Handbook for Ph.D. Students in the Behavior Analysis Specialization

USU Department of Psychology

2023-2024

Department of Psychology
Eccles-Jones Education Building Room 487
Utah State University
2810 Old Main Hill
Logan, UT 84322-2810

Psychology Department Head: Scott Bates

Specialization Coordinator: Gregory J. Madden
Phone: (435) 881-8477
E-mail: greg.madden@usu.edu

Table of Contents

Introduction

This handbook provides information for students enrolled in the Behavior Analysis specialization in the Ph.D. program in the Department of Psychology at Utah State University. The handbook conveys program expectations and summarizes information from several sources, including:

the General Catalog (http://catalog.usu.edu/),
the Department of Psychology (http://psychology.usu.edu/), and
the School of Graduate Studies (http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/).

Please consult original sources as necessary to clarify or supplement the information here. The Department of Psychology continually reviews and, as appropriate, refines its programs and operations. Therefore, the requirements, policies, and regulations outlined in this handbook may change at any time. Change may take place before a new handbook is issued, and students must adhere to these changes. Although the Department attempts to notify students through posting of information about important changes, it is the student's obligation to ascertain current rules, regulations, financial aid opportunities, deadlines and procedures, program requirements, and the like.

Behavior Analysis Specialization Overview

Students successfully completing the program will acquire in-depth knowledge and technical skills in Behavior Analysis and psychological science more generally. The program is designed to produce experts in research; that is, someone who is capable of contributing to the knowledge base in the field.

The program is a full-time graduate program. **Students entering with a baccalaureate degree** are expected to complete the Ph.D. within **5 years. Students entering with a Master's degree** are expected to complete the Ph.D. within **4 years.** Failure to make appropriate progress toward completing the program within these timelines can result in dismissal from the program.

The sections below outline several *program requirements* that students must complete before earning their Ph.D. degree. In addition to coursework, students are required to engage in research and to produce finished products illustrating their understanding and ability to apply key concepts and skills. Timelines for completing these program requirements may be found below.

In addition, prior to receipt of the Ph.D., students must complete three *professional milestones:* 1) presenting your research at a professional meeting, 2) writing and submitting a grant, and 3) publishing a paper. To accomplish these professional milestones requires involvement in research above-and-beyond the program requirements (i.e., the Master's thesis, dissertation research, etc.). Student progress in completing the program requirements and professional milestones is evaluated annually.

Program Requirements

Students entering with a baccalaureate degree will first form a Graduate Supervisory Committee who will approve the student's program of study and evaluate their Master's thesis proposal and defense. These students will complete 70 hours (no more and no less) en route to the Ph.D. Students entering with a Master's degree will complete 51 hours and are required to complete a "thesis equivalent" only if their Master's thesis was not accepted by three members of the Behavior Analysis faculty.[1] All students will complete the remaining program requirements: 1) formation of a doctoral Graduate Supervisory Committee (GSC), 2) pass the comprehensive exam, 3) successfully propose the dissertation, 4) conduct the dissertation research, 5) write the dissertation document to the satisfaction of the doctoral GSC chair, 6) submit the Application to Candidacy form, and 7) defend the dissertation. In addition, students will complete the three Professional Milestones described below.

---

[1] Should a student's advisory committee decide that it is in the student's best interest to earn a second Master's degree and complete 70 hours of coursework, the student will be required to do so. All 70 hours will be covered by tuition waivers.

Program of Study Approved by Graduate Supervisory Committee

The student should work with their advisor to complete the *Program of Study for the Master's Degree* form. By the end of the second semester, the form must be completed and approved by your three-member Graduate Supervisory Committee (GSC). The Department's Graduate Program Coordinator (Krista Terrell) can help you with these tasks. At least two members of the GSC (thesis committee) must be Behavior Analysis faculty and the third must be an outside-specialization member (may be within the Psychology department). Changes to the program of study must be approved by the student, advisor, and department head.

Students entering with an approved Master's thesis may skip this and the next section. Their first task is to form the doctoral Graduate Supervisory Committee.

Master's Thesis

Students entering with a baccalaureate degree must complete a Master's thesis by the end of their 3rd year. *Failure to do so may result in dismissal from the program.* Students entering with a Master's degree but whose thesis was not accepted by the BA faculty will have to complete a new "thesis equivalent". Students completing a thesis equivalent are not required to enroll in thesis coursework, nor are they required to complete paperwork for their thesis with the College (this paperwork is italicized below).

Thesis projects are developed in collaboration with the student's advisor starting early in the first semester. Here is a step-by-step guide to completing the Master's thesis:

1. In (or before) the fall semester of Year 2, the student will convene a meeting of their thesis committee. Students must submit an electronic copy of their proposal document to the thesis committee **two weeks before** the proposal meeting**.**
   a. The written project proposal will include a review of the relevant literature and will propose a novel research question. The proposal will consist of an Introduction, Methods, and Expected Results/Interpretation sections (no more than 20 pages double-spaced, not including references).
2. At the proposal meeting, the student will present a summary of their research proposal and answer committee questions. Substantive feedback provided on the research design or data analysis should be given full consideration and, where appropriate, incorporated into the methods going forward (a revised proposal document is not required).
3. After a successful proposal-defense, complete the *Thesis Project Approval* form; again, see the Graduate Program Coordinator.
4. The student will then complete the project under the supervision of the advisor. The student will enroll in 6 credit hours (no more, no less; spread out over multiple semesters) of thesis credit (PSY 6970). If needed, the student may enroll in 10 credit hours in a semester, to accommodate thesis credits needed.
5. Schedule a thesis-defense meeting.
   a. The publication-quality thesis document must be submitted to the thesis committee at least two weeks prior to the defense.
   b. At least two weeks before the thesis defense meeting, you must complete an *Appointment for Examination* form (see the Graduate Program Coordinator).
   c. Students are expected, to the extent possible, to schedule meetings with faculty committees (e.g., proposals, defenses) during the fall/spring semesters (when classes are in session). Faculty may not be available outside of the regular academic year.
6. By the end of the fall semester of Year 3, the student will defend their thesis. At the defense meeting, the student will present the results of the project and answer committee questions. Substantive feedback will be used to revise the paper. The revision process will continue until the student's advisor is satisfied with the final product.
7. After a successful thesis defense, see the Graduate Program Coordinator to complete additional forms and to ensure that the formatting of your thesis meets university requirements (https://gradschool.usu.edu/dissertation-thesis-format-style/). The Master's degree is awarded after the student has completed 30 hours of coursework (including 6 hours of thesis credit), has

defended and submitted the thesis in its final (approved) form, and has completed all necessary forms.

Regarding the scheduling of thesis proposal (and defense) meetings, students are expected, to the extent possible, to schedule their proposal and defense meetings during the 9-month academic year. Faculty may be unavailable outside of that time interval.

Formation of the Doctoral Graduate Supervisory Committee

By the time the student has defended their Master's thesis, they should have formed the 5-member doctoral graduate supervisory committee (GSC). At least one, but no more than two members of the GSC may come from outside the Department of Psychology. The GSC chairperson, in most cases the student's advisor, must be from the Psychology Department. A faculty member outside the department may act as co-chairperson. Only one member of the GSC can hold the "adjunct" title.

Because the GSC usually serves as the student's dissertation committee, students are urged to ensure the members have complementary strengths (e.g., knowledge of the relevant literature, research design and data analysis skills). The GSC is responsible for guiding the student in completing appropriate course work and the dissertation. The GSC will define coursework requirements for each student to meet individual needs.

Students are admitted to the program to work with a specific chairperson. GSC members will be agreed upon jointly by student and advisor. The **student is responsible for inviting potential committee members to serve**. In the event a student has difficulty forming a committee, the program or department chairperson may be consulted.

Once the committee has been chosen, the student must complete and submit to the department a committee form. Forms are available at: http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/

Comprehensive Exam

All students are required to pass a comprehensive exam prior to advancement to doctoral candidacy. Students entering with a baccalaureate must **pass** the comprehensive exam prior to the beginning of the 4th academic year in the program. Students entering with a Master's degree must pass the comprehensive exam prior to the beginning of their 3rd academic year in the program. Comprehensive exams must be submitted no later than 30 days prior to these deadlines so that faculty members will have adequate time to grade the submission before the deadline expires. Students failing the comprehensive exam or failing to pass the exam by the deadlines outlined above will not advance to doctoral candidacy and may be dismissed from the program.

Comprehensive Exam Details. The exam must be completed in 2 weeks without the aid of others (e.g., student's advisor, prior instructors, peers). The exam consists of a 14-page (excluding tables, figures, and references), double-spaced, APA-formatted research proposal paper. The proposal should review the relevant area of research, identify a significant gap in knowledge in that area, and propose a novel, interesting, well-justified, and methodologically sound experiment to fill that gap.

The proposal submitted as the comprehensive exam must include the following sections: Introduction, Methods, Expected Results, and Discussion. The Methods section must be detailed enough to allow the committee to evaluate the adequacy of the design and methods. The Discussion should integrate the anticipated outcomes with the theory (or other rationale) that was developed in the Introduction. The Discussion should also note any anticipated pitfalls and how they could be addressed in the project.

The exam is graded by three Behavior Analysis faculty members. Students will receive one of the following grades:
1) Pass
2) Conditional Pass
   - Appropriate revisions submitted within 1 week may earn a Pass.
   - The revised proposal should include a 1-page response to the previous reviews that details how concerns in the previous version were addressed.
3) Fail with Retake

- Students who receive a grade of Fail with Retake on their first comprehensive exam may request a retake. The student will be given a new set of topics for the retake.
- Only one retake will be permitted.
- Second comprehensive exam must be completed within 6 months of receiving the Fail with Retake decision, or an interval of time specified by the comprehensive committee.
- Should the student not meet this deadline, the grade will be changed to Fail and the student will be dismissed from the program.

4) Fail
- Student will be dismissed from the program

Dissertation Proposal

Early in the student's program, informal preparation (e.g., selection of an area of research interest) should begin on the dissertation proposal. This is done by meeting with the doctoral GSC chairperson (the student's advisor) to define a research problem and develop the proposal.

Preliminary research should begin as soon as feasible and drafts of sections should be submitted periodically to the major professor for critiquing. Primary responsibility for development of the dissertation rests with the student and the major professor, but individual committee members should be consulted on sections which involve their special expertise. When the chairperson believes that the dissertation proposal is in defensible condition, approval is given to schedule the defense with the GSC. The proposal document is **limited to 30 double-spaced pages** (not including references) and must be given to BSC members 2 weeks prior to the proposal meeting.

The Proposal Meeting. The student will schedule a proposal meeting with the full GSC. During the meeting, the committee will make final input regarding requirements for the research. The student is responsible for obtaining the statistical and research expertise necessary to carry out the research and is expected to cover all costs of the research where projects are not specifically funded. When the proposal is accepted, and the Proposal Cover Sheet signed by the GSC, a copy is then placed in the student's file.

Regarding the scheduling of dissertation proposal (and defense) meetings, students are expected, to the extent possible, to schedule their proposal and defense meetings during the 9-month academic year. Faculty may be unavailable outside of that time interval.

Prior to Conducting the Research. If human subjects are involved in the study, approval by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB) for Human Participants must be obtained **in advance of collecting data**. This is accomplished by either submitting an amendment to an IRB approved protocol, or by submitting a new protocol: https://usu.kuali.co/protocols/portal/protocols. So as to avoid having to submit amendments or an entirely new protocol, students are advised to have their committee approve their proposal prior to submitting the research to the IRB for review. The student's GSC chairperson must be listed as the principal investigator on the IRB application and must sign all application forms.

If research animals are involved in the study, approval by the University's Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) must be obtained **in advance of collecting data**. If the proposed research is not entirely covered by the advisor's existing protocol, then the student must submit either a new protocol or a protocol amendment: https://usu.kuali.co/protocols/portal/protocols. So as to avoid having to submit amendments or an entirely new protocol, students are advised to have their committee approve their proposal prior to submitting the research to the IACUC for review. The student's GSC chairperson must be listed as the principal investigator on the application and must sign all application forms.

Conducting the Dissertation Research

As in the writing of the proposal, the actual research is conducted under the primary supervision of the chairperson, with input along the way from other members of the GSC as needed. Each step of the research should be checked by the student and the chairperson. The research should conform to the requirements of the proposal, to sound methodological practice, and to the desires of the committee. The Graduate School offers a USU Publication Guide for Graduate Studies to aid in the writing of the dissertation that is located on the forms page: http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/.

Preparing the dissertation document. The chairperson will supervise the student in writing and rewriting the final product until it is ready to present to the full committee. Other committee members may be asked for help or input as appropriate but should not be asked to review the product until it has first been approved by the chairperson. The student, not the chairperson or the committee, is responsible for writing the final product. Therefore, the student should expect to continue making revisions until the product is adequate and should not expect the chairperson to do the rewriting.

Application to Candidacy Form Submitted
The *Application to Candidacy* form must be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies **at least three months prior** to the scheduled dissertation defense date. The form can be obtained on-line at http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/. This form may **not** be submitted until all of the Program Requirements have been completed:

- Master's thesis (if applicable)
- Program of study approved by GSC
- Completed the majority of the coursework requirements
- Successfully passed the comprehensive examination
- Successfully defended the dissertation proposal

Dissertation Defense
When the chairperson is satisfied that the manuscript is in excellent condition, the student arranges a meeting of the GSC where the completed research is presented and defended. The appointment for examination form (available online at http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/ is signed by the entire committee and must to submitted to the graduate school **at least 10 working days before the defense.** Each committee member must receive a copy of the dissertation at least four weeks before the scheduled defense. Committee members who believe that the dissertation is not ready for defense will notify the student and the major professor prior to the oral examination. The student and major professor may postpone the defense in order to make revisions to the dissertation.

The oral examination is a defense of a final document. Minor changes may be made following the defense. If major changes are needed, another defense will be scheduled for the new document. The defense should not be used as an opportunity to discuss the research and propose changes to the dissertation project. Following the final defense, the final copy of the dissertation is prepared embodying changes approved by the committee members. It is then signed by the committee members.

After signatures are obtained from the entire committee, the final paper must have formatting approval by a departmental reviewer, after which it is submitted electronically to the Graduate School Office. Many students elect to personally pay a formatter. If students do not do this, they are responsible for all proofreading and formatting.

Professional Milestones

Prior to the final defense of the dissertation, student must complete the 3 professional milestones described below. Completion is verified by the advisor and/or dissertation committee and documented on the yearly evaluation.

1) External Professional Presentation
All students must serve as the presenting author of a presentation (an oral presentation given to an audience, not a poster) at an appropriate external professional venue.

2) Peer-Reviewed Paper Published
All students are expected to make substantial author-level contributions to at least one peer-reviewed published article based on work conducted at USU prior to the dissertation defense. Most students in the program serve as an author on multiple such articles and generally serve as the lead author on at least one publication.

3) Grant Proposal Submitted

All students must complete and submit a grant proposal appropriate to their area or research. Decisions about the target and scope of the proposal must be made in collaboration with the major professor and/or dissertation committee.

The BACB Handbook

If you plan to earn the BCBA credential while at USU, then it is important that you are strictly following the rules and regulations for obtaining that credential. Those rules and regulations are available in the BACB Handbook: https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/BCBAHandbook_201119.pdf It is ultimately the student's responsibility to adhere to the rules and regulations in the BACB Handbook. Advisors are fallible – the BACB Handbook is not. Follow the Handbook.

Timeline

To assist in planning, checklists are available from the Graduate School: http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/forms/

<u>Year 1</u>

During the first academic year, students will focus on the acquisition of skills by integrating into an ongoing research project. They will also complete coursework, attend seminar, and begin the literature review that will support the Master's thesis project.

Skill acquisition. Your advisor will outline the skills he/she expects you to acquire in the first year. This may include the handling of laboratory animals, mastering a programming language, and/or helping another graduate student complete an ongoing research project. Mastering these skills is critical to your long-term success in the program.

Coursework. Graduate students typically enroll in 7 credit hours per semester. This will most often include two content courses (6 hours) and seminar (1 hour). A listing of courses available in the Psychology and Special Education departments may be found below. Graduate students are expected to earn A's in all of their courses. A grade of C is considered unacceptable. Students who earn more than one C grade may be dismissed from the program.

Form the Graduate Supervisory Committee (GSC). Work with your advisor to select the members of your GSC. Guidance on this is provided in the *Program Requirements* section above.

Seek GSC approval of your Program of Study. Work with your advisor to map out the remaining courses you will take. Course requirements and electives appear below. When this is completed, ask all members of your GSC to approve the program of study.

Seminar. Students are expected to enroll in, prepare for, and contribute to the Behavior Analysis seminar. Graduate students are expected to contribute to every seminar discussion.

If you entered with a Master's degree. Students entering with a Master's degree must provide their advisor with a copy of their Master's thesis. The advisor will circulate the thesis document among two other behavior analysis faculty members. If the thesis is found to meet the standards of a USU thesis, the student is exempt from this program requirement. If the thesis is not accepted, the student must complete a new "thesis equivalent". In the latter case, (1) the expected timeline for graduation is extended to 5 years, (2) none of the College's thesis paperwork requirements must be completed, and (3) no thesis credits will be completed.

If your thesis is accepted, you should form your doctoral Graduate Supervisory Committee (GSC) and begin work on your Program of Study. This should be approved by your GSC by the end of Year 1. You should also consult with your advisor about courses and writing experiences that will prepare you to successfully complete the comprehensive exam. The comprehensive exam must be successfully completed by the beginning of your third year. You are encouraged to complete it at the earliest date that you and your advisor believe you are prepared to do so. The dissertation cannot be proposed until after the comprehensive exam is passed, so passing it earlier means a more-timely graduation.

Preparing for the Master's Thesis Project. Near the beginning of Year 2, you will propose a research project that will be conducted in partial fulfillment of the Master's thesis. To prepare you for the proposal you are expected in Year 1 to work on a review of the relevant literature. By reviewing the literature under the supervision of your advisor, you will identify an experimental question that will be addressed in the thesis.

After identifying an experimental question, you will work with your advisor to prepare a thesis proposal paper. This is due at the beginning of the fall semester in Year 2. See *Program Requirements* section (above) for details on the proposal paper.

Year 2

Thesis. In the fall semester you will propose your thesis project to your GSC (aka the thesis committee). The proposal document must be submitted to the GSC members at least two weeks before your thesis proposal meeting. Scheduling the meeting is the responsibility of the student.

In Year 2 you will conduct the proposed thesis research (amended with any changes requested by your thesis committee). The project must be completed and defended prior to the end of the fall semester of Year 3.

Coursework. Continue to take coursework, earning A's, in accord with your approved program of study. Should you need to change your program of study, this should be done in consultation with your advisor, and must be approved by your GSC.

Preparing for the comprehensive exam. After you complete your Master's thesis, the next requirement is the comprehensive exam. Details are provided in the *Program Requirements* section above. Consult with your advisor on the best way in which to prepare for the comp. Students who fail the comprehensive exam twice are dismissed from the program.

Year 3

Master's Thesis. In the fall semester of Year 3, you will defend your Master's thesis. The thesis is complete after a successful defense, submission of the final document, and completion of all forms.

Comprehensive exam. Students who entered with a baccalaureate degree are required to pass the comprehensive exam by the beginning of the fall semester in Year 4. Details are provided in the *Program Requirements* section above. Failure to meet this deadline will result if dismissal from the program.

Year 4 and Beyond

Dissertation proposal. After passing the comprehensive exam, you may propose your dissertation and complete the steps thereafter (see *Program Requirements* above). Good luck!

Coursework & Credit Hour Requirements

Behavior analysis students must complete 70 credit hours of required and elective courses before graduating. Your tuition waiver does not extend beyond 70 hours, so do not exceed that limit, lest you be required to pay for those hours out of pocket. Students who enter with a Master's degree and an accepted thesis will complete 51 credit hours before graduating.

Tables 1-3 outline required and elective credits. If you are completing the standard Ph.D. degree, your required courses are listed in Table 1. If you are also pursuing the BCBA credential, your required courses may be found in Table 2. Table 3 lists the elective credits most commonly taken by Behavior Analysis graduate students.

TABLE 1

Course Prefix and Number	Title	Credit Hours
Required Courses		
PSY 6560	Introduction to Educational and Psychological Research	3
PSY 6600	Statistical Foundations	3
PSY 6970	Thesis Credits	6
PSY 7090	Behavior Analysis Program Seminar[1]	10
PSY 7250	Professional Ethics and Standards	2
PSY 7610	Regression Analysis	3
PSY 7900 / 7910	Independent Study; Independent Research[2]	7
PSY 7970	Dissertation[2]	12
	Sub-Total	**46**

1. Students will enroll in one credit of PSY 7090 (BA Seminar) every semester.
2. Students can enroll in variable credits of PSY 7900, 7910, and 7970, with no more than 3 credit hours in each within a single semester.

TABLE 2

Course Prefix and Number	Title	Credit Hours
ABAI Preapproved Course Sequence & Other Required Courses		
PSY 6560	Introduction to Educational and Psychological Research	3
PSY 6600	Statistical Foundations	3
SPED 6700	Single Subject Research Design	3
SPED 6710	Concepts and Principles of BA[1]	3
SPED 6720	Advanced ABA in Education 1	3
SPED 6730	Advanced ABA in Education 2	3
SPED 6770	Systems Change/Supervision	3
SPED 6780	Ethics and Professional Behavior	3
SPED 6790	Experimental Analysis of Behavior	3
PSY 6970	Thesis Credits	6
PSY 7090	Behavior Analysis Program Seminar[2]	10
PSY 7610	Regression Analysis	3
PSY 7970	Dissertation[3]	12
	Sub-Total[4]	**58**

1. Despite its numbering, this is the first BA course in the preapproved course sequence offered by the Special Education department (SPED).
2. Students will enroll in one credit of PSY 7090 (BA Seminar) every semester.
3. Students can enroll in variable credits of 7970, with no more than 3 credit hours within a single semester.
4. When you have completed 30 hours of required coursework (the SPED preapproved course sequence, PSY6560/6600, and 6 thesis credits), you are eligible for the M.S. degree, which, when combined with supervision hours, will allow you to sit for the BCBA exam. Note that this parenthetic list sums to 33 hours, reflecting the fact that most students will complete PSY 6560 and 6600 before earning the M.S., but completing both of these ultimately required courses (for the Ph.D.) is not required to earn the M.S.

TABLE 3

In addition to your required courses, you will enroll in elective credits. The total number of credits for the Ph.D. (i.e., required + elective credits) is 70 hours. Exceeding this number may result in your paying tuition out of pocket.

Course Prefix and Number	Title	Credit Hours
Elective Credits		
PSY 6650	Theories of Learning	3
PSY 7750	Behavioral Economics	3
PSY 7810	Behavior Theory and Philosophy	3
PSY 7740	Behavioral Pharmacology	3
PSY 7810	Experimental Analysis of Human Behavior	3
SPED 7730	Behavior Systems/OBM	3
SPED 7700	Single-Subject Research Design	3
SPED 7820	Verbal Behavior/Derived Relational Responding	3
PSY 6020	Cellular and Molecular Neuroscience	3
PSY 6120	Behavioral Neuroscience	3
PSY 6680	Neuroeconomics	3
PSY 6800	Addictive Behaviors	3
PSY 7110	Cognitive Neuroscience	3
PSY 7650	Multilevel and Marginal Models	3
PSY 7670	Literature Reviews in Education and Psychology	3
PSY 7700	Grant Writing	3
PSY 7760	Structural Equation Modeling	3
PSY 7770	Longitudinal Data Analysis	3

Required PSY Courses: Course Descriptions

PSY 6560: An introduction to research methods including identification of research problem, review and evaluation of research literature, and design and implementation of a research project.

PSY 6600: This is the first graduate-level statistics course. There are two prerequisites: Completion of PSY 6750 (or an equivalent graduate-level course in research methods) and passing a pretest evaluating knowledge of undergraduate-level statistics. See https://cehs.usu.edu/research/courses/educ-psy-6600 for more details.

PSY 7090: Provides an opportunity for doctoral students in the Behavior Analysis specialization to meet on a regular basis to discuss journal articles and explore student and faculty research projects. Repeatable for credit. Pass/Fail only.

PSY 7250: Designed to train clinicians and researchers in the field of psychology to operate within the professional ethics and standards of the field.

PSY 7610: Advanced treatment of research design and statistical concepts and issues in educational, human services, and psychological research. Prerequisite: successful completion of PSY 6600.

PSY 7900: Individualized discussion and intensive study of a particular problem or area. May be repeated. Graded pass/fail.

PSY 7910: Experiments are conducted, and papers are prepared for publication in peer-reviewed outlets. May be repeated. Graded pass/fail.

PSY 7970: Research conducted after the dissertation committee and ethics committee (IRB/IACUC) have approved the proposal. May be repeated. Graded pass/fail.

Additional Policies and Procedures

Disclaimer
The University reserves all rights afforded to it under applicable law. Nothing in this policy or related policies, procedures, and practices of the University or the University's governing institutions shall be read to offer or constitute a legal agreement or be subject to legal jurisdiction of the law courts of any kind. The University's policies, procedures, and practices are subject to change at any time.

The Student-Advisor Relationship
Although most student-advisor relationships last throughout the degree program, either the student or the advisor may terminate the relationship without repercussions. A student may initiate the change if agreed to by the advisor. Should the advisor refuse, the transition should be mediated by the Behavior Analysis Program Coordinator and/or department head. After a change in advisors is made, the student has 6 months to secure a new advisor. Failure to meet this deadline may lead to the dismissal of the student from the program.

Review of Students' Academic and Professional Progress
At the end of each academic year, program faculty will review students' progress toward completing program requirements and professional development. Students will receive written feedback on their progress every year; a copy of the form is included as an Appendix to this Handbook. The feedback will address progress in the areas of:
- Research skills and progress
- Progress toward completion of the program
- Didactic coursework
- Assistantship performance
- Other accomplishments and/or concerns

Students who fail to maintain acceptable progress may be dismissed from the program

Student Representatives
One Experimental area student is elected annually by his/her fellow students to represent the graduate students in the specializations (Behavior Analysis, Brain and Cognition, etc.) at meetings with the department chair. The representative or their designee may also serve on any other committees on campus that request graduate student representation. Students are encouraged to contribute ideas and raise concerns relative to the graduate training program through their appropriate student representative.

E-mail
Email is the primary form of communication with graduate students. Therefore, it is critical that students 1) ensure that the e-mail address listed in the Psychology Graduate Student Directory is up to date, 2) check their email inbox daily, and 3) reply to emails in a timely fashion.

Mail Distribution
Each graduate student is assigned a mail box located just inside the front door of Education 487. If you are teaching, your students will leave things for you in there. Best to check it at least once per week.

Use of Psychology Department Facilities and Supplies
The Department's research and clinical facilities may be used by faculty and students; however, students should follow all applicable scheduling guidelines. Students should not print personal

documents (including class papers and dissertations) using university-supplied materials. The department does not provide letterhead, postage, or mailing supplies for students' personal use. Department staff are not available to do student word-processing (including formatting of dissertations) during working hours.

Changing Specialty Area Within the Department
Should a student wish to change from one specialty area to another (e.g., Behavior Analysis to Brain and Cognition), the application must be approved by the faculty of the program the student wishes to enter. Students desiring to transfer may be asked to follow all of the normal admission procedures, deadlines, etc.

Reasons for and Notification of Dismissal
"The student's department and the School of Graduate Studies monitor the progress of graduate students. For continued participation in a graduate program, a student must complete requirements in a timely manner. In reviewing a student's progress, several factors will be considered, including demonstrated ability to develop a [research] proposal, independence in the conduct of research, performance on comprehensive examinations, GPA, and special program requirements. Satisfactory progress also involves maintaining the standards of professional ethics and integrity expected in the student's discipline." (USU General Catalog).

The Department of Psychology has established and strives to maintain high standards in all of its programs. In keeping with this goal, graduate students are expected to maintain: (1) high academic standards of achievement; (2) consistent and timely progress towards the completion of degree requirements; and (3) high standards of personal conduct and behavior that will reflect positively upon the Department and the psychology profession. To assist in maintaining such standards, any one or more of the factors listed below will result in a student being considered for dismissal.

1. Possessing a grade point average less than 3.0 in USU graduate courses (matriculated or provisional) during two consecutive semesters.
2. Any of the following: (a) any characteristics which would, in the judgment of the faculty, make the student unsuited to engage in a career in the specialization in psychology for which he/she is preparing; (b) conduct unbecoming a professional psychologist (see APA guidelines); or (c) failure to comply with departmental, college, and university regulations or procedures.
3. Failure to continue making adequate progress on programmatic requirements (e.g., excessive delay in forming a supervisory committee or completing research requirements).
4. Failure of the comprehensive exam.
5. Academic dishonesty or research misconduct including cheating, falsification of information, and plagiarism.

Procedures for Dismissing a Student from a Graduate Program in Psychology
The following procedures, used by the Department of Psychology, are consistent with those outlined in *The Code of Policies and Procedures for Students at Utah State University*:
https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/index.

1. One of the doctoral areas of specialization would convene as appropriate (e.g., via a steering committee meeting) to vote to recommend dismissal of a doctoral student. Program committees must ensure they are recommending dismissal of a student for reasons outlined in the appropriate program handbook and / or as stated in university policies. Program committees must also ensure due process in any dismissal procedures.
2. Upon recommendation of the specialization area, the program chair of the appropriate specialization area will forward the recommendation for dismissal to the entire psychology faculty.
3. The psychology faculty will vote on whether to approve the dismissal. This vote may be conducted either at convened faculty meeting or via e-mail. Not all faculty need to vote, and

a simple majority of those voting is needed to uphold the dismissal recommendation. If voting occurs outside of a convened meeting, faculty must vote within 2 working days of the recommendation being put forward for a vote.

4. Assuming support for the dismissal, the Psychology Department Head will write a memo to the Dean of Graduate Studies recommending the student be dismissed from the Psychology PhD program. Note that this dismissal would normally preclude a student from requesting a transfer to another specialization area. If a transfer would be appropriate, this should be explored on a case-by-case basis prior to a recommendation for dismissal moving forward.

5. If faculty do not vote to uphold the dismissal recommendation, specific reasons for non-support must be provided. In instances in which the faculty cite lack of adequate due process as a reason for non-support, the program committee recommending dismissal should address these concerns and then, may again move forward with a recommendation for dismissal. If concerns other than due process are raised, those faculty raising the concerns must take responsibility for the student and for addressing those concerns. If these faculty then decide the concerns cannot be remediated, they can again recommend to the entire faculty that the student be dismissed.

6. Per university policies, the dismissed student retains the right to appeal the dismissal.

Grievances and Appeals

If the student wishes to appeal a dismissal recommendation, the grievance process as outlined in the Student Code should be followed. This includes appealing first to the Program faculty and second to the Psychology Department Head. If these appeals are unsuccessful the continued channel is: the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, the USU Grievance Board, the Hearing Officer, the Provost, and the President of the University. If the student's grievance is related to discrimination or harassment the AA/EO Director is also included in concert with the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies. For more information on the grievance process see section VII-1 of the Student Code (available online at http://www.usu.edu/studentservices/studentcode/article7.cfm

USU Student Code

Graduate students in the Psychology Department are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times in line with the USU Student Code. The Student Code is available at https://studentconduct.usu.edu/studentcode/index. The code outlines student rights and responsibilities, university regulations, and discipline and grievance procedures. Students are referred to the document to answer questions related to procedure. Please be advised that USU is a dry campus. It is a violation of the student code to possess or consume alcohol on campus.

Financial Assistance

Several types of financial support are available to graduate students in Psychology. A brief description of each source of support is outlined below, along with an overview of application and awards procedures and deadlines.

Graduate Assistantships

Doctoral students in Psychology will be employed on .50 FTE (20 hrs per week) assistantships as long as they remain in good standing in the program. Students may be assigned to one of the following 3 types of assistantships:

- **Graduate instructor** (GI) A graduate student assigned to teach one or more sections of a course for an entire semester. A GI must be the instructor of record.
- **Graduate teaching assistant** (GTA) A graduate student assigned to assist one or more faculty, or a senior graduate student, with instruction and grading. A GTA may lecture in a course occasionally, tutor students, or assist in some other teaching capacity, such as teaching a lab or recitation session under faculty supervision.
- **Graduate research assistant** (GRA) A graduate student assigned to work under faculty guidance on one or more research projects.

Process for Applying for Graduate Assistantships

Graduate Instructor and TA positions are awarded through the Department of Psychology. Each year in the spring, students are sent via e-mail a list of possible GI and GTA positions for the following year. Students apply for these positions by submitting rank ordering of desired positions.

Graduate RA positions are paid for by research funds allocated to a specific faculty member. Thus, RA positions are typically allocated by a specific faculty member with whom a student would work.

Graduate students are sent letters informing them of their assistantship placements each spring. **Students are required to accept (or reject) the assistantship by a specified date**. Students who reject an assistantship will not be awarded an alternate departmental assistantship.

Tuition Awards

Doctoral students are eligible for the doctoral tuition award which covers the in-state portion of tuition for classes on a student's doctoral program of study. Out-of-state tuition awards are awarded to non-Utah residents during their first year in the program. After that, **students must obtain Utah residency** unless they are international students (in which case the out-of-state portion of tuition will continue to be covered). **All tuition awards are contingent on a student having a .5 FTE assistantship (20 hours per week)**.

Student Representation and Responsibilities

The faculty assumes that all graduate students are responsible for progress in their graduate programs and expects them to show initiative and independence in all aspects of their programs. A major function of the Department is to train competent psychologists who can work in research, academic, or applied settings.

All graduate students are expected to maintain the ethical standards espoused by the American Psychological Association and to comply with departmental, college, and university policies and procedures. Failure to do so constitutes grounds for dismissal from the program.

Graduate students are also provided an opportunity to participate in setting and reviewing departmental policies and procedures through representation on major departmental committees. In addition, elected graduate student representatives are invited to attend departmental faculty meetings.

For many of the program requirements described above there is a form which must be signed by the GSC members upon completion of the particular requirement. It is the graduate student's responsibility to see that these signed forms are placed in his/her file as soon as the requirement has been met.

Student Resources

For the most up-to-date information on graduate school policies, please see the "Graduate Catalog" tab on the School of Graduate Studies home page (http://rgs.usu.edu/graduateschool/)
Resources for students are also listed under the "Student Resources" tab on the Psychology Department web-site: http://psychology.usu.edu/

BCBA Certification

The Board Certified Behavior Analyst (BCBA) certification is a graduate-level certification for professionals who provide behavior-analytic services that is maintained by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB). Students working towards their BCBA certification will need to: (1) complete the required coursework, (2) obtain the necessary hours of supervised fieldwork under an approved BACB-supervisor, and (3) pass the exam administered by the BACB. Students who have graduated with a doctoral degree in behavior analysis can apply for designation as a doctoral-level BCBA.

Coursework

To be eligible to sit for the exam, students need to complete the required coursework. Current coursework requirements can be found at https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/170113-BCBA-BCaBA-coursework-requirements-5th-ed.pdf. The Department of Special Education offers a pre-approved course sequence that students pursuing BCBA certification are permitted to take.

Fieldwork Requirements

The BACB offers two options for obtaining supervised fieldwork requirements: (1) supervised fieldwork (2,000 fieldwork hours required to qualify with a minimum of 4 contacts with supervisor and 5% of experience hours supervised per supervisory period) and (2) concentrated supervised fieldwork (1,500 fieldwork hours to qualify with a minimum of 6 contacts with supervisor and 10% of experience hours supervised per supervisory period). Complete fieldwork criteria can be found at: https://www.bacb.com/wp-content/uploads/2022-BCBA-Fieldwork-Standards_190730.pdf.

APPENDIX
Student Self-Assessment & Evaluation
Behavior Analysis Program
Psychology Department, Utah State University

Due Date: June 15, 2021
It is important to complete Part 1 and return it ELECTRONICALLY to your advisor by the due date. Each student in the Behavior Analysis program must complete this form to remain in good standing in the program. Your advisor will review with you the completed evaluation after the Behavior Analysis faculty have reviewed it.

Date Submitted:

Student Name:

Faculty Advisor:

How many years have you been in the program: _____

If you completed your Master's degree elsewhere,
was your thesis accepted by the BA faculty? Yes _____   No _____

Part 1: To be completed by the student

Instructions: When you submit this form electronically to your advisor, also attach to the email your 1) updated plan of study, 2) current Supervisory Committee forms, and 3) your CV.

Courses taken   Grade Earned
   Replace this text with the course name and number

Assistantship Appointment
     Please indicate your teaching or research assistantship appointment in this academic year.
          • *Please include a copy of your teaching/research assistant evaluations for each semester this year. If you did not receive an evaluation, please indicate that too.*

Program Requirements (see Handbook for details)   Semester/Year Completed

   Thesis Committee Formed and Program of Study Approved

   Thesis Project Proposed

   Thesis Project Defended

   Doctoral Committee Formed and Program of Study Approved

   Comprehensive Exam Passed

   Dissertation Successfully Proposed

Professional Milestones (see Handbook for details)   Semester/Year Completed

Presenting Author – Conference Paper
>   *Replace this text with your APA-formatted vita entry. You should have only one entry here. All others should appear in your vita.*

Peer-reviewed publication(s)
>   *Replace this text with your APA-formatted vita entry. You should have only one entry here. All others should appear in your vita.*

Grant Proposal Submitted
>   *Replace this text with the grant title, granting agency, amount requested, and the funding decision. You should have only one entry here. All others should appear in your vita.*

<u>*List your accomplishments*</u> ***in this academic year***

Courses taught (indicate semesters):
- Here and below, list your accomplishments as bulleted points. If none, indicated "none"

Program requirements (see above) completed:
- List accomplishments or "none"

Professional milestones (see above) completed:
- List accomplishments or "none"

Presentations (papers or posters) at professional conferences:
- List APA formatted citation or "none"

Experiments completed:
- List titles of completed experiments or "none"

Publications submitted/accepted:
- List APA formatted citation or "none"

Grants submitted/funded:
- List grant title/amount/funding-decision or "none"

Papers reviewed for professional journals (provide only the journal name):
- List accomplishments or "none"

Other accomplishments:
- List accomplishments or "none"

Briefly evaluate your performance this year. If you are beyond the first year, please indicate if you believe your performance has improved, stayed about the same, or deteriorated. If the latter, please outline your self-improvement plan.

Please evaluate your seminar performance this year. Are you adequately prepared? Are you contributing to the discussion? Students are expected to regularly and substantively contribute to seminar discussions.

Briefly outline your plans for the next academic year. What do you plan to accomplish? Which areas of your performance will you concentrate on improving?

Part 2: Faculty Evaluation of Student Performance (to be completed by the faculty)

Behavior Analysis students are expected to:
- Earn A's in all of their courses. A grade of "C" is "Unacceptable".
- Be productively involved in research for the duration of the program leading to publishable products.
- *Actively* participate in a Psych 7090 Program Seminar.
- Be mature, professional, and involved departmental/program citizens.

Students demonstrating *Unacceptable* performance in any of these areas may be dismissed from the Behavior Analysis program

	Unacceptable 1	2	Meeting Expectations 3	4	Exceptional 5
Involvement in Research					
Program Seminar Participation (attendance and quality)					
Maturity/Professionalism					
Ability to Work with Others					
Responsiveness to feedback					
Performance in Assistantships					
Timely Progress Toward Completion of Program					
Course Grades					
Attention to Detail					

Note: Performance is rated as "Exceptional" only for truly unusually exceptional accomplishments in an area.

Comments/Recommendations:

Standing in the Program: Good _____   Probationary _____   Recommend Dismissal _____

Signatures:

Faculty Advisor: _____

Student: _____

Behavior Analysis Director
of Graduate Training: _____