# Table of Contents

I. Purpose 3  
II. Core Program Faculty and Research Interests 3  
III. Admission to the Program 4  
   A. With research-based Masters degree 5  
   B. Without a research-based Masters degree 5  
IV. Program Overview & Requirements 6  
   A. General requirements 6  
   B. Current course descriptions 7  
V. Customizing Your Program 9  
VI. Expectations and Evaluation 10  
   A. Advisee / Advisor Relationship 10  
   B. Progress Towards Research Requirements 13  
      1. Doctoral Research 14  
      2. Internship 14  
      3. Dissertation Research 15  
   C. Progress Towards Coursework Requirements 15  
   D. Continuous Enrollment / Leaves of absence 16  
   E. Professional and Ethical Conduct 17  
   F. Departmental Citizenship 17  
   G. Evaluation of Progress 18  
      1. Program of Study Form 19  
      2. Research 19  
      3. Coursework 20  
      4. Professional and Ethical Behavior 20  
VII. Advancing to Doctoral Candidacy 21  
   A. The Qualifying Exam 21  
   B. Dissertation and Grant Proposal 21  
   C. Dissertation Committees 23  
VIII. Example Full-Time Degree Plan 24  

Rev. 8/1/12
I. Purpose
The PhD in Psychology program at UTSA is designed to give students the opportunity to work with faculty who have expertise in various areas of Psychology and an interest in applying that expertise to issues impacting health, military personnel, and their families. The program is designed around the notion that psychological theory, advanced research, and statistical methods are vital to addressing a range of applied problems, including those related to health and the military. The program provides students with training in research and data analysis methods that can be applied to a variety of problems in public and private sector. The core of the program consists of a series of courses on data analysis, research design, and special issues in military health. Students are also expected to obtain specialized training in various relevant content areas through content courses (see “advanced topics”), outside electives (e.g., grant writing), and supervised research. The program will also provide students with many opportunities to refine their scientific writing and oral communication skills and to apply their knowledge and methodological expertise. The program is designed to prepare graduates for conducting basic and applied research in the private sector, public sector, or academia.

This handbook provides students with the requirements and expectations for making progress through the program. We have adopted best practices from existing programs in both the design of this program and handbook. The handbook will be updated as necessary. Should requirements change during a student’s tenure in the program, the student will have the option of whether to meet the requirements in effect at the time of their entry or the updated requirements.

II. Core Program Faculty and Research Interests

UTSA Faculty
Michael R. Baumann, PhD; Social/Organizational Psychology, decision making in groups and teams, affect in decision making and behavior, impression formation

Daniel Beal, PhD; Industrial/Organizational Psychology, emotional experience and expression at work, performance processes, longitudinal and multilevel modeling

Thomas R. Coyle, PhD; Cognition and Development, intelligence and cognitive ability, academic aptitude tests (SAT and ACT), cognitive neuroscience

Ephrem Fernandez, PhD; Clinical and Health Psychology, psychosomatics, pain and suffering, emotions, assessment and regulation of anger

Robert W. Fuhrman, PhD; Social Cognition, stereotypes, attitudes, person and event memory, personality, interpersonal relationships

Rev. 8/1/12
Raymond T. Garza, PhD; Social Psychology, research methods, Chicano studies, personality theory, intergroup relations, Hispanic social processes, and minority mental health

R. Reed Hunt, PhD; Cognitive Psychology, memory, distinctiveness, memory errors and correction, implicit memory

Michelle Little, PhD; Developmental Psychology, adolescent and young adult externalizing problems and substance use, violence prevention, gender differences in the course of psychopathology, longitudinal methodology

Deborah L. Mangold, PhD; Biological Psychology, biomarkers for psychopathology stress, allostatic load, and health

Augustine Osman, PhD; Clinical Psychology, evidence based assessment, psychometrics, assessment of anxiety and mood disorders, suicide, pain, and eating disorders

Rebekah E. Smith, PhD; Cognitive Psychology, memory in young and older adults, prospective memory, false memory, memory correction and improvement; multinomial modeling

Rebecca Weston, PhD; Intimate relationships, health effects of partner violence, measurement of partner violence, changes in violence and relationship outcomes (e.g., satisfaction, commitment) over time

Tina Zawacki, PhD; Social and Health Psychology, health related social behaviors including alcohol use, sexual transmission of HIV and sexual violence

**UTHSC Faculty**

Anthony Scott, PhD; Neuropsychology and neuropsychological assessments, psychoneuroimmunology, project evaluation

Alan L. Peterson, PhD, ABPP; Clinical Health Psychology, posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD), psychological risk and resiliency, Tourette Syndrome, tobacco cessation, pain management, insomnia, weight management, and managing suicidal behaviors

Jennifer S. Potter, PhD, MPH; Clinical Psychology, opioid use behaviors in individuals with pain and substance use disorders, development of empirically-supported treatments for SUDs.

**III. Admission to the Program**

Admission to the doctoral program is limited and competitive. Meeting the minimum criteria will not guarantee admission. Students must meet all University-wide requirements as outlined in

Rev. 8/1/12
Chapter 2 of the most recent UTSA Graduate Catalog. At the very least, students must hold a completed baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university in the United States or have proof of equivalent training at a foreign institution, have been in good standing at the time of departure from the last institution attended, and be recommended for admission by the Psychology Doctoral Program Admissions Committee.

A. Admission with a Research-Based Master’s Degree
In addition to university-wide requirements, the PhD in Psychology will consider the following:
1. Documented completion of a 36-hour (or more), thesis-based Master’s degree in psychology. Applicants with fewer hours or from a non-thesis program may be considered for conditional admission pending completion of all deficiencies.
2. A Master’s degree transcript documenting a GPA of 3.5 or higher. If a master’s degree has not been completed, a transcript documenting a minimum GPA of 3.5 in the last 60 hours of coursework will be required.
3. For applicants whose native language is not English, a score of at least 550 on the TOEFL.
4. Three letters of recommendation indicating the applicant has the necessary academic and personal attributes for success in the program and has the potential for making significant contributions in the field of psychology.
5. A 3-page statement written by the applicant that clearly states his or her career goals, research interests, and purpose for pursuing a PhD in Psychology at the University of Texas at San Antonio.
6. Evidence of prior research experience. The preferred form is a completed Master’s thesis, but published research articles, a manuscript prepared for publication, or a paper submitted for credit in an independent or honors study project are acceptable alternatives.
7. Scores on the verbal and quantitative sections of the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), along with scores on the GRE Psychology Subject Test must be submitted before the application is considered complete. These scores must be no older than 5 years and will be weighed in conjunction with the other material in the applicant’s file.

B. Admission without a Research-Based Master’s Degree
Exceptional applicants having only a bachelor’s degree in Psychology or closely related field may be considered for conditional admission. These individuals must meet all other requirements outlined above (with the exception of requirement #2). Students admitted
conditionally will be required to make up deficiencies by fulfilling all requirements necessary to complete the Masters of Science program in Psychology. Limitations on the time permitted for removing deficiencies are likely to be included in the conditions. Exceptional applicants having a non-thesis Master’s degree in Psychology at time of application will be required to complete a research project equivalent to a master’s thesis, as well as making up any deficiencies by completing courses in the Psychology MS program.

Students admitted without a research-based master’s degree will have 6 years from completion of deficiencies to complete all Doctoral requirements.

IV. Program Overview & Requirements
As required by UTSA-wide regulations, the program requires students to complete a minimum of 48 hours of post-masters courses or research credit. Students must complete all coursework, research hours, and successfully defend and deposit their dissertation within 6 calendar years of the time the student enters the doctoral program, not including any leave of absences described below. It is anticipated that students will enroll full time (9 hours Fall, 9 hours Spring, 3 hours summer). Full time students who have taken all UTSA Master’s level statistics and methods courses or their equivalent are expected to complete the 48 post-masters hours in 3 years or less. Questions about typical course offerings should be directed to the PhD Graduate Advisor of Record (GAR).

A. General requirements

Required PhD Core Courses (9 hours required)
All students must take each of the following

- PSY 7003 Multivariate Statistical Analysis (3 hours)
- PSY 7013 Advanced Research Design (3 hours)
- PSY 7023 Military Health Psychology (3 hours)

Advanced Seminar Topics (12 hours required)
Students will take a total of 12 hours from the following advanced seminar topics. Each seminar may be repeated for credit as topics vary from offering to offering. Students’ selection of advanced topics courses is one way in which students will be able to customize their individual program of study. Currently, students can reasonably expect at least 1 offering of each of the following in any 2 year period.

- PSY 7103 Advanced Topics in Biopsychology (3 hours)
- PSY 7113 Advanced Topics in Clinical Psychology (3 hours)
- PSY 7123 Advanced Topics in Applied Social Psychology (3 hours)
- PSY 7133 Advanced Topics in Applied Cognitive Psychology (3 hours)
- PSY 7143 Advanced Topics in Diversity and Health Disparities (3 hours)
Prescribed Electives (6 hours required)
Students will take 2 courses from the following options. These courses are to bolster students’ research and statistical skills with specialized tools relevant to their individual research interests.

- PSY 7203  Grant Development
- PSY 7213  Program Evaluation
- DEM 7233  Forecasting
- STAT 5413  Nonparametric Statistics
- STAT 5253  Time Series Analysis
- STAT 6113  Bayesian Statistics
- STAT 6853  Categorical Data Analysis

Research and/or Internship (9 hours required)
Research credits are an opportunity for students to gain specialized hands-on experience in areas relevant to their individual interests. These typically involve one-on-one supervision of a student by a terminal degree holder and written products demonstrating the educational value of the experience. Doctoral research hours are expected to eventually result in a draft dissertation proposal.

- PSY 6513  Psychology Research Internship (3 hours each section)
- PSY 7911-6  Doctoral Research (3 hours each section)

Dissertation Courses (12 hours required)
Dissertation credits are for the execution, analysis, and reporting of the results of the student’s dissertation project.

- PSY 7921-6  Doctoral Dissertation (3 to 9 hours per semester)

B. Current Course Descriptions

**PSY 7003  Multivariate Statistical Analysis**
(3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
An advanced treatment of multivariate statistical techniques. Topics include multivariate normal distribution, multivariate tests of hypotheses, confidence regions, principal component analysis, factor analysis, discrimination and classification analysis, and clustering.

**PSY 7013  Advanced Research Design**
(3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
An examination of issues related to complex research designs to address health-related issues. Topics include multilevel modeling, complex sampling, experimental, quasi-experimental, and mixed designs.
PSY 7023  Military Health Psychology  
(3-0) 3 hours credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
Overview of research related to Military Health Psychology. Topics include military cultural competency, psychological assessment, population health, intervention, and treatment of health-related issues of importance to the military, such as depression, PTSD, substance-abuse, and combat-related injuries. Approaches to prevention and resiliency in military personnel and their family members are also covered.

PSY 7103  Advanced Topics in Biopsychology  
(3-0) 3 hours of credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
Topics related to empirical and clinical findings that contribute to current knowledge of brain-behavior relationships and the structural and functional changes associated with specific clinical conditions will be examined. Topics include traumatic brain injury, neurotransmitter imbalance, and specific related disorders, and the effects of stress on brain structure and function. This course may be repeated for credit when the topics vary, but not more than 6 hours may be applied to the doctoral degree.

PSY 7113  Advanced Topics in Clinical Psychology  
(3-0) 3 hours of credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
Topics related to the critical evaluation of prevention, assessment, and intervention strategies used to address clinical problems in a military environment will be examined. Topics include depression, PTSD, clinical issues related to injuries and rehabilitation, substance abuse, family and partner conflict, combat-related stress disorders, and promotion of resiliency. This course may be repeated for credit when the topics vary, but not more than 6 hours may be applied to the doctoral degree.

PSY 7123  Advanced Topics in Applied Social Psychology  
(3-0) 3 hours of credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
Topics related to understanding social psychological approaches that can be applied to understanding the prevention, etiology, and treatment of health disorders. Topics include group and organizational dynamics, social comparison, affiliation, cognitive dissonance, attitude formation and change, and attribution theory. This course may be repeated for credit when topics vary, but not more than 6 hours may be applied to the doctoral degree.

PSY 7133  Advanced Topics in Applied Cognitive Psychology  
(3-0) 3 hours of credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.
Topics related to understanding cognitive psychological approaches that can be applied to understanding the prevention, etiology, and treatment of health disorders. Topics include memory, problem solving, strategy utilization, communication, spatial cognition, training and learning, cultural learning, and social information processing. This course may be
repeated for credit when topics vary, but not more than 6 hours may be applied to the doctoral degree.

**PSY 7203  Grant Development**  
(3-0) 3 hours of credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.  
This course will provide students with an overview of the grant writing process. Literature review, theoretical rationale, budget, evaluation protocols, and IRB requirements will be examined. Local, state, national, government, and private funding sources will be reviewed. The final product will be a completed grant proposal. Note that credit cannot be earned for both PSY 7203 and KAH 5163.

**PSY 7213  Program Evaluation**  
(3-0) 3 hours of credit. Prerequisite: Consent of instructor.  
This course will review the process by which health-related programs are planned, implemented, and evaluated in various communities and work-related settings. Students in this course should have prior knowledge of health-related theories, multivariate statistics, and advanced research design. Note that credit cannot be earned for both PSY 7213 and KAH 5133.

**PSY 7911-6  Doctoral Research**  
1 to 6 hours credit. Prerequisites: Permission of the PhD GAR and dissertation director; must be a PhD candidate.  
Preparation and writing of dissertation proposal. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 12 hours will apply to the Doctoral degree.

**PSY 7921-6  Doctoral Dissertation**  
1 to 6 hours credit. Prerequisites: Permission of the PhD GAR and dissertation director; must be a PhD candidate.  
Preparation, writing, and successful defense of the Doctoral dissertation proposal. May be repeated for credit, but not more than 12 hours will apply to the Doctoral degree.

**V. Customizing Your Program**  
Students are encouraged to think carefully about how to best select their advanced topics, prescribed electives, and research credits to customize their experience. In support of this, students will be required to submit an Interim Program of Study form to the PhD GAR no later than the second month of classes in the first year. This form must be endorsed by the student’s faculty advisor prior to submission. The form should be updated as necessary at the start of each academic year and a final version will be submitted in the student’s final semester. Although programs of study may change as student interests develop over time, it is expected that these
changes from year to year will be at the level of refinements rather than drastic changes in interests.

The Interim Program of Study should consist of the following elements:

1. A 1-2 sentence description of the research interest/specialty the student intends to achieve with this program of study. A wide range of topics are acceptable, but the level of detail should be similar to the following examples: “Understanding of factors influencing coping strategies of military families during deployment,” “Determining the factors underlying differences in susceptibility of commanders to memory errors over the lifetime,” or “Factors influencing resiliency to PTSD.”

2. A list of the core courses to be taken each semester in service of that goal
3. A list of the advanced topics courses to be taken each semester in service of that goal
4. A list of prescribed electives to be taken each semester in service of that goal
5. Potential internships or research experiences related to that goal

VI. Expectations and Evaluation
To remain in good standing with the program, all students must meet university-wide as well as program-specific standards. These include expectations and rights with respect to advisee / advisor relationships, ethical and professional conduct, research progress and the nature of experiences deemed acceptable for research or internship credit, coursework.

A. Advisee / Advisor Relationship
1. Assignment of advisors, changing advisors, and being asked to change advisors
Each student is initially assigned an advisor whose interests are as similar as possible to those expressed by the student and who is available to serve as an advisor. These assignments are made during the admissions process in consultation with potential advisors. The faculty advisor will serve as the student's major professor and mentor. Students are not required to work with a given advisor and advisors are not required to work with students who do not meet their expectations. Students are allowed to initiate changes with the consent of the PhD GAR and agreement in writing of the potential new advisor. When an advisor dismisses an advisee, the advisor must provide the PhD GAR with written documentation as to the reason, and the department will attempt to assist the student find a new advisor.

Changing advisors does not carry a penalty. However, there are a number of practical difficulties students may wish to consider. Changing advisors may make it impossible to continue collaborative projects in that faculty member’s lab, which may affect the time it takes a student to complete the degree. Similarly, if the student is funded through that lab, the student may be required to change his or her support (e.g., from research to teaching). As such, students are encouraged to select potential advisors carefully.
2. Expectations and suggestions for advisor-advisee relationships
There are many different views on what makes an ideal advising relationship and good advising relationships take many different forms. UCLA and Northwestern University have developed a set of general guidelines representing views across a range of disciplines. This section includes those and other general guidelines and describes general expectations advisors and advisees are expected to meet and suggestions for making the relationship as beneficial as possible for both parties.

Ideally, a student’s advising professor is also a mentor. The relationship should foster the student’s confidence, skills, and comprehension of theory relevant to the chosen field of study. In concrete terms, an advisor should be expected, at a minimum, to provide

a. Guidance with ongoing research including constructive feedback for improvement.

b. Guidance in planning professional progress and achieving necessary milestones (including progress towards the degree).

c. Opportunities for and assistance with professional publications and conference presentations.

d. Letters of reference required for professional opportunities (assuming satisfactory performance by the student).

These are the minimum expectations. It is not unusual for the advisor to grant additional benefits such as financial support (e.g., research assistantships, conference funding), networking opportunities, and/or intellectually stimulating collaborations.

Advisees are also expected to meet certain standards. At a minimum these include

a. Openness to constructive feedback from advisors.

b. Working diligently to make progress on dissertation and other research projects.

c. Communicating with advisors when deadlines cannot be met or a changed in the program of study is desired.

d. Being enthusiastic about collaborative research and motivated to complete projects with advisors and possibly other students.

Each party also has the right to expect the other to behave in an ethical, professional, and civil manner. Neither advisees nor advisors should expect the other to engage in work unrelated to their common research interests or relevant appointments (e.g., Teaching Assistantships, Research Assistantships).

To prevent misunderstandings and maximize the likelihood of a productive advisee-advisor relationship, students are encouraged to discuss expectations with their advisor. This should be done early and often. Different advisor-advisee pairs will develop different working relationships and these may change over time due to the needs of the advisee, advisor, and the research being

Rev. 8/1/12
conducted. The important thing is that both parties are aware of what to expect and feel that they can safely raise issues as needed. We suggest advisors and advisees be clear about the following questions:

**How often and when should we meet?**
Common practices on advising meetings range from one to eight times a month depending on the needs of the student and the research project(s) in progress. In many cases this will involve a regular meeting time. When these are group meetings (e.g., the entire lab is present), there is an expectation that the advisor is available for one-on-one meeting by appointment to discuss confidential matters (e.g., FERPA-protected academic issues). However, it is also common to meet on an ad-hoc basis with times varying from week to week. Advisees should keep in mind that the advisor may have certain periods of unavailability (e.g., class preparation, conference attendance) and that advisors have other duties to fulfill as well.

**How should the advisee prepare for advising meetings?**
There is considerable variability on this issue, and it is likely to change even from meeting to meeting. Generally, when given an assignment to think about a particular idea or potential project, the advisee should, at a minimum, come with ideas or questions to discuss. When given a written assignment (e.g., a manuscript for submission or thesis draft) the advisee should ask the advisor how far in advance he/she will need the assignment in order to read it and discuss it at the meeting. Professors frequently have a number of obligations to juggle (e.g., reviewing for journals, grading tests), so the student should not assume his or her paper is always at the top of the list.

**How quickly will the advisor return a written draft with comments? How quickly will the student be expected to incorporate the advisor's comments and bring in a new draft?**
This will often depend on the size of the document and relevant deadlines. However, it is reasonable for advisees to expect their advisor to read, comment, and return a draft within 1 - 2 business weeks under normal circumstances. In some situations turnaround may be longer (e.g., the advisor is at a conference or ill or has several advisees). In those cases, the advisor should inform the advisee accordingly.

Similarly, in most cases it is reasonable for the advisor to expect the advisee to incorporate or respond to comments and provide a new draft in 1 – 2 business weeks. Some situations may require even faster responses (e.g., in the case of submitting a manuscript revision or proofs).
How long should the advisee expect the program to take? When will I graduate?
It is important to develop a shared understanding of the timeline for the advisee's progress through the doctoral program. Typically, we expect students to complete the 48 post-masters hours in 3 years or less. However, this assumes adequate progress in courses and research. Advisees should talk to their advisor to determine how quickly they need to develop a dissertation idea in order to propose, conduct, and defend the final product on time. A student’s first draft proposal is unlikely to ever be the one accepted, and the first draft of the final product is almost never the one deposited. Your advisor has the right to refuse to set a date for a dissertation proposal or defense until s/he thinks the document is in suitable shape for reading by other committee members.

Who will be first author, and who owns the data?
Although the APA has guidelines on authorship and the UT System Board of Regents has rules on intellectual property, each involves a number of judgment calls. Philosophically, it is partly an issue of who conceptualized the study and partly an issue of who contributed which specific effort to the project. Legally, the terms under which funding was provided can also have an impact. Because of this, advisees and advisors should discuss these issues early in the project life cycle. It is recommended that advisors and advisees set order of authorship and conditions for reconsidering order of authorship in advance.

Students and advisors who feel unsatisfied with their relationship are encouraged to communicate their needs and discuss possible remedies prior to the student seeking a new advisee or the advisor asking the student to find a new lab. It the responsibility of both parties to recognize unsatisfactory situations early on and handle them appropriately. When a resolution cannot be reached, students and/or advisors should consult the PhD GAR before consulting the Department Chair.

B. Progress towards Research Requirements
Students will be evaluated partly on their research activities each year (see “Evaluations”). Failure to make adequate progress may result in students being placed on warning, academic probation, or being dismissed. Students are expected to become involved in research during their first year, often during their first semester. Typically, this research will involve assisting with ongoing projects in their advisor’s research program or laboratory. As the year progresses, students are expected to begin examining potential topics and designs for their dissertation project. Ideally, students will have a dissertation idea ready to develop into a dissertation proposal by late Spring or Summer of their first post-master’s year and defend their proposal during the Fall of their second post-master’s year. It is recommended that students allow 3 long semesters (i.e., a year and half) to go from defending the proposal to approval and depositing of the final product.

Rev. 8/1/12
Although there is no program requirement for students to attend professional conferences or publish scholarly articles, lack of involvement in such activities will negatively affect students’ job prospects upon program completion. Hopefully their theses and dissertations will be publishable products, but students should seek out additional opportunities. Potential sources of additional presentation and publication opportunities include collaborative projects with their advisors, other faculty, and/or other students. Students are encouraged to talk to their advisors about publication norms and opportunities in their specific research area.

1. Doctoral Research

Students should enroll in doctoral research each semester in which they are conducting studies or literature reviews laying the groundwork for their dissertation project. In some circumstances, it may also be appropriate for students conducting research with faculty other than their primary advisor to enroll in doctoral research with that faculty member as well. In most cases, a written product (e.g., a research or review paper) will be expected to result from doctoral research credits.

2. Internship

The activities and products of internship credits are expected to resemble those of doctoral research, with the main difference being the nature of the setting. Whereas doctoral research is generally in a more basic academic setting, internship assumes a more applied setting. Generally, the student is expected to use internships to develop specific competencies unique to the applied setting in question. To earn internship credit, the student must specify the educational value or competencies to be learned through interning in a specific setting and justify how this relates to the intended program of study. The student must also obtain the permission of a terminal degree holder at the internship site to serve as an on-site supervisor and a Psychology faculty member to serve as instructor of record (typically his or her advisor). The internship must involve an average of 9 hours of relevant activities weekly (e.g., on-site research, training experience, etc.) for each 3 hours of credit. The on-site supervisor will be responsible for documenting the number of hours the student devotes to the internship and reporting on the student’s progress towards the relevant competencies. The advisor or other Psychology faculty member will be responsible for evaluating student performance on written products related to the internship. The nature of the written product is likely to vary by project, but should demonstrate an understanding of the project conducted and relevant theoretical issues. The department currently requires 2 written products (i.e., papers) for each 3 credit hours. Written products are expected to be no less than 3200 words of content each. This corresponds to roughly 10 double-spaced pages at a standard 12-point font with 1 inch margins. Additional pages needed for a reference section, graphs, or appendices do not count towards this minimum.

Rev. 8/1/12
3. Dissertation Research
Students are not permitted to enroll in dissertation research hours until they have been admitted to doctoral candidacy (see Advancing to Doctoral Candidacy below). Thereafter, students should enroll in dissertation hours each semester at a level commensurate with the number of hours they devote to executing, analyzing, and writing the results of their dissertation project.

C. Progress Towards Coursework Requirements
Student progress towards coursework requirements will be evaluated following their first semester and then annually through the program (see “Evaluation” section). Failure to make adequate progress may result in students being placed on warning, academic probation, or being dismissed. As per university rules, students must earn a grade of B or higher in all courses counted towards their doctoral degree.

The majority of students are expected to be enrolled full time (9 credit hours in each Fall and Spring, 3 hours each summer). Although it is likely that more advanced students (e.g., third years) will have a Fall or Spring schedule consisting entirely of doctoral research and dissertation hours, this is unlikely to be appropriate for newer students. To stay on track towards course completion, students should complete all three of the core courses and at least 1 advanced topics course or prescribed elective their first academic year. Currently, the core courses Multivariate Statistics and Military Health Psychology are expected to be taken during the first Fall while Advanced Research Design is expected to be taken during the first Spring. Students will typically have a larger selection of options for Advanced Topics during the Fall than during the Spring. Failure to complete at least 12 credits of non-research courses during the first academic year may be ruled inadequate progress during the annual review.

During the second academic year, students are expected to complete the majority of their remaining non-research credits (i.e., prescribed electives and advanced topics). By the end of the second academic year, full time students should have no more than 6 hours of the required non-research credits remaining. It is anticipated that many students will complete all of the required organized courses by the end of their second academic year. Having completed fewer than 24 credits of non-research courses by the end of the second year may be ruled inadequate progress during the annual review.

For most students, the third academic year will consist primarily of Doctoral Dissertation credits. Progress towards completion of the doctoral dissertation will be included when considering progress towards completion of coursework requirements. The department realizes that some doctoral projects may require more than the minimum 12 hours of required dissertation credit. However, students are warned that repeated enrollment in dissertation credits beyond the required 12 hours will need to be justified during the annual review. This justification must include a description of the state of the project from the student and dissertation committee chair.
(typically one’s faculty advisor), the obstacles contributing to the delay, and a plan for completing the dissertation in a timely fashion. Failure to submit the justification will be viewed as evidence of inadequate progress during the annual review. Failure to complete the dissertation within 12 hours beyond the required number will most likely be judged a failure of progress and may carry disciplinary action.

D. Continuous Enrollment / Leaves of Absence
University regulations require that all doctoral students be continuously enrolled unless permission for a leave of absence has been obtained in advance. To meet this requirement, the student must be officially enrolled in doctoral level classes by the twelfth (12th) class day of the semester each Fall and Spring of each academic year. This must occur each year until the time of the student’s graduation.

Summer enrollment is strongly encouraged in the Psychology program, and certain forms of funding awarded by the program require enrollment during summer as well. Because many students intend to make use of university facilities (e.g., collect and analyze data) or faculty time (e.g., consult with their advisor on the design or implementation of a research project) over summer, they should plan to enroll for doctoral research hours. If a student has been admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree, registration in the dissertation course or the equivalent is required. The only alternative to continuous registration is a leave of absence.

Students enrolled in a doctoral program may apply for a leave of absence for one Fall or Spring semester when events such as active military service, illness or injury, pregnancy, or the need to provide care for a family member prevent active participation in the degree program. If the student has not yet been admitted to candidacy for the doctoral degree, this request must be approved in advance of the leave by the PhD GAR. If the student has been admitted to candidacy, the application must be approved in advance by the doctoral program coordinator, the Graduate Associate Dean of COLFA, and the Dean of the Graduate School. A leave of absence is required for Fall and Spring semesters. Under no circumstances may a leave of absence be applied retroactively.

While on a leave of absence, the student will not receive student funding from his or her program. Leaves of absence may also affect the student’s ability to receive financial aid or loans and/or to defer payments on loans. Students should contact the Office of Financial Aid with questions regarding financial aid or loan status.

A student returning from a leave of absence must enroll for the following Fall or Spring semester or provide a written request for a leave of absence extension. Only one extension per leave is allowed. At no time may the student be on leave for more than one year. A student who does not register, receive approval for a leave of absence, or receive approval for a leave extension by the
12th class day will be dropped from the program (see www.graduateschool.utsa.edu). The student will not be permitted to return to the university without applying for readmission to the graduate program and paying all relevant application fees. Readmission is not automatic; the program admissions committee may choose to deny admission of any dropped student.

E. Professional and Ethical Conduct
All students, faculty, and staff have a right to be treated with courtesy and respect. To this end, students are expected to behave professionally and ethically at all times (as are faculty and staff). Repeated acts of disrespect or incivility towards students, faculty, or staff will be viewed negatively during the annual review process. Serious breaches of professionalism and ethics may result in punitive actions, including dismissal from the program.

A number of university and professional organization guidelines pertain to ethical behavior. Among these are the university’s policy on academic integrity and university honor code (pertaining to class behavior), the American Psychological Association’s guidelines (pertaining to treatment of patients and human subjects, intellectual property, and publication guidelines), and federal regulations set by the Office of Human Research Protections in the department of Health and Human Services (legally binding codes pertaining to treatment of human subjects). Students should become familiar with each of these. Because professional and ethical norms – including interpretation of APA guidelines – vary somewhat by research area, students should also discuss relevant norms with their faculty advisor.

When in doubt about an action or how to interpret ethical or professional guidelines, consider these five principles:

- **Beneficence and nonmaleficence**: Strive to benefit others and avoid causing them harm.
- **Fidelity and responsibility**: Be trustworthy and mindful of your duties to others.
- **Integrity**: Promote accuracy and truthfulness; do not steal, cheat, or misrepresent.
- **Justice**: All persons are entitled to fair treatment.
- **Respect for rights and dignity**: All persons are entitled to certain rights, have worth, and deserve to be treated as such.

F. Departmental Citizenship
Both faculty and students have a responsibility to maintain collegial relationships and to handle any disputes that arise in a professional manner. Should disputes arise, students should first attempt to resolve the problem by an honest and open discussion with the faculty member involved. Faculty have an obligation to be responsive to such discussions and to exert every effort to resolve problems fairly. If you cannot resolve the matter in this way, consult with your advisor. If you are still dissatisfied, or if the initial problem arose with your advisor, then please...
bring the problem to the attention of the PhD GAR who will also discuss the issue with the faculty member in question if you request that he/she do so.

Although professional, ethical, and collegial behaviors are important, they are only part of departmental citizenship. Unlike bachelor’s programs, doctoral programs involve more than just taking classes. Students are being groomed to be members of a profession. Much of this happens informally and outside of the classroom. Part of this is accomplished through the advisor-advisee relationship. However, it is also accomplished through interaction with other faculty, students, and staff, through attending colloquia and talks given by outside speakers, and even by interacting with undergraduates in a teacher-student capacity. The department frequently invites speakers to present on campus and organizes a small number of social gatherings each semester. Announcements for such events are posted around the department one or two weeks in advance and typically announced over email and in graduate classes. Students are expected to regularly attend these events. Some researchers or clusters of researchers also have informal journal clubs. Although these are less publicized, students are encouraged to seek out such opportunities and, assuming a relevant group is found, attend regularly.

G. Evaluation of Progress

The departmental faculty regularly evaluates student performance and progress. All first year students are evaluated at the end of their first semester, and all students are evaluated again at the beginning of each academic year. Evaluations are based on an assessment of the student's progress towards completing research and coursework requirements as well as professional and ethical behavior.

Formal evaluation is done by the entire faculty of the department. Input from faculty who have taught, advised, or otherwise supervised students are considered particularly valuable sources of information for this process. Hence it is important that there be free communication between the student and these faculty members so that the student is not taken by surprise when evaluations are reported. It is important for students to make sure that they understand how their work is being received.

The evaluation process will lead to one of three categories of student status: good standing, warning, or probation. Most students are expected to progress through the program in good standing, indicating faculty are pleased with the students performance in all three areas. Warning is intended to convey that the student's performance is deficient in some respect and continued deficiency risks being placed on probation. Probation is intended to inform the student of more serious deficiencies such as those that may culminate in being dropped from the program if not rectified or if additional problems occur. Students placed on Warning or Probation will be informed of the reasons for that action and what they must do to return to good standing.
Note that neither warning nor probation carries any penalty in and of themselves. They are a formal way to inform the students that they are not meeting expectations and provide guidance on ways the student may improve performance to successfully complete the program.

Warning is not a prerequisite to probation, nor is probation a prerequisite to dismissal. Violations judged as serious by the faculty may lead a student to be placed on probation without warning. Especially serious violations (e.g., a serious ethical breach) may result in a student being dropped from the program without having first been placed on probation. However, this is expected to be rare. Students placed on probation will remain on probation until the next regular review, at which point the faculty will determine whether the concerns have been addressed and whether the student should be returned to good standing, remain on probation, or be dismissed. In the case of a dismissal recommendation, the student will be provided an opportunity for a hearing with the program faculty prior to the formulation of any recommendation to drop the student from the program.

The following describes the faculty's expectations for student performance and progress for full-time students admitted without conditions, and the deficiencies that may lead to warning or probationary status. Students admitted with conditions should consider Year 1 the first calendar year after completion of any requirements. Students having taken a leave of absence should adjust the calendar accordingly.

1. **Program of Study form** An Interim Program of Study form must be submitted by the second month of enrollment in the doctoral program. This form must be updated each year at the start of fall semester and have a plausible sequence of courses and research activities. A final Program of Study form will be submitted to the Graduate School in the last semester before graduation. Failure to submit the form each year may lead to warning status. Repeated failure will result in warning or probationary status.

2. **Research**. The faculty expects students to show definitive progress towards the goal of preparation for and completion of a dissertation project. The milestones below are what students should reasonably expect to complete each year to stay on track to complete the degree in their third year. Minor shortfalls will typically result in warning status, while more serious shortfalls will result in probation.
   - **Year 1**: By the end of August of the first year, students should show evidence of involvement in research activities in one or more laboratory groups within the program. This evidence should include a description (non-binding) of the intended dissertation topic. Lack of an intended topic will result in a warning. If combined with lack of evidence of other research activities, students may be placed on probation.
   - **Year 2**: By the end of August of the second year, students should have completed their qualifying exam, defended their dissertation proposal, and have initiated data collection on their dissertation project. Failure to have initiated data collection may result in warning...
status. Failure to have completed the qualifying exam or proposal defense will result in probation.

**Year 3:** By May of the third year, students should have completed, defended, and deposited the final product of their dissertation project. Students not completing and defending by August of the third year will be placed on warning status and required to submit a plan for completion of their remaining work. This plan must be formulated in consultation with the chair of the student’s dissertation committee. If no plan is submitted or the plan is inadequate, the student may be placed on probation.

3. **Coursework**. Each year, students are expected to be enrolled in 9 credit hours each Fall and Spring semester and strongly encouraged to be enrolled for 3 hours during the summer. All students are expected to complete each course with a B or better. A grade below a B in any course is likely to place the student on “warning” status. A semester GPA of less than 3.0 will result in probation and, if the student is already on probation may result in dismissal as per university regulations.

**Year 1:** By the end of Spring semester of the first post-master’s year, students are expected to have satisfactorily completed the three core courses (Multivariate Statistics, Advanced Research Design, and Military Health Psychology) and at least one other non-research course (i.e., an Advanced Topics or Prescribed Elective). Minor shortfalls will result in a warning. More serious shortfalls may result in probation or dismissal.

**Year 2:** By the end of Spring semester of the second post-master’s year, students should have satisfactorily completed at least five non-research courses beyond the core (e.g., three Advanced Topics and both Prescribed Electives).

**Year 3:** By the end of Spring semester of the third post-master’s year, students should have completed all non-research credits (the three core courses, four Advanced Topics, and two Prescribed Electives).

4. **Professional and Ethical Behavior / Departmental Citizenship**. Each year, the core faculty will poll those who have taught, advised, supervised, or otherwise had frequent interaction with students for input on how these students have comported themselves in classroom, research, and other professional settings. Students are expected to receive ratings of at least “adequate” in each category. Reports of occasional problem behavior (e.g., occasional disrespect or incivility to other students or faculty member) are unlikely to result in disciplinary action. Reports of minor but frequent misbehavior or a single incident of a more serious breach, especially if coming from multiple faculty members, are likely to lead to warning or probation. More serious or widespread incidents may result in a recommendation of immediate dismissal.
VII. Advancing to Doctoral Candidacy

Admission to the doctoral program does not confer doctoral candidate status. Prior to advancing to candidacy, a student must complete Qualifying exams, an oral defense of the dissertation proposal, and all required coursework except for the 12 credit hours of dissertation. Only after satisfactorily completing all of the above can the student apply for advancement to candidacy.

A. The Qualifying Exam

Prior to proposing a dissertation project, a qualifying exam must be taken and passed by the student. The exam is based on material covered in the core courses, advanced topics, and prescribed electives. As students may take different combinations of advanced topics and prescribed electives, questions may vary somewhat from student to student. **Exams are scheduled during the week prior to the first week of classes of each semester. Students are expected to sit for their qualifying exam at the beginning of their second Fall semester or fall of first post-master’s year. Students must submit a written request to the PhD GAR at least four weeks before the date of the scheduled exam.** To facilitate assembly of questions, this request must include (1) a copy of the student’s program of study form, including a description of the student’s specialization and (2) a list of the courses with instructors the student took to satisfy the degree requirements. The qualifying exam is a two part written exam. The first part of the written exam assesses the student's ability to respond appropriately to typical research problems, theoretical issues, or practical problems in the areas of statistical analysis, research design, measurement, and psychological theory and research related to their content courses and areas of specialization. This portion of the exam is written and evaluated by faculty who teach the required and core courses in the program and will consist of a 1-day closed book exam. The second part of the written exam will be written by faculty responsible for the advanced topics and prescribed electives taken by the student and will therefore vary by student. This portion will also be a 1-day closed book exam. Together, these components will ensure that 1) the student has sufficient grasp of the theoretical and methodological fundamentals of the chosen dissertation research area; 2) the student has knowledge of both quantitative and qualitative methods of research as appropriate to the chosen dissertation research area; and 3) the student has the ability to exchange ideas and information with collaborating research faculty members.

The qualifying exam, as a whole, is evaluated on a pass/fail basis. Faculty have the option of allowing a student who fails the exam one semester to make up the exam or a portion of it at the next regularly scheduled opportunity. Therefore, students will have a maximum of two attempts to complete the qualifying exam.

B. Dissertation and Grant Proposal

Within one semester of the qualifying exam, the student is expected to submit a dissertation prospectus and grant proposal for review by his or her dissertation committee. Although no specific format is required for the grant proposal, it is strongly recommended that the student...
follow the format used by agencies commonly funding projects in the student’s intended area (e.g., NSF, NIH, DoD). Not only does this provide valuable experience in the preparation of a formal grant proposal, it may also result in the student being able to apply for external funding to support the proposed dissertation research. Proposals should outline the student’s topic of study, review the relevant literature, propose specific methods and measures for conducting the study, provide a rationale for why the proposal is likely to advance our knowledge, and describe and explain the plan for data analyses.

In addition to the written proposal, the student will be required to have a formal dissertation prospectus meeting. When combined with the written proposal, the formal prospectus meeting satisfies university requirements for a qualifying exam including both a written and an oral component. The student will present the written proposal to his or her dissertation committee two weeks prior to the formal prospectus meeting. At the prospectus meeting, the student will defend the proposal and answer questions both about the proposed project and the relation of the research to the discipline. By university rule, the initial presentation is open to the public – students and faculty members not associated with your project are permitted to attend.

Following the initial presentation, the doctoral committee will typically choose to enter closed session (i.e., those not associated with the project will be asked to leave) to ask additional questions of the student. After the questioning, the student will be asked to leave the room while the committee deliberates. Upon completion of deliberation, the committee will decide whether to: (1) accept the proposal as submitted, (2) accept the proposal but require that some specific changes be made (this outcome may or may not include a requirement that the student submit a revised proposal, or an addendum to the original proposal), or (3) reject the proposal and require a new submission. In order to be acceptable, the proposal must describe original research within the student’s area of expertise that seems likely to make a contribution to scientific knowledge in the field. The project described should be the student’s own conception and be substantially the student’s own design. The committee may reject a proposal if, in its judgment, the proposal itself is seriously deficient in conceptualization or research design, or if the student showed an inadequate understanding of the proposed research and its implications during the meeting.

An approved proposal does not represent a commitment by the committee to grant the student the PhD degree if the research is carried out. The student remains responsible for addressing questions and criticisms raised in the proposal meeting, to carry out the research with proper attention to methodological and analytic details not specified in the proposal, to adapt the research if necessary to take into account unanticipated results, and to carefully consider the implications and interpretation of the results obtained. The committee (and especially the student’s advisor) will be available to provide assistance and advice during the project, but the PhD requires that dissertation research be carried out independently. Final intellectual responsibility for the research rests with the student, not with the committee or advisor.
C. Dissertation Committees

Students will assemble dissertation committees in consultation with their faculty advisor and the program coordinator. Committees will consist of four members, with at least three members from the program Core Faculty. It is strongly recommended that dissertation committees include at least one member in a related area from outside of the Core or Support faculty. All regulations pertaining to the number of faculty who must be present for the oral components of the dissertation process will be the same as university regulations. Students wishing to include individuals who are not only from outside of the program but from outside of the university are advised that the program must receive special permission from the Graduate School before allowing this. The process for credentialing such individuals typically takes one to two months, and students will need to adjust the timeline for submitting paperwork / proposing / defending accordingly. Awarding of the degree is based on the approval of the majority of the Dissertation Committee and the acceptance of the Graduate School.

Rev. 8/1/12
### VIII. Example of Full Time Degree Plan:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year, Semester</th>
<th>Hours</th>
<th>Course Number and Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Year 1, Fall</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7003 Multivariate Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7113 Advanced Topics in Clinical Psychology OR other research seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7023 Military Health Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1, Spring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7013 Advanced Research Design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7103 Advanced Topics in Biopsychology OR other research seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 6513 Psychology Research Internship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 1, Summer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 6513 Doctoral Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2, Fall</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7123 Advanced Topics in Applied Social Psychology OR other research seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>DEM 7233 Applied Forecasting Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7911 Doctoral Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2, Spring</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7143 Advanced Topics in Diversity and Health Disparities OR other research seminar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>STAT 6853 Categorical Data Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7911 Doctoral Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer of Year 2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Complete Qualifying Exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 2, Summer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PSY 7911 Doctoral Research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3, Fall</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>PSY 7921 Doctoral Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year 3, Spring</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>PSY 7921 Doctoral Dissertation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>