately \$2000, depending on experience).

Summer support is not guaranteed, but we have provided summer fellowships for most of our graduate students since at 2012. Moreover, some graduate students are supported in the summer by GSR positions, with stipends averaging \$2000 a month. After advancement to candidacy, graduate students are eligible to teach their own summer course for approximately \$5000 for a 6-week session (approximately \$5300 for an 8-week session).

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Following advancement to candidacy, doctoral students who are not California residents will have their Nonresident Tuition reduced by 100 percent for a maximum of three consecutive calendar years. Any such student who continues to be enrolled or who re-enrolls after receiving the reduced fee for three years will be charged the full Nonresident Tuition that is in effect at that time.

Graduate students are also strongly encouraged to seek out grant funding to support their research. There are typically two types of graduate student funding: external and internal grants. External funding are grants and fellowships from agencies (e.g., non-profit groups, National Institutes of Health [NIH], and the National Science Foundation [NSF]). Internal grants and fellowships are awards that are given only to students at UC Merced or the UC system. The UC Merced Graduate Division web site maintains a list of many of these opportunities. Moreover, Research Development Services (a division of the Office of Research) holds workshops and consulting services for grant writing and development. Students are encouraged to visit their website for consultation and resources.

### **13) Leaving the Program Prior to Completion of the PhD Requirements:**

A student admitted for the Ph.D. degree who, in the judgment of the Graduate Group should not continue based on continued unsatisfactory progress, must be notified in writing by the Graduate Group Chair. A copy of the letter must be sent to the Vice Provost and Dean of Graduate Education. In some cases, a doctoral student who has completed the requirements for a master's degree may choose to leave the program with a master's degree. It is the responsibility of the Graduate Group unit to notify the Graduate Division via the Change of Degree form so that the student's record may be updated to reflect the student's degree status. This notice must include the student's written permission to have his/her degree objective changed officially from doctorate to master's.

## **D. General Information**

### **1) PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee status.**

Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave Program), In Absentia (reduced fees when researching out of state), and Filing Fee status can be found in the Graduate Group Policies and Procedures Handbook available on Graduate Division.

## Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

### E. Forms

#### 1) Faculty Advisory Committee Appointment Form

Student Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisor (print): \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Advisory Committee Members: The Faculty Advisory Committee must include at least 3 faculty members, at least 2 of whom must be faculty members in Psychological Sciences, including the Faculty Advisor. Obtain the signatures of the members below indicating their agreement to serve.

---

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Optional

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Optional

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Student and Faculty Advisor must sign indicating their agreement to the faculty advisory committee described above.

Faculty Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template

## 2) Progress Towards the Degree Checklist

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Semester Started: \_\_\_\_\_

| Date Completed | Milestone (when indicated, circle Satisfactory <i>or</i> Unsatisfactory Progress)  |
|----------------|--|
| _____          | Faculty Advisor Assigned (Name: _____)   |
| _____          | Progress Report (Fall of 1 <sup>st</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Faculty Advisory Committee assigned  |
| _____          | Progress Report (Spring of 1 <sup>st</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Progress Report (Fall of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Progress Report (Spring of 2 <sup>nd</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Pre-Candidacy Paper Completed  |
| _____          | Progress Report (Fall of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Candidacy Project Proposal Completed   |
| _____          | Progress Report (Spring of 3 <sup>rd</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | UCM APPLICATION FOR QUALIFYING EXAMINATION form must be completed one month before final candidacy exam and sent to Graduate Division.                       |
| _____          | Candidacy Exam Passed. Complete second page of UCM APPLICATION FOR QUALIFYING EXAMINATION and return to Graduate Division.                                   |
| _____          | Requirements for Advancement to Candidacy Completed. Complete UCM CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY – PLAN A and submit to Graduate Division. |
| _____          | Required Courses Completed (see specification below)   |
| _____          | Teaching Requirements Completed (see specification below)  |
| _____          | Progress Report (Fall of 4 <sup>th</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Progress Report (Spring of 4 <sup>th</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Dissertation Proposal Completed  |
| _____          | Progress Report (Fall of 5 <sup>th</sup> Year). Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Progress Report (Spring of 5 <sup>th</sup> Year): Progress: Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory  |
| _____          | Dissertation Defense Completed   |

## Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

### 3) Required Courses Form

Twelve (12) courses are required for the doctorate, two of which may be outside Psychological Sciences. All courses to count towards the degree must be passed with a grade of A+., A. A-. B+, or B. If a student receives a grade less than B-in one of the five required core courses, the course must be repeated and passed with a grade of A=. A. A-. B+, or B. Additional courses need not be recorded.

| <b>Semester</b> | <b>Year</b> | <b>Grade</b> | <b>Course prefix, number and name</b>                    |
|-----------------|-------------|--------------|--|
| _____           | _____       | _____        | PSY200A Proseminar for 1 <sup>st</sup> Year PhD Students |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | PSY200B Proseminar for 1 <sup>st</sup> Year PhD Students |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | PSY202A Advanced Psychological Statistics I              |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | PSY202B Advanced Psychological Statistics II             |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | PSY204 Research Design and Methodology                   |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | _____  |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | _____  |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | _____  |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | _____  |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | _____  |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | _____  |
| _____           | _____       | _____        | _____  |

## Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

### 4) Teaching Requirement Form

Graduate students must serve as teaching assistants for two semester-length classes. This does not need to be for pay, but can be as a volunteer assistant. Prior teaching experience may substitute for one or both of these (see relevant section in GSH).

**Semester      Year      Course**

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      *First Course:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      *Second Course:* \_\_\_\_\_

Teaching a course (as instructor on record) can substitute for the above requirements. Enter information below and write “see below” for semester and year for the requirements above

**Semester      Year      Course prefix, number and name**

\_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_      \_\_\_\_\_

**Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template**

**5) Graduate Student Progress Report**

**Name:**

**Last Semester/Year Completed in Program:**

**Semester/Year Entered Graduate Program at UCM:**

**Major Professor:**

**Faculty Committee:**

| <b>Major Steps in Program</b> (as appropriate) | <b>Planned for</b> (Sem./Yr.) | <b>Completed in</b><br>(Sem./Yr.) |
|--|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Pre-Candidacy Project                          |                               |                                   |
| Qualifying Exam/Admission to Candidacy         |                               |                                   |
| Dissertation proposal defense                  |                               |                                   |
| Dissertation defense                           |                               |                                   |

**Research Activities since Last Progress Report:**

**Conference Presentations since Start of Graduate Studies** (list presentations in APA format with no additional description; **bold** those added since last Progress Report):

**Publications since Start of Graduate Studies** (list in APA format with no additional description; **bold** those added since last Progress Report):

**Research Plans for Next 12 Months** (present in brief bullet format, limit to space provided):

## Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template

| <b>Content Courses Completed (bold those added since last Progress Report)</b> | <b>Semester/Year</b> | <b>Grade</b> |
|--|----------------------|--------------|
|  |                      |              |
|  |                      |              |
|  |                      |              |
|  |                      |              |
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**Any additional information regarding completed courses and grades** (limit to space provided):

**Courses to Complete in Next 12 Months** (course prefix, number and title):

**Teaching/TA Activities Completed** (brief bullet format; **bold** any added since last Progress Report):

**Teaching Plans for Next 12 Months** (brief bullet format, limit to space provided):

*Inserting my name below indicates this is a true representation of my work:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Graduate Council- Policies and Procedures Template**

**6) Faculty Evaluation Report**

**Student:**

**Semester/Year:**

| <b>Progress in</b>        | <b>Poor</b>                    | <b>Good</b>                                | <b>Excellent</b>             |  |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| Research                  |                                |  |                              |  |
| Coursework                |                                |  |                              |  |
| Teaching                  |                                |  |                              |  |
| <b>Overall Evaluation</b> | <b>Unsatisfactory Progress</b> | <b>Potentially Unsatisfactory Progress</b> | <b>Satisfactory Progress</b> | <b>More than Satisfactory Progress</b> |
| <i>Overall</i>            |                                |  |                              |  |

| <b>In the cases of <i>Poor Progress, Potential Unsatisfactory Progress, and Unsatisfactory Progress</i>, the following needs to be addressed</b> | <b>By Date</b> |
|--|----------------|
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**Additional Information for Student:**

|  | <b>Signatures</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|--|-------------------|-------------|
| <i>Student</i><br>(indicating understanding) |                   |             |
| <i>Faculty Advisor</i><br>(every semester)   |                   |             |
| <i>Faculty Committee Member</i><br>(yearly)  |                   |             |
| <i>Faculty Committee Member</i><br>(yearly)  |                   |             |
| <i>Faculty Committee Member</i><br>(yearly)  |                   |             |

## Graduate Council- *Policies and Procedures* Template

### 7) **Dissertation Proposal Defense Report**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The student named above completed the defense of the dissertation proposal on the date of \_\_\_\_\_ . The dissertation committee (named below) has agreed on the following recommendation:

\_\_\_ PASS

\_\_\_ PASS WITH MINOR REVISIONS (detailed in attached memo)

\_\_\_ MAJOR REVISIONS REQUIRED (detailed in attached memo)

|                         | <b>Signatures</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|-------------------------|-------------------|-------------|
| <i>Faculty Advisor</i>  |                   |             |
| <i>Committee Member</i> |                   |             |
| <i>Committee Member</i> |                   |             |
| <i>Committee Member</i> |                   |             |
| <i>Committee Member</i> |                   |             |