EXPERIMENTAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY PHD

PROGRAM

HANDBOOK

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY
COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

11 August 2014

University of Missouri-Kansas City
5030 Cherry Street
5100 Rockhill Road
KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI 64110-2499
816-235-1318
EXPERIMENTAL HEALTH PSYCHOLOGY PHD PROGRAM HANDBOOK

This handbook contains information about the Experimental Health Psychology doctoral program requirements and UMKC guidelines.

You are responsible for knowing and complying with program and University policies, procedures, and deadlines.

From time to time, program and University policies change, so the information in this edition of the handbook may become temporarily outdated. The most up-to-date information can be found on UMKC web site.

Additional information is available using the following links:

UMKC General Graduate Academic Regulations

Requirements for the master’s degree

Requirements for the doctoral degree
# Experimental Health Psychology Program Handbook

## Table of Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Structure</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Learning Outcomes</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Requirements for the Experimental Health Psychology Program</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Experimental Health Program Curriculum</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Competence in Coursework</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course and Thesis Waivers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s Thesis</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Year Project</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensive Examination</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD Residency Requirement</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Status and Dissertation</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Evaluation</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Time Constraints</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Rights</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Resources for Health and Wellness</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students with Disabilities</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Communication</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary of Important Program Deadlines</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of the Experimental Health Psychology graduate program consists of a Program Director and Program Faculty, whose responsibilities are described below.

Program Director:

The Program Director (PD) is responsible for general oversight of all aspects of the program. The PD will schedule meetings of program faculty as needed, create the agenda, and run the meeting. The PD is also responsible for monitoring student progress through the program, including a variety of permissions and milestones as outlined in the Program Handbook. The PD maintains close communication with EHP program faculty, and keeps them apprised of relevant issues as they arise.

Program Faculty:

Program faculty members are responsible for student admissions, student mentoring, and student evaluation in the EHP program. They attend meetings of the EHP program faculty called by the Program Director and are consulted by the Program Director as issues arise.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students completing the Experimental Health Psychology Ph.D. Program will demonstrate:

1. Competence in the evaluation, conduct, and dissemination of research to support independent activity at the next level (e.g., post-doctoral research, academic research, applied research),

2. Ethical conduct and high professional standards in research, including sensitivity to issues of diversity,

3. Knowledge in the theoretical and scientific foundations of health psychology, and

4. Understanding the areas of scientific psychology relevant to health psychology.
Introduction

The mission of the Experimental Health Psychology Program at UMKC is to enhance health outcomes, broadly defined, for individuals and communities. In service of this mission, we offer advanced training in the fundamental areas of experimental psychology, health psychology, and quantitative and methodological approaches for applied psychology. The program emphasizes the development of research skills and empirical investigation of real-world problems in the life and health sciences. Graduates are prepared for careers in academia, industry, and public and private health organizations.

Experimental Health Psychology at UMKC is a full-time program of graduate study. Didactic instruction is integrated with research from the beginning of students' training. Students are paired with a faculty mentor and become part of a lab where they learn how basic research is applied to practical problems and develop the knowledge and skills to carry out original research. These experiences are graded in complexity and designed to foster the development of cumulative knowledge and skill as the student progresses through the program.

General Requirements for the Experimental Health Psychology Program

The Experimental Health Psychology program curriculum is designed to provide students with a common core of knowledge in the following areas:

- Scientific psychology;
- Research methods, techniques of data analysis, and psychological measurement;
- Empirical, methodological, and theoretical foundations of individual and community health psychology

Students complete a Master’s Thesis, pass Comprehensive Examinations prior to candidacy for the doctoral degree, and complete a dissertation leading to the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Psychology degree.

Areas of study representing core faculty research include:
- Social cognition and health
- Health in diverse communities
- Adolescent development
- Neuropsychology and applied neuroscience
- Cognitive aging
- Psychophysiology in cognition and mental health
The Experimental Health Program Curriculum

This table represents the currently recommended sequencing of courses. It is subject to change based on course availability in a given semester. Students may be allowed to take additional classes or alter this sequencing, with prior approval of the faculty advisor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sem-Year</th>
<th>Course Number and Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FS-1</td>
<td>5516 Advanced Quantitative Analysis I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS-1</td>
<td>Psychology Core course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS-1</td>
<td>5590 Directed Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-1</td>
<td>5517 Advanced Quantitative Analysis II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-1</td>
<td>5601 Experimental Methods in Design</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-1</td>
<td>5590 Directed Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS-2</td>
<td>5631 Theoretical Foundations of Health Psychology</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS-2</td>
<td>5538 Development &amp; Evaluation of Assessment Tools</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS-2</td>
<td>5599 Thesis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-2</td>
<td>5580 Structural Equation Modeling / Hierarchical Modeling</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-2</td>
<td>Psychology Core course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-2</td>
<td>5599 Thesis</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At completion of master’s degree: 36 total credits
12 research credits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sem-Year</th>
<th>Course Number and Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FS-3</td>
<td>Psychology Core course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS-3</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS-3</td>
<td>5696 Pre-Dissertation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-3</td>
<td>Psychology Core course</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-3</td>
<td>Elective</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-3</td>
<td>5696 Pre-Dissertation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUM-3</td>
<td>Comprehensive Exam to advance to candidacy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS-4</td>
<td>5699 Research and Dissertation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WS-4</td>
<td>5699 Research and Dissertation</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If students do not defend their dissertation by the end of the 4th year, they must enroll in 1 credit of Dissertation in each succeeding semester until it is completed.

Post-master’s degree: 24 total credits
12 research credits

Program: 60 total credits
Psychology Core courses

Students must take four of the following courses (not all courses are taught each year so it is advantageous to plan carefully):

5521 Advanced Social
5507 Cognitive Psychology
5505 Motivation
5518 Advanced Biopsychology
5515 Advanced Systems and History of Psychology
5543 Adult Development and Aging

Possible electives from Psychology (electives are not limited to Psychology courses, but must be approved by a student’s mentor and the EHP Program Director):

5533 Psychopathology
5632 Health Psychology Interventions
5580 Special Topics in Health Psychology: Community Based Participatory Research

Minimum Competence in Coursework

All courses must be passed with a grade of B- or better. In cases where a lower grade is earned, the faculty will consider each situation individually and prescribe an appropriate, individually-tailored remediation strategy (e.g., re-taking the course, or other methods of developing strength in the competence area.)

In order to remain a student in good standing, an overall GPA of 3.00 must be maintained. Failure to do so will result in the student being placed on probation. While on probation, a student must maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 each semester. Failure to do so will result in dismissal from the program. The student’s performance must justify removing the probation within a period of two consecutive semesters or he or she will be dismissed.

You should be aware that academic regulations for the School of Graduate Studies stipulate that “no course with a grade below C (2.0) in any 500 level course or above will count toward any advanced degree program.” A graduate course may be repeated one time to improve the grade and the grade received the second time replaces the first grade in the student’s graduate grade point average. This means that, in order for a course with a grade of C- or below to count towards your degree requirements, it must be repeated. At the time you register for the second time, you will need to submit a completed Course Repeat Form.
Course and Thesis Waivers

Unless a specific waiver is granted, students are required to complete all aspects of the curriculum as laid out in the handbook. Program requirements, courses, and research credits are waived at the discretion of the program faculty.

In certain circumstances, the faculty will consider requests for course waivers. Students should be aware that another course may be required to replace the course waived. In addition, students should weigh carefully the benefits and disadvantages of waiving courses. Please discuss with your advisor the decision to apply for a waiver prior to submitting a formal application.

If you do make the decision to apply for a course waiver, the following policy applies: If a student believes he or she has completed a course equivalent to one that is required in our program, the student may request a waiver. The waiver needs to be supported by the full-time faculty member who is teaching the course. If a regular faculty member has not taught the course recently, the Program Director will review the materials or request review by another qualified professional. All waivers need the final approval of the Program Director.

The process for requesting faculty consideration of a course waiver is as follows:

1. Contact the Instructor of Record (i.e., the full-time faculty person currently teaching the course at UMKC) to discuss the possibility of a waiver and provide them with a copy of the Course Equivalency form. You should be prepared to provide documentation (e.g., textbook, syllabus, assignments, grade as shown on your transcript, etc.) to help the UMKC Instructor compare your previous course with the one offered at UMKC. You will be notified by the Program Director about the final decision.
2. If the UMKC Instructor of Record concludes that your previous course was not sufficiently comparable to support a waiver, you may either accept the conclusion of the Instructor or you may appeal to the Program Faculty through the Program Director. To appeal, notify the Program Director, who will assist you with the process.
3. If the UMKC Instructor of Record determines that your previous course was comparable to the one offered at UMKC and agrees to support your request, the Instructor will present your request to the Program Director for approval. If the request is granted final approval, you should discuss with your advisor an appropriate course to substitute.

Students who have already completed a Master’s thesis in psychology prior to entering the program may request a waiver of the M.A. thesis requirement. Forms to request this waiver can be found on the Psychology Department web site. Thesis waiver requests must be submitted within the first 2 weeks of classes and must include a copy of the completed thesis. If a thesis is waived, you must still continuously enroll in research hours and complete a second year project (see below).
Master’s Thesis

Selection of M.A. Supervisory Committee

The faculty member who sponsors a student’s admission will serve as Chair of the student’s Supervisory Committee. In consultation with the Chair, and generally by the end of the first semester, the student selects two additional Psychology faculty members to serve on the Supervisory Committee. All three Committee members must be members of the UMKC doctoral faculty. In consultation with the advisor, students have the option to include a fourth doctoral faculty member from another relevant discipline outside of Psychology. The M.A. project will be developed in consultation with the Supervisory Committee.

A copy of the final paperwork designating each student’s supervisory committee must be filed with the Program Director prior to submitting the thesis proposal. The form for establishing the M.A. Supervisory committee can be accessed here.

Thesis Timeline

In order to complete the thesis project during the second year, the project proposal should be approved by the faculty committee and IRB by the beginning of the second year (i.e., no later than the last day of summer session of year one). Please note that the thesis project should be completed by the end of the second year, and must be completed prior to taking the comprehensive examination.

Students who do not meet this deadline may request a 60 day extension to complete the proposal requirement. If an extension is granted and the student still does not have a committee-approved and IRB-approved proposal at the end of the extension, the student may be placed on inactive status (which involves not being able to register for classes) for a maximum of two consecutive semesters until the proposal has received committee and IRB approval. Students can stay on inactive status for only two semesters before being discontinued from the program.

Thesis Program of Study

In consultation with their mentors, the student plans a program of study in accordance with the program requirements described in this handbook. During the Fall Semester of the student’s second year in the program (before 60% of coursework is completed), a Program of Study form must be filed with the Graduate School. The student fills out the form with the plan of study, and then submits the form to the Advisor. The Advisor secures required departmental approval and forwards the program of study to the graduate officer of the College.

Thesis Proposal Defense

There are no specific graduate school requirements regarding a defense of the master’s thesis proposal. Thus the format for the proposal defense is left to the discretion of the student’s primary advisor. Options include (but are not limited to) individual meetings between the student and his/her committee members, having committee members read and provide written feedback to the student, and an in-person defense.
Ethical Conduct of Research Training and SSIRB approval

Before beginning any research, students must complete the relevant training in ethical conduct of research required by the Social Science IRB at UMKC. Information is available on the website of the UMKC Office of Research Services. At the completion of training, certificates of successful completion should be printed and kept on file.

Prior to the collection of any data, all students must obtain approval for human subjects research from the University Institutional Review Board which meets regularly and oversees the ethics of research projects conducted at UMKC. The process for obtaining approval is found at the UMKC Office of Research Services web site.

Graduate Studies Formatting Review of the Thesis Document

When the student has a completed a thesis draft and is ready to go to defense, the draft thesis may be sent to the Graduate School for a formatting review. Prior to the published deadline for the term in which the student expects to graduate, they must submit a copy of the thesis and the Preliminary Approval of the Thesis by the Supervisory Committee Chair form to the Graduate School for review and any formatting corrections. Details regarding this approval process can be found in the General Graduate Academic regulations.

Thesis Final Defense

When all members of the student’s advisory committee feel that the thesis work is complete and ready for final defense, the committee members notify the committee chair by completing a Master’s Pre-Oral Defense form and forwarding it to the committee chair. The committee chair and student then schedule a final defense of the thesis.

The defense of the thesis is approved when a majority of the supervisory committee members recommend approval and sign the Report of the Result of Final Master’s Thesis Examination and the committee approval page in the thesis.

Requirements for Final Acceptance of the Thesis by the Graduate School

After the thesis defense, a corrected final version of the thesis, along with the Master’s Thesis Final Evaluation form, should be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. The graduate dean will review the document for certification of acceptance, and the student will be notified of the outcome of that review. Once certified, the candidate may retrieve the certified copy and the certificate of acceptance from the School of Graduate Studies office, and make copies to deposit with the library (see details under “Requirements for Graduation”.

Experimental Health Psychology
Second Year Project

If the requirement to complete a master’s thesis is waived, a second year project must be completed, following the same timeline as required for the master’s thesis. The format for this project, as well as the process for evaluation and approval, is left to the discretion of the student’s primary advisor. Options for a second year project include products such as a journal article based on work conducted during the first two years in the program, a comprehensive literature review, or a grant proposal.

Comprehensive Examination

Philosophy and Goals

The comprehensive examination is designed to be administered after the completion of the Master’s project and appropriate core courses in the student’s plan of study, and serves as an examination of foundational knowledge/core competencies that a student must demonstrate prior to being advanced for doctoral candidacy. The aim of the comprehensive exam is to provide the student with an opportunity to demonstrate the depth and breadth of knowledge s/he has acquired during his/her course of study (through didactic and experiential training).

The Examination

The examination will consist of two components:

I. A written, timed, examination of research competency

   The examination of research competencies will assess core competencies consistent with specific program goals. In this exam students will demonstrate

   a. knowledge of appropriate research designs, sampling techniques, methods/instrumentation, and statistical analyses through the critique of an empirical article,
   b. the ability to apply this knowledge to the development/design of research, and
   c. knowledge of ethical issues relevant to the design and implementation of research

   The written research competency exam will be administered at the end of the summer of the student’s third year in the program.

II. A written research product such as a literature review, submitted manuscript, or grant proposal.

   Students may propose one of the three options listed below to satisfy the second comprehensive examination component. In each case, the work must reflect scholarly activity conducted following completion of the master’s thesis or second year project.

   The student will write a short (2 – 4 page) proposal for the project, which must be approved by the advisor, the reader (one other program faculty member), and the program director. The plan may be approved any time following completion of the master’s thesis, but must be
approved by February 1st of the second semester of the third year in the program. The final written product is to be completed by the end of the summer of the student’s third year in the program.

**Publication quality literature review.** Students may write an APA-style review paper based on the literature in their area of interest. The focus of the review should be broad enough in scope to demonstrate an understanding of a significant area with the field, and it should provide a significant and new contribution to the field. A maximum of 50 double-spaced pages (including references) is allowed.

The 2-4 page document proposing this option should indicate (a) a brief description of the review topic, (b) a rationale for writing the review (contribution to be made), (c) a description of the method to be used to identify articles and the number of articles expected to be reviewed, and (c) the target journal.

**Submitted manuscript.** If students have a completed project of publishable quality on which they are first author, the preparation and submission of the manuscript may count for the second component of the comps requirement.

The 2-4 page document proposing this option should indicate (a) a brief description of the manuscript topic, (b) the contribution made by the work, (c) the student’s role in the project and the writing of the manuscript, and (c) the target journal.

**Grant proposal.** A significant grant proposal may also fulfill the requirements of the second component of the comprehensive examination. The minimum page requirement is 12 pages for the research plan. The format used may be the NIH R01, or other proposal formats that require at least a 12 page research plan.

The 2-4 page document proposing this option should indicate (a) the specific agency and grant program on which the proposal will be modeled, (b) the research question and rationale for the proposed work (contribution to be made), and (c) an overview of the methodological approach to the research question.

**Student Eligibility and Examination Procedures**

1. In order to sit for the comprehensive examination, a student must have
   a. completed and demonstrated at least minimum competence in all of the courses listed in the first 5 semesters of the degree program curriculum, and
   b. completed the required thesis (i.e., all members of the faculty committee have provided signed approval of the completed project)
2. A student planning to take the examination must meet the requirements and notify the Program Director.
3. Both components of the Comprehensive Exams are to be taken in the student’s third year in the program.
a. The **written, timed examination of research competence** will be administered in late summer each year, within a month of the start of the Fall semester.
   i. This examination will be administered in a 4-hour time period and students will not be allowed to work past the 4th hour.
   ii. Use of outside materials will not be allowed in taking any section of the comprehensive examination. Students will be expected to work independently and the program will uphold the university policies of Academic Honesty.
   iii. A Comprehensive Examination Committee will be appointed by the program for each administration of the exam. Two committee members will independently evaluate each exam and given a grade of pass or fail. In the event that the two readers do not reach consensus on a pass/fail grade, a third reader can be asked to help determine the evaluation.
   iv. Comprehensive exam scoring will be blind and students are discouraged from disclosing their identity in written responses.
   v. Students will be notified by the program director of their pass/fail status on the exam. This notification will take place within a month of the exam administration. Should a student receive a failing grade, s/he may receive more specific feedback by consulting with the primary faculty mentor.
   vi. If a student initially fails the examination, s/he will be permitted to retake the examination the following year. Students will be allowed two chances to pass the examination. In the event of a second failed attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program

b. The deadline for submission of the **written research product** to the student’s advisor and reader is one week following the written timed examination of research competence. It can be submitted at any point before that time when it is complete.
   i. Students are allowed to work on the document from the time the proposal is approved until the final due date. While working on the document, students may confer with their advisor, but are expected to produce a document that reflects their own independent contribution to their field.
   ii. Students will be notified by the program director of their pass/fail status on the written product. This notification will take place within a month of the exam administration. Both the advisor and the reader will provide written feedback to the student.
   iii. If a student initially fails the written research product component of the exam, s/he will be permitted to revise and resubmit. The resubmission is due to be submitted to the advisor within one month of receiving feedback. Students will be allowed two chances to pass the examination. In the event of a second failed attempt, the student will be dismissed from the program

4. Students are expected to have successfully completed all components of the comprehensive examination prior to the start of the 4th year of study. Any student not meeting this expectation will be automatically reviewed by the program faculty regarding progress and continuation in the program.
PhD Residency Requirement

The doctoral residence requirement stipulates that students complete a minimum number of credit hours in a given time frame.

This requirement can be met in the EHP Program in either of the following ways:

- the student satisfactorily completes at least 21 credits, exclusive of dissertation research, in no more than 18 months. [this requirement is satisfied in Fall1, Winter1, and Fall2 in the standard EHP curriculum]
- the student satisfactorily completes three consecutive semesters of 8 credits each completed within 18 months and following 24 credits of graduate study. [this requirement is satisfied in Winter2, Fall3, and Winter3 in the standard EHP curriculum]

Doctoral Status and Dissertation

Once the comprehensive exam is successfully completed, the student is advance to doctoral status and begins work on the doctoral dissertation.

Forming a Doctoral Committee

A doctoral committee supervises each student’s dissertation research. The student’s major advisor typically will serve as the chairperson of the dissertation committee. This person must be a member of the program faculty. A doctoral committee must have a minimum of five members, at least three of whom are Psychology Program faculty members. The chair must be a member of the doctoral faculty and 2 others must be doctoral or graduate faculty. With the consent of the Committee Chair and the Program Director, it is permissible for the fourth and fifth members to be full-time faculty persons in another discipline or department or an outside individual (e.g., adjunct faculty, non-faculty) judged by the program and the Graduate School to have suitable credentials.

Program of Study

In consultation with their mentors, the student plans a program of study in accordance with the program requirements described in this handbook. During the Fall Semester of the student’s third year in the program, a Program of Study form must be filed with the Graduate School. The student fills out the form with the plan of study, and then submits the form to the Advisor. The Advisor secures required departmental approval and forwards the program of study to the graduate officer of the College.
Dissertation Proposal Defense

Once a student has become a Candidate for the Ph.D. degree, he or she may develop and seek approval for a research proposal for the doctoral dissertation. The dissertation must give evidence of the candidate's ability to do independent work and to make a contribution in the field of psychology. Identification of an appropriate topic is, once again, negotiated between the student and committee Chair.

Once an appropriate topic has been selected, students prepare a written document describing the rationale and methods for the proposed dissertation project. This proposal document is circulated to the dissertation committee in advance of an oral defense of the proposed work. At the oral defense, the student makes a presentation describing the proposed work, and fields questions from the committee. Once the committee approves the project, the student may begin the dissertation research project.

Ethical Conduct of Research Training and SSIRB approval

Candidates cannot begin the research until the proposal has been formally defended (i.e., approved by the committee) and approved by the University IRB. The process for IRB approval is described on the UMKC Office of Research Services web site.

Requirements for Final Acceptance of the Thesis by the Graduate School

The office of Graduate Studies has a set of guidelines that must be followed when writing the dissertation. Be aware that this Guide is revised periodically. So it is best to check the website in advance of preparing the dissertation document.

The School of Graduate Studies provides formatting workshops at the beginning of each fall and winter semesters. In addition, degree candidates may schedule individual conferences with the school’s Dissertation Formatting Assistant during the first four weeks of the fall or winter semester and the first two weeks of the summer term to make sure they have interpreted the formatting guidelines correctly and to seek guidance on specialized formatting problems. Candidates should call the School of Graduate Studies office for the time and place of workshops or to schedule a formatting conference.

When the student has a completed dissertation draft and is ready to go to defense, the draft thesis may be sent to the Graduate School for a formatting review. Prior to the published deadline for the term in which the student expects to graduate, they must submit a copy of the dissertation and the Dissertation Preliminary Approval of Dissertation Checklist signed by the student’s primary advisor to the Graduate School for review and any formatting corrections. Details regarding this approval process can be found in the General Graduate Academic Regulations.
Final Dissertation Defense

When the student has a completed dissertation draft, it is circulated to the advisory committee for a preliminary review. When all members of the student’s advisory committee feel that the dissertation work is complete and ready for final defense, they notify the committee chair by completing a Doctoral Dissertation Pre-Oral Defense form and forwarding it to the committee chair. The committee chair and student then schedule a final defense of the dissertation.

The final defense will consist of a public colloquium including a presentation with visual aids and a follow-up question and answer period. The colloquium will be open to any interested students and faculty. Students should schedule the final defense in consultation with advisors and committee members. Once the dissertation committee approves a date and time, it is the student’s responsibility to provide this information, along with the title of the dissertation, to the Psychology Department Secretary for posting and distribution two weeks prior to the date. The dissertation is officially approved by the committee when the Chair and all members sign the Report of the Result of Final Examination and the committee approval page in the thesis.

Requirements for Final Acceptance of the Dissertation by the Graduate School

After the dissertation defense, a corrected final version of the dissertation, along with the Doctoral Dissertation Final Evaluation Form should be submitted to the School of Graduate Studies. The graduate dean will review the document for certification of acceptance, and the student will be notified of the outcome of that review. Once certified, the candidate may retrieve the certified copy and the certificate of acceptance from the School of Graduate Studies office, and make copies to deposit with the library (see details under “Requirements for Graduation”).

Student Evaluation

Once students have been admitted to the Ph.D. degree program, it is important that they acquire relevant skills and make progress through the program at a reasonable pace. It is equally important for students to receive periodic feedback about their performance and progress. Therefore, at the end of every semester students are evaluated with respect to their research progress and academic performance, and annually, students' overall program performance is reviewed.

1. Semester Evaluation

To assist students in assessing their own progress and to help the program provide experiences for optimal development, students are evaluated at the end of each semester by their research mentors. Students will complete a draft of the Portfolio of Accomplishments document (see http://cas.umkc.edu/psychology/forms.asp) and submit the draft to their advisor. The advisor will review the form, and will also evaluate the student's research activity using the Semester Research Evaluation Form.
2. **The Annual Evaluation and "Portfolio of Accomplishments"

Each year, at the beginning of the fall semester, the Program faculty meets for purposes of reviewing the overall performance of all students enrolled in the program. The Annual Evaluation is based on data provided by the student and faculty. Students provide information in the form of the Portfolio of Accomplishments. Faculty present information from semester reviews and from other contact with students (e.g., as course instructor, GTA supervisor, etc).

The program's annual evaluation procedure is as follows:

1. Student completes a copy of Portfolio and submits it to the faculty advisor by the first day of classes each Fall. The student then schedules a meeting with the faculty advisor no later than the second week of the Fall semester.
2. Pre-evaluation meeting: Advisor and student discuss student accomplishments for that year and, if necessary, revise portfolio. When student and advisor agree, both sign a final copy of student portfolio.
3. Student presents one final copy of portfolio signed by student and advisor to the Program Director by the end of the third week of classes in the Fall semester in preparation for the Annual Review of Progress Meeting.
4. Faculty hold the Annual Review of Progress Meeting early in the Fall semester. Each student is reviewed individually. Advisors are responsible for presenting their students; other faculty may provide input regarding any student's progress.
5. The Program Director sends student a letter summarizing the faculty's evaluation.
6. If necessary, the advisor meets with the student and the student is offered opportunity to respond within thirty days.

**Other Student Assessment**

All students are expected to adhere to the [UMKC student standard of conduct](#).

To protect student interests as well as the rights of faculty to uphold the academic and professional standards of the program, the Program retains the right to review any student at any point during the student’s matriculation though the program. Such a review may result in the student not being permitted to continue in the program. The following are examples of behaviors that are the basis for immediate evaluation of student progress:

1. Failure to maintain academic standards (e.g., grade of B- or better in all core courses).
2. Academic dishonesty (e.g., cheating, plagiarism).
3. Unethical or unprofessional behavior
4. Behaviors that obstruct the training process and/or threaten the welfare of the student or others (e.g., active substance abuse).
5. Failure to comply with established University or Program timetables and requirements (e.g., failure to meet time limits for completion of degree program).
6. Consideration may be given to other circumstances as they arise.

The following steps may be taken as part of the academic review process separate from the yearly evaluation procedure.

1. If a concern about student behavior develops within the context of a course, the course instructor document concerns. The instructor meets with the student to outline deficiencies and establish a remedial course of action (if appropriate).
2. When the instructor has made a reasonable determination with adequate documentation that a pattern and severity of problem exists to warrant additional action beyond that already taken, the instructor will communicate the concerns, actions taken and their outcomes to the Program Director for possible action.
3. The student will be informed in writing by the Program Director of: (a) any decision that may affect the student's status within a degree program, and (b) the opportunity to address the faculty in person or in writing to appeal the decision.
4. The student will be informed in writing by Program Director of the response to the appeal. The student will be advised of the opportunity to seek further resolution of the concern with the Psychology Department Grievance Committee or Psychology Department Chair.

For reasons other than those stated above, it may be decided at the annual review of the Ph.D. students that a student is not making satisfactory progress through the stages of the program. Such a decision requires a majority vote of the faculty. In such cases, the student will be notified of the unsatisfactory evaluation and be requested to submit within 30 days a petition for a plan of remediation to the Chair of the student's Supervisory Committee. The Chair will forward the petition to the faculty with recommendation as to disposition. Acceptance of the petition requires a simple majority vote of the faculty. Failure to petition or to receive an affirmative vote will result in the student being placed on inactive status and subject to the provisions of such status.

**Program Time Constraints**

If a student has been in the program for four years and does not have a committee-approved dissertation proposal, the faculty may elect to put the student on inactive status at the yearly evaluation meeting. Inactive status can only be maintained for two semesters before being discontinued from the program. In that 2 semester time period, the student must submit a plan to complete your doctoral program. The plan must be approved by the student’s advisor and dissertation committee and must specify the expected date of completion. The Graduate School requires that all degree requirements be completed within five years of advancing to doctoral candidacy (i.e., successful completion of the comprehensive examination).

Other circumstances may arise that lead to a student being put on inactive status. Whatever the circumstance, if, after 2 semesters, the student does not return to active status or gain an extension of inactive status by an affirmative majority vote of the faculty, the student will be dropped from the program. In order to return to active status, the student must write a letter to the Chair of the Ph.D.
Supervisory Committee indicating a plan of action for completion of the degree. The student may request to continue the relationship with the previous committee or may request a new committee. In either case, as in the initial selection of the advisor and committee members, the faculty members will have the prerogative of refusal. A request to return to active status must have the recommendation of the Ph.D. Supervisory Committee and an affirmative majority vote of the program faculty.

Student Rights

The faculty of the Psychology Program wishes to ensure that students are treated fairly and with respect. Several procedures are in place that students can follow if they have concerns. First, you may find it helpful to confer with your advisor or the Program Director. Your advisor may also refer the question to the Program Director. On your request, your advisor or the Program Director will present your concern to the program faculty for consideration. If you are not satisfied with the response of the program faculty, you may choose to present your concerns to the Department Chair. If you are still dissatisfied, you may refer the matter to the Arts and Sciences Dean’s Office. Details available here.

The most current statement of University policies and procedures are found here.

All graduate students are governed by the policies in the General Graduate Academic Regulations and Information, in addition to those of the Program and the American Psychological Association.

Students also should be aware that when they serve as staff (e.g., in the capacity of teaching assistants or course instructors), the University and department policies relevant to staff apply (e.g., FERPA training, confidentiality requirements).

In addition to the web sites provided above, the UMKC web site includes a variety of sources of useful information. Following is a list of some of these:

College of Arts and Sciences Course Policies and Resources
   Academic Calendar
   Academic Honesty
   Campus Safety
   Attendance Policy
   Disability Support Services
   English Proficiency Statement
   Grade appeal Policy
   Grievance Procedures for Students
   Statement of Human Rights
   Academic Support
   Sexual Harassment/Discrimination
The UMKC Counseling, Health, and Testing Center, located at 4825 Troost, offers a comprehensive set of health and wellness services to the University community. Accident and Sickness Insurance is available through the Center. In addition, the Center provides counseling services for full time students without charge for the first eight sessions and minimal fees for additional sessions. A list of other resources in the community that may be useful to students in need of mental health or legal services is maintained in the Psychology Department.

Students with Disabilities

The University has an Office of Services for Students with Disabilities and detailed instructions about accommodations for students with disabilities. It is the student’s responsibility to request accommodations through this office. The procedure for requesting accommodations is outlined at the web site above. Students must complete this process prior to undertaking the program or course of study for which they need accommodation.

Electronic Communication

UMKC E-mail

The UMKC E-mail Policy States:

Each student, upon being admitted, is issued an UMKC e-mail account with an address on the umkc.edu domain. This is the account used for University business and official University communications to students via e-mail. Students are expected to regularly check their UMKC account for University communications and are responsible for communications sent to this account. Students may use their UMKC e-mail account at their discretion for personal use as long as the usage is in compliance with the University's Acceptable Use Policy (110.005). For more information regarding UMKC e-mail, go to: http://www.umkc.edu/exchange-faq/email_policy.asp
Summary of Important Program Deadlines

Year 1
- Selection of advisory committee (before last class, Winter semester, year 1)
- Thesis proposal approved by Committee and IRB by end of summer session of year one
- At end of each semester, mentor & student discuss semester research evaluation & send copy to Program Director

Year 2
- Completion of thesis project and final committee approval by end of yr 2 summer session
- Complete portfolio of accomplishments and schedule pre-evaluation meeting with advisor by early Fall semester
- At end of each semester, mentor & student discuss semester research evaluation & send copy to Program Director

Year 3
- Comprehensive Examinations
- Selection of Dissertation Committee (and filing of appropriate paperwork)
- Complete portfolio of accomplishments and schedule pre-evaluation meeting with advisor by early Fall semester
- At end of each semester, mentor & student discuss semester research evaluation & send copy to Program Director

Year 4
- Program of study must be approved by committee and submitted to the College prior to defending the dissertation proposal
- Dissertation proposal defended before applying for internship in early Fall
- Complete portfolio of accomplishments and schedule pre-evaluation meeting with advisor by early Fall semester
- At end of each semester, mentor & student discuss semester research evaluation & send copy to Program Director
- File required graduation paperwork as appropriate