

# **M.S. Experimental Psychology**

## **Student Handbook**

**Department of Psychology**

**Idaho State University**

Prepared by  
The Psychology Department  
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## **Preface**

The MS in Experimental Psychology Student Handbook has been prepared by the Department of Psychology for students enrolled in the master's training program in experimental psychology. The Handbook is designed to sensitize the student to the wide range of policies and procedures that constitute the program. The Handbook is subject to review and revision. All graduate students, regardless of date of matriculation, are asked to review the basic parameters of the program as described in the Handbook. We require that students document their review of the Handbook with a signature on the "Handbook Distribution Forms". Consult with your advisor or the Director of Experimental Training (DET) if you find any aspect of the Handbook unclear. Changes in the Handbook that are necessitated by changes in conditions, departmental policy, or for purposes of clarification, apply to all students. The Office of Graduate Studies invokes a similar policy regarding the Graduate Catalog. Essentially, neither the Handbook, nor the Graduate Catalog should be considered a binding contract between Idaho State University and the student. If a hardship is created for a specific class of students by future Handbook alterations, the Psychology Department and/or the Experimental Training Committee will always consider rendering an exception in policy or procedure to accommodate transition problems.

This Handbook supplements, but does not supersede, any other existing policies and procedures of Idaho State University. In particular, all students should be familiar with the current Graduate Catalog, the "Instructions for Preparing Theses, Dissertations, DA Papers, and Professional Projects" (printed Graduate School), and the Psychology Department Graduate Studies Manual. Current copies of each of these documents are available from the Department Secretary or the Graduate School.

Students should meet regularly with their advisors and the DET to review progress and to determine the need to file forms, meet deadlines, etc. Although faculty will do everything possible to alert students to requirements, one should not assume that advisors or the DET will provide reminders in a timely manner to perform every task. Use this Handbook and all other resources as a guide to the seemingly countless forms and rigors of graduate student life.

### **I. Mission, Goals, and Philosophy of the Experimental Training Program**

The Master of Science program in general/experimental psychology provides students with an education in core areas of psychological science, including personality/social psychology, learning, perception/cognition, developmental psychology, and sensory/physiological psychology. The MS program is designed for students with a variety of career goals. Whereas many of our students pursue doctoral degrees in psychology, others pursue careers in related fields. For students who intend to continue their graduate study, the program's accomplishments are threefold. First, students who complete the MS program establish a foundation for further study in psychology, in both basic and applied areas. The wide variety of courses offered in the program provides students with a strong background, useful for understanding specialized areas of psychology, as well as for teaching related courses. Second, for those students who are undecided about which area of psychology they would like to pursue, the program provides an opportunity to become familiar with a variety of areas of psychology, thus, enabling students to focus their interests. Finally, the program provides students with an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to perform at a graduate level, enhancing their opportunities for entrance into a doctoral program. Previous students have continued their education in doctoral programs in various areas (e.g., experimental psychology, clinical psychology, neuroscience, human factors).

The program also is designed for those who are interested in pursuing careers in applied areas of psychology and in related fields that require mastery of the principles and methods of general/experimental psychology. Some of our former students are working in management, government, human factors, human resources, health related fields, and research positions. At the Masters level, students have specialized in areas that include cognition, social, learning, personality, developmental, and physiological and comparative psychology. Although each of these areas is not considered a separate degree program, our mentor model does allow for individualized courses of study. Students are encouraged to select a mentor/advisor working in the student's area of interest during their first semester of study. Although the student is also encouraged to work with other faculty, the advisor serves to guide the student's course selections and thesis.

The department of psychology has established various goals that reflect the mission of the MS in Experimental Psychology program. These goals, and related competencies for the student, are listed below.

1. Graduate students will gain an understanding of core areas in psychology.
2. Graduate psychology students will be able to integrate knowledge and theories across, and think critically about, topics within the domains of psychology.
3. Graduate students completing the degree requirements in psychology will be competent in library information technology and computer applications related to the study of psychology.
4. Students receiving a master's degree in psychology will be competent in scientific methodology and analysis as they apply to the study of psychology.
5. Students who complete the degree requirements for a master's degree in psychology will communicate effectively, in both oral and written form, about issues within the field of psychology.
6. Students who complete the degree requirements for a masters degree in psychology will have an understanding of the breadth of the field of psychology and its applications.
7. Students completing the master's degree in psychology will be active participants in the research process.
8. Students in the M.S. program will understand and comply with the APA code of ethics pertaining to research conduct.

## **II. History of the Experimental Program**

The MS program in General Experimental has a long history at Idaho State University. The program was initiated in 1968. In 1983, a clinical emphasis was added as an option for students. The clinical emphasis was eliminated when the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program was introduced in 1995. Since the addition of the clinical doctoral program, the experimental degree requirements have remained unchanged. Currently, all students must complete training in the core areas of psychology and experimental design, as well as 12 elective credits and a thesis. The required coursework for the MS program is intended to provide students with a general knowledge of the field of experimental psychology, and the necessary academic background to propose and complete a thesis. Since the introduction of the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program, enrollment in the MS program has decreased. Approximately 4-6 students are enrolled in the two-year Experimental MS program.

In the last five years the Experimental MS program has seen three major changes. First, several of the core courses had been offered at the 400/500 level, meaning that undergraduate and graduate students were enrolled in the same course. With the introduction of the Clinical Psychology Ph.D. program, the need to offer core courses exclusively at the graduate level became apparent. Several courses, including Psyc 642 (Cognitive Psychology) and Psyc 644 (Advanced Development), are now offered at the graduate level, allowing for more in depth

coverage of the topic area. In addition, the faculty recently added to its offerings a graduate level History and Systems course (Psyc 672). Second, to help MS students adjust to graduate school, we now require students to attend an orientation session at the beginning of each academic year. In this orientation session, we discuss course requirements, research requirements, graduate student responsibilities, etc. These meetings have been viewed positively by students, and we believe they help students anticipate faculty expectations. Third, students have a greater variety of research opportunities. There are six experimental psychologists with different areas of expertise, and some students choose to work with one of our six clinical psychologists.

In the future, the faculty will examine the feasibility of a doctoral program in experimental psychology. The current M.S. program offers us a good foundation on which to build. The changes needed to institute such a program are likely to be minimal in terms of course offerings and reasonable in terms of costs. Offering doctoral training in experimental psychology would likely increase our enrollments. Over the years it has become increasingly more difficult for our MS program to compete with Ph.D. programs in experimental psychology.

### III. Advising

During the first semester of training at ISU, all incoming graduate students are assigned to the DET for all issues pertaining to academic advising. Students should not register for classes before meeting with the DET. First year registration decisions are few in number, but important in terms of Area Requirement completion (discussed below). **All entering students are required to designate an academic advisor (who also directs the student's research) by October 1 for Fall enrollment, and by March 1 for Spring enrollment.** An orientation to each faculty member's current research program and interests will be provided by the department prior to the October 1 deadline. Students are encouraged to meet with potential thesis/dissertation advisors to discuss mutual interests during September. The DET retains the right to review student requests for thesis/dissertation supervisors. Individual faculty retain the right to approve or deny student requests for advising or directing research. Students and/or faculty may request a change in research directors at any time; refer to the Graduate Catalog for more detail regarding changing major advisors.

The demands of training require careful attention to course requirements, course sequences, time-limits, and so on. It is the goal of the Experimental Training Program (ETP) that every admitted student be given every opportunity to finish the on-campus component of the masters program in two years. The student's major advisor and the DET are charged to help the student accomplish that goal. Students should meet with their advisors regularly and often. Advisors are provided copies of student evaluations and professional activities by the DET to facilitate mentoring. **All students are also required to consult with the DET prior to class registration for each upcoming semester to ensure adherence with temporal guidelines of the program.** All students are expected to enroll for a minimum of 9, and no more than 12, credits each semester or the equivalent. Credits may be in the form of courses or research (thesis or special problems) See the Basic Curriculum Sequence at the end of this Handbook. All departures from the "full load" principle must be reviewed and approved by the Experimental Training Committee (ETC). The ETC must grant explicit approval for any part-time arrangements. Failure to maintain adequate progress toward completion of the masters degree is considered a serious deficiency by the ETC. Students not maintaining adequate progress may be placed on academic probation or even dismissed from the program by a vote of the departmental graduate faculty.

The many temporal guidelines defined in this Handbook are but one criterion by which adequate progress is defined. Students in good standing with the ETC make every possible effort to adhere to the recommended temporal guidelines. Conditions, however, may prevent a well-intended student from meeting the recommended time frame for completing specific tasks. It is

incumbent upon the student to inform the ETC in writing of the conditions creating significant deviations from the recommended temporal guidelines.

#### IV. The Master of Science Degree Requirements

*Scope and Objectives.* The MS program in general/experimental psychology aims to provide students with an education in the core areas of psychological science. The MS program is designed for those who are interested in pursuing careers in applied areas of psychology and for those needing to establish a foundation for doctoral study in psychology.

*Applicant Qualifications.* MS degree program applicants are admitted in either spring or fall. Applicants are required to have a BA/BS in psychology or the equivalent and an undergraduate GPA at or above 3.0 for the last two years. Applicants must submit both GRE Aptitude and Advanced Subject test scores to be considered for admission. GRE's of 50<sup>th</sup> percentile or higher on two of the three aptitude tests (i.e., verbal, quantitative, analytical), in addition to the GRE Advanced Subject Test in Psychology are preferred. Occasionally, students with majors in other areas are admitted, but only when their undergraduate degrees provide them with a strong background in experimental design and analysis. Applicants should have had at least a course in basic statistics and courses in at least three of the following areas: experimental design, cognition, physiological, learning, developmental, sensation and perception, and tests and measurement. Other undergraduate courses preferred for admission are in the natural sciences, mathematics, and statistics.

*Curriculum.* The current curriculum is designed to be a two-year course of study. A strong undergraduate psychology major is expected of most applicants. Should a student lack a strong background in measurement, statistics, research design, or other areas judged relevant by the faculty, he or she may be required to complete the undergraduate requirements for such courses prior to obtaining classified graduate student status. Such students might take more than four semesters to complete the program.

The MS degree requires 36 credits of coursework and a thesis. The required course work for the MS program is intended to provide students with a general knowledge of the field of experimental psychology, and the necessary academic background to propose and complete a thesis. Elective course work permits the student to specialize in an area of psychology. All students must complete 12 credits of electives and the following required courses:

1. Psyc 627 - Advanced Statistics
2. Psyc 632 - Advanced Experimental Design I
3. Psyc 650 - Thesis (6 credits)
4. Area requirements including one course from each of the 4 areas:
  - a) Biological Bases (Sensation & Perception, Physiological Psychology I, Physiological Psychology II)
  - b) Cognitive-Affective Bases (Cognitive Psychology)
  - c) Social (Advanced Social Psychology)
  - d) Individual Behavior (Advanced Developmental Psychology, Personality and Individual Differences)

The MS thesis consists of original research, representing the integration of methodology and an area of specialization selected by the student. Students generally select an area of interest

based upon consideration of future career plans. The student should select a faculty advisor for the thesis based upon his or her expertise in the student's specialty area. Thus, students are encouraged to carefully consider the specialties of the faculty prior to applying to the program. Interested students also are invited to contact individual faculty members regarding their research interests.

### **Area Requirements**

Completing the Area Requirements poses several important problems for the student and his/her academic advisor to solve. The Department requires that each student, in conjunction with the Chair and a second faculty member (the DET in the case of experimental students), file an Area Requirement Plan of Completion during the first month following matriculation. A copy of the Area Requirement Plan of Completion form can be found in the Appendix. Essentially, the departmental administrators, representing the faculty, review the student's undergraduate and graduate transcripts. Successfully completed (i.e., As & Bs) upper division undergraduate courses and, if available, graduate courses, will be considered in evaluating alternative strategies for completing Area Requirements. For example, a student who had successfully completed an undergraduate course in physiological psychology would be advised to use PSYC 532 (Physiological Psychology II) to fulfill Area A. Students may be asked to retrieve undergraduate course syllabi or textbooks to ensure the department (and themselves) of adequate preparation in each area.

### **The Master's Thesis**

The master's thesis is a second year research project. The thesis represents an integration of methodological skills and subject matter knowledge previously acquired. Generally, students select a research area based on interest, faculty expertise and support. The student also selects, by October 1 of the first year, a full-time member of the Psychology Department faculty to direct the thesis. The faculty thesis director should be selected based on her/his expertise in the thesis topic and ability to assist the student's implementation of the project (i.e., space, equipment, access to research participants, etc.). A second member of the Psychology Department faculty is selected to join the thesis committee by the student and the thesis director; at least one faculty member must be a member of the experimental faculty. The thesis director need not be a member of the ETC. The final member of the thesis committee is a Graduate Faculty Representative appointed by the Graduate School. The thesis committee must be officially convened by the Graduate School prior to the prospectus meeting (discussed below). In order to create the committee, the Graduate School must receive a final Program of Study ("Candidacy Form") for the MS degree.

Several steps have been formalized to promote the successful and timely completion of the thesis. During the fall semester of the first year, an informal arrangement exists between the student and her/his thesis advisor. Once an advisor has been selected, students are encouraged to learn about projects currently in progress and to join the advisor's research team. Possible roles include reviewing prior research documents, research protocols, and published studies. It is also possible that first-year students collect data, analyze data, and otherwise assist the faculty member or other graduate students engaged in research under the supervision of the thesis advisor. During the spring semester of the first year, students are required to enroll in one credit of thesis (PSYC 650) unless prevented from taking a 13th credit by Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) rules. GTAs begin taking thesis credits as soon as possible. Thesis credits formally commit the student to four hours per week of research activity. Once a student enrolls in thesis credits, they must continue enrolling in at least one thesis credit (even over the summer). The

actual research tasks are to be determined via discussion between the student and the thesis director. Generally, first year students devote part of their four-hour commitment to the scholarly preparation of a prospectus and part to assisting the thesis advisor's research team. In addition, the department organizes an annual Research Forum each spring to promote research, as well as the Data Blitz in the fall, to orient applicants to current projects. All graduate students, including first-year students, are required to present their current research efforts at the Research Forum and Experimental students are strongly encouraged to present data (if they have it) at the Data Blitz. Presentation formats range from poster sessions of prospective projects and studies in progress to colloquium-style reports of completed thesis, dissertation, or faculty-sponsored research.

Students submit a prospectus to their thesis committee, usually during the fall semester of the second year. The prospectus represents the culmination of a literature review and methodological decisions made by the student in consultation with the thesis director. The final prospectus should not be circulated to other committee members until it has been approved by the thesis director. The prospectus consists of three sections: 1) an introduction, justifying the research question and methodology, based on a thorough literature review; 2) hypotheses, reasonably inferred from the introduction; and 3) a method section, describing in operational terms the procedures, measurements, and analyses to be employed. Although original empirical research is usually proposed, a relatively broad latitude of research goals will be entertained by a thesis committee. These goals could include systematic replications of important projects, methodological studies, initial investigations of a new measurement instrument, a re-analysis of archival data/information, etc. The prospectus meeting is both educational and evaluative. Committees often provide advice and recommendations that lead to important improvements in the eventual research. Generally, the committee will approve the proposal, contingent upon specific recommended changes derived during the prospectus meeting. It is possible, however, for a thesis committee to request major changes and, consequently, require the student to reconvene the committee prior to approving implementation. In addition, the committee evaluates the student's general abilities to conceptualize the proposed research. It is possible for a committee to determine that a student's conceptualization/communication skills are insufficient to proceed. The committee will then defer consideration of the proposal until such time as the student's thesis advisor recommends convening a second meeting. Consensus of the entire committee must be obtained prior to initiation of the thesis project. Further, all research with human subjects must be approved by the ISU Human Subjects Committee; all animal research must be approved by ISU's Animal Welfare Committee. A student cannot "fail" a prospectus. Inadequate preparation, however, can extend the process.

Upon completion of the project, the student, in consultation with the thesis director, prepares the thesis for final defense before the committee. The document needs to conform to standards established by the Graduate School. Students should obtain the Graduate School's publication, "Instructions for Preparing Theses, Dissertations, DA Papers, and Professional Project". Generally, the basic text of the thesis includes four sections: the introduction, method, results, and discussion. The final form of the document, however, is left to the discretion of the thesis director, with the approval of the thesis committee. The final manuscript may take various forms, including a comprehensive scholarly document or a manuscript ready for submission to a journal. The thesis should be distributed to committee members only after the thesis director has approved the document. The Graduate School must be notified of the meeting date, time, and location. The thesis director must sign and submit the "Oral Defense Notification Form" to the Graduate School. The committee members must be allowed a minimum of two weeks to review the document prior to the meeting. The oral defense of the thesis includes a presentation of the project, focusing on the findings and implications. The adequacy of the oral defense is evaluated by the three committee members, each of whom will decide if the thesis is satisfactory or

unsatisfactory. A majority vote in support of the student's thesis is required for approval. Generally, committee members make specific recommendations for altering the final manuscript. Upon approval, the student assumes full responsibility for completing required alterations and for conforming to all Graduate School requirements, deadlines, fees, and so on, to ensure completion of the MS degree. It is possible to fail an oral defense. If this happens, the oral exam must be repeated in the subsequent academic semester. A second failure of an oral defense may be considered grounds for academic dismissal from the program.

It is expected that students will work with their thesis director to submit successful research for publication in scientific journals. Authorship credit for submitted thesis/dissertation research must adhere to Ethical Standard #8.12 of the APA Code of Ethics. Specific written agreements may need to be established between the research director and student regarding mutual responsibilities and individual rights to the products of completed research, subject to approval of the Department of Psychology and ISU Chief Research Officer and in compliance with current legal standards.

### **Grading**

Students are expected to earn As or Bs in all graduate courses. A grade of C or less is considered inadequate in any graduate course for the MS degree. A student earning a C or less in any graduate course will be automatically placed on academic probation by the Psychology Department and required to retake the course at the earliest possible time. Failure to earn an A or B upon retaking the course may be considered grounds for program dismissal. Multiple C grades in graduate courses, despite subsequent remediation, may also be construed by the departmental faculty as evidence of unsatisfactory progress toward degree completion and may result in termination from the program.

### **Transfer Credit**

The Graduate School defines specific policies regarding transfer of academic credit from other graduate programs. Only nine credits may be transferred toward the completion of the MS degree at ISU.

## **V. Professional Training**

### **Departmental Colloquium Series**

The Psychology Department, the ETC, and Psi Chi schedule presentations by professionals and students throughout the year. Colloquia are open to all members of the academic community. Colloquia are coordinated with other activities so that most students and faculty can usually attend (e.g., 4:00 – 5:00 PM). Professional presentations are solicited to enhance and broaden the range of knowledge and information available to students and faculty. Presentations are also solicited to increase student awareness of diversity issues. Academic presentations also are provided by faculty, guest speakers, applicants for open academic positions, and by students presenting their dissertation colloquium. The Experimental program conducts Brown Bags 2-4 times a semester, and all experimental students are expected to attend and participate. Experimental students are invited and encouraged to participate in the Clinical program's Brown Bag series whenever speakers are relevant to the student's interests.

## VI. Standard of Conduct

Graduate school is a very difficult and demanding period of life. It is not surprising that personal problems arise from time to time. Seeking assistance when needed would reflect positively on a student. There are many appropriate departmental and community options. We do share a collective responsibility to take action if a fellow student or faculty member's personal problems appear to be harmful. The appropriate first step would be to bring the concern to the attention of the impaired colleague. If that is not corrective, it is appropriate to bring the matter to the attention of a faculty member. If there is sufficient evidence supporting a student's impairment due to an emotional, neuropsychological, or substance abuse condition, the ETC may recommend a leave of absence until the impairment is remediated; continued impairment despite reasonable remediation efforts may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

The University reminds you that any website, blog, email, email signature, or answering machine message is literally an announcement to the general public. Part of that general public is any employer, externship, or legal authority, any of whom may conduct an online search to learn more about you. Be aware that any ill-considered, unprofessional posting may reflect badly on you and on our program. Indeed, a number of negative episodes have occurred in training programs and at universities where graduate students have been negatively affected by material they posted on websites, emails, and answering machines.

Obviously, the ETC has no authority or desire to restrict your freedom of speech. If you identify yourself as a graduate student in our program, however, we have an interest in how you portray yourself. In an extreme case that you might describe unethical or illegal behavior online, that information could be used to determine continued eligibility for training in psychology at ISU. Recall that you are expected to adhere to the APA Ethical Code of Conduct, which includes obeying the law. In the risk avoidance spirit in which this warning is intended, the program advises each student and faculty member to approach very carefully any online announcements. Always keep this question in mind: "Have I have posted anything that I would not want the program faculty, employers, family, or clients to read or view?" Always remain concerned about professional demeanor and your personal presentation. If you have any questions regarding "safe" web practices, do not hesitate to contact the ETC.

Finally, all students are explicitly reminded of the ethical issues surrounding plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Ethical Standard #8.11 indicates that psychologists do not "present substantial portions or elements of another's work or data as their own, even if the other work or data source is cited occasionally." Essentially, in all written material, students must be sure to reference all sources of information and all quoted material as indicated by the APA Publication Manual. Students take every reasonable step to minimize the risk that a reader might mistakenly conclude that someone else's work or ideas are the student's. Please note the section on "Academic Dishonesty" in the Graduate Catalog and the range of quite severe consequences for violations, including program dismissal.

In addition to unethical conduct, dismissal from the program, under the Graduate School's policy, can occur if 1) a student fails to meet the continuation standards of the department (including conditions stated on the Approval of Admissions form) or 2) if it is the academic judgment of a two-thirds formal vote of the graduate faculty in the department that the student is not making satisfactory progress in the program. Students may seek further information on this process by examining dismissal procedures detailed in the Graduate Catalog.

## VII. Financial Support

It is the goal of the Psychology Department to offer some level of financial support to every graduate student. Graduate Teaching Assistantships (GTAs), Graduate Research Assistantships

(GRAs), and internships at Idaho National Laboratory (INL) are currently committed to experimental students. Service Learning Positions (SLPs) may also be available some years. Each position requires approximately 20 hours of work per week during the academic year; service positions require 15 hours per week during the academic year and up to 20 hours during the summer months. GTAs perform many duties, often for more than one faculty instructor. Duties include, but are not limited to, grading exams, giving presentations, holding office hours, directing review sessions, proctoring tests, preparing and grading lab assignments and problem sets, and compiling class data. GRAs are funded through research grants and involve working directly on research by a particular faculty member who received the grant. Currently, Graduate Teaching Assistants at the MS level earns \$8267 plus tuition and health insurance during the fall and spring semesters of one academic year. Service Learning positions, usually in direct care, earn from \$7 to \$9 per hour, and include a non-resident tuition waiver (NRTW). Assistantships and SLP performances are formally evaluated semi-annually by the relevant supervisor(s). These evaluations are incorporated into the ETC's semester review of each student.

All financial awards are announced on or before April 1 of each year. Current graduate students are automatically considered for funding. Current students do need to submit preferences for funding when requested to do so by the ETC, usually before March 1. If a graduate student is also an Idaho resident, the student should apply for a Kasiska grant by the required deadline (usually in March). Teaching and Research Assistantship recipients are ineligible to receive Kasiska grants.

It is very important to note that funding for one year does not guarantee a stipend during subsequent years. It is possible that a previously stipended student will not be offered financial assistance by the department, or may be assigned to a less preferred funding source. Funding is on an annual basis only and is competitive. Performance variables considered for funding include, but are not limited to, course work, assistantship/service learning/INL externship ratings, participation in professional activities sponsored by the program, and adherence with the temporal guidelines of the program. Students who are not in good standing with the ETC (e.g., not making satisfactory progress or on academic probation) are a lower funding priority than students in good standing. The ETC may admit unfunded students. In general, students do not receive more than two years of departmental funding.

Assignments by the department to an Assistantship, Service Learning Position, or INL Externship are not open to negotiation by students who request funding from the department. The ETC has worked diligently to secure and contract reasonable educational, assistantships, externships, and service learning positions. The ETC has encumbered the responsibility to fill each and every contracted position with a graduate student. The ETC will do everything possible to match students with preferred positions.

## **VIII. Summer Session**

Summer session brings limited offerings to graduate students maintaining residence. Many students maintain active academic pursuits during the summer for a variety of reasons. Second year students often remain to collect thesis data (see last paragraph of this section). Some remain in summer session as a result of contractual responsibilities with a community agency.

It is possible to schedule various committee meetings during the summer (e.g., thesis defense). The student is advised, however, to check with committee members well in advance of the summer session to ensure attendance at a June or July meeting. Contact the Graduate School to ensure timely completion of oral exams that ensure an August graduation date. Early August is a particularly poor time to attempt to schedule a committee meeting of any kind.

The Graduate School requires thesis credits to be continuously taken until the thesis is defended. This policy includes continuity across summer. In other words, if a student enrolls in

thesis credit, but does not defend that semester, s/he must also enroll in thesis credit during the summer.

## **IX. Work Policy**

It is recommended that funded students refrain from seeking or accepting additional employment during the academic year. The “9-12 credit” semester plus a 15 hour per week assistantship/externship is a full life! It is wiser to acquire a loan, if necessary, than assume any additional burdens. The ETC, of course, cannot dictate to anyone what he/she does beyond the structure of the program. The ETC requires, however, that any student who chooses professional employment outside the program inform the ETC and sign the Employment Acknowledgement and Disclaimer Form. If a student employed outside the program is not making adequate progress toward completion of the degree (e.g., missing recommended deadlines), the ETC can place the student on probation. Sustained inadequate progress may be considered grounds for dismissal from the program.

Students in any community placements or employment contexts must adhere to all ethical and legal requirements regarding public representation of their credentials. See the APA Ethical Standard #5.01, Avoidance of False or Deceptive Statements, and the Idaho Code #54-2302/2303 regarding the legal use of the title, psychologist, and exemptions for students. Generally, students in a supervised setting that is a component of their program of study (e.g., SLPs) refer to themselves as “Psychology Trainees”. In contrast, if a student chooses to engage in professional employment or professional activities that are not a component of her/his program of study, the student must use the job title designated by the employer (e.g., “Psychosocial Rehabilitation Worker”). Only a licensed psychologist can use the title, “psychologist”. The title is protected by law. Further, in professional activities not sanctioned by the program, students must be very careful not to represent themselves as ISU graduate students engaged in a program of study.

## **X. Graduate Student Association**

All matriculated graduate students are automatically members of the Psychology Graduate Student Association (PGSA). The PGSA has as an important formal function, namely, to appoint student representatives to various departmental committees. If elected by the PGSA, student members of departmental committees have full voting rights on all programmatic issues. Currently, the association is asked to elect one graduate students from the experimental training program to serve on the Experimental Training Committee; two graduate students, one from each degree program, are elected to participate in Psychology Department meetings; three graduate students from either degree program are elected to serve on the Grievance Committee. Further, the Departmental Chairperson or the ETC may ask the PGSA to appoint a student representative(s) to various ad-hoc committees.

The Psychology Graduate Student Association is not limited to nominating committee participants. It may pursue any other aspect of student affairs it so chooses. The association is encouraged to meet at least monthly. The Department Secretary provides space and clerical assistance upon request.

## **XI. The Grievance Process**

Any number of disputes and honest disagreements can arise during the course of graduate training. Students are strongly encouraged to seek informal solutions as the best, first step to resolving conflicts. Consultation with one’s academic advisor, the DET, the Department

Chairperson, other faculty, the secretarial staff, or other students will often lead to a better understanding of the conflict and successful adaptations.

If an informal resolution of the problem is not successful, students are asked to submit written complaints to the appropriate administrator. If the complaint involves an Experimental Training Committee decision, submit the complaint to the DET; if it involves a another faculty member, submit it to the Department Chairperson; inform the ISU Office of Affirmative Action if a problem of sexual harassment or discriminatory practices occurs. If a student is reluctant to file a complaint within the Psychology Department, the student can submit a written complaint to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences or the Dean of the Graduate School.

Formal written complaints should include: 1) identification of the individual or organizational entity of concern; 2) the date or time-frame of the alleged incident; 3) the specific allegation and rationale justifying the complaint; 4) evidence in support of the allegation and/or justification of the complaint; and 5) perceived actions that would constitute a fair redress of the grievance. If a complaint is submitted to a departmental administrator, she/he will respond in writing within five working days of receiving the written complaint. Students may be asked to meet with the administrator to clarify the complaint or provide further information. Students are welcome to bring a member of the Psychology Graduate Student Association with them to such meetings to provide information and support. Formal complaints and the written administrative response will be maintained on file in the Psychology Department.

If a complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of a student at the departmental administrative level, two general courses of action are available. First, if the complaint involves an appeal of a course grade or program dismissal, specific steps and time frames outlined in the Graduate Catalog must be followed. The student is referred to the section entitled "Appeals of Grade or Dismissal." A series of actions then ensue providing due process for both the student and the individual/organizational entity against whom the complaint was lodged. These steps may eventually involve the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences or the Graduate Council.

The student should direct all other appeals to the Departmental Grievance Committee. Three general classes of complaints will be reviewed by the Grievance Committee:

1. Allegations of ethical violations
2. Disagreements with a departmental or ETC decision
3. Probationary Status

For more specific details regarding the function and process of the Grievance Committee, see the Psychology Department Graduate Studies Manual.

## **XII. Americans with Disabilities Act**

Idaho State University has issued a statement of compliance with the Americans With Disabilities Act. See the policy statement in the Graduate Catalog and associated service information. Students who need auxiliary aids or other accommodations are asked to contact the ADA and Disabilities Resource Center on campus. The Psychology Department will cooperate and accommodate to requests made by the ADA and Disabilities Resource Center.

## **XIII. Annual Student Evaluation**

At the end of each academic year, students are required to complete the Annual Experimental Graduate Student Progress Report (see Appendix for form) and meet individually with his or her advisor and at least one additional ETC member to review progress and to identify goals. The ETC will meet to review all evaluative materials on every matriculated experimental student. Materials include items such as course grades, progress on component tasks (e.g., thesis),

conference presentations, publications, ongoing non-thesis related research, and evaluations in GTA, GRA, or service learning positions. Specific written summaries of progress (including success in achieving academic milestones and meeting and exceeding departmental expectations), deficiencies, and recommendations are provided to each student by the ETC, and also discussed in the individual meeting with the student. If progress in the program is considered inadequate by the ETC, specific recommendations will be offered to the student.

#### **XIV. Basic Curriculum Sequence**

<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Fall</b> Advanced Statistics MS Core Elective/Research	<b>Spring</b> Experimental Design I MS Core Elective/Research Thesis (1)
<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Fall</b> Thesis MS Core Elective/Research  <u>Additional Year 2 Goals</u>	<b>Spring</b> Thesis MS Core Elective/Research  Finalize and Defend Thesis

All courses are 3-credits unless stated otherwise in parentheses. Students are strongly advised to maintain the schedule of courses as presented above. Significant deviations in recommended course sequence require approval of the academic advisor and the ECT. The student and his/her advisor should be fully cognizant of the many tradeoffs in costs and benefits when qualitatively altering the Basic Curriculum Sequence.

## Appendix Area Requirement Plan of Completion

### Experimental Student Tracking Form

#### Program, Years 1 and 2

#### M.S. Core

#### Year 1

1. History & Systems
2. Biological
3. Cognitive
4. Social
5. Personality
6. Developmental

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#### Year 2

##### Methodological

1. Statistics (627)
2. Design (632)
3. Cognitive
4. Social
5. Personality
6. Developmental

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##### Professional

1. Prospectus
2. Ethics (512)
3. GFR
4. Defense

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Initial MS Program of Study filed with Psychology Department  
Final MS Program filed with Graduate School (Prior to thesis  
prospectus)

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#### **Thesis**

#### **Title:**

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**Idaho State University Department of Psychology  
Annual Experimental Graduate Student Progress Report**

Part I. of this form is to be completed by the student, before the Annual Experimental Graduate Student Progress Report meeting (typically held during the Spring semester). Include only information for the current academic year.

Part II. of this form is to be completed by the Faculty Supervisor, at the conclusion of the meeting. This form should be initialed by the student and all faculty members present at the meeting and then given to the departmental secretary. This form provides documentation of the meeting.

**I.**

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- a. Academic Year:
- b. Student Name:
- c. Faculty Supervisor:
- d. Provide an accurate description of your research activities during the current academic year. Briefly describe all research projects you have been involved with this year, your level of involvement, and progress you have made (e.g., have you been working on data collection, analyses, manuscript preparation?).
- e. Specifically address any progress you have made on your thesis.
- f. List all poster and oral presentations.
- g. List all manuscripts (submitted, in press, or published).
- h. List all grant proposals (in preparation, submitted, or funded).
- i. List all honors, awards, and other academic activities.
- j. List all classes taken during the current academic year and grades, if known.
- k. Proposed goals for next year, with justification.

**II.**

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- g. Outcome of the meeting and goals for next semester