

# Department of Psychology

## Graduate Handbook

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### Preface

We recommend that new graduate students save an electronic copy of the version of the Handbook in effect when they enter the Department, as in some cases students will have the option of following the rules and guidelines in effect when they enter the Department rather than the newer versions of rules and guidelines.

Please provide suggestions for changes or additions to the Handbook to the current Graduate Training Committee. We revise the Handbook on an ongoing basis, and we appreciate your help in this process.

The original version of the Handbook resulted from work by Jon Krapfl, Professor of Psychology at WVU (1973-1981). The 2007 version of the Graduate Handbook was dedicated with admiration and affection to Hayne W. Reese, Centennial Professor of Psychology at West Virginia University from 1970 to 2000. The material covered by this handbook was shaped in large part by Professor Reese's academic values and his intellectual leadership in the Department of Psychology from before the inception of the first edition of the handbook in the 1970s to his retirement in 2000.

In 2021, a collaboration between the Department Chair, Director of Graduate Training, and several graduate students resulted in a significantly revised version of the Handbook.

#### ***Changes to the Document:***

7/1/22: Links updated

10/2/22: Asst DGT info updated

10/31/22: Plan of Study information removed

11/9/22: Added Arrival on Campus policy

1/30/23: Modified Award Section

2/16/23: Removed gendered pronouns

3/7/23: Modified Employment Beyond Assistantship section

3/23/23: Changed Alternate Assignment to OGEL's MOD policy & updated language about awards

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# I. Introduction

This handbook is provided by the Graduate Training Committee (GTC) to help students succeed in our graduate training areas. Much of the graduate experience takes place outside the traditional classroom setting, and much of its quality depends upon students' own initiative and judgment. To help students make good decisions, this handbook describes many of the rules, regulations, requirements, and policies of the Department, College, and the University.

## I.A. Special Notes

The [WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#) is available online through WVU's [Office of Graduate Education and Life](#). The Graduate/Professional Catalog includes University rules and policies concerning graduate education and information about students' rights and responsibilities. Students are responsible for abiding by the rules and responsibilities listed in the Graduate/Professional Catalog. These rules and policies apply to all students in the Psychology graduate programs, unless a rule or policy is superseded by a more stringent rule or policy of the Eberly College of Arts or the Department of Psychology (described in this Handbook and Program Training Area Supplements).

Any deadlines in this Handbook that fall on a weekend or University holiday will be considered to be the next date the University is open.

## I.B. Overview of the Graduate Programs

### I.B.1. Structure

The Department of Psychology offers a Doctor of Philosophy degree with concentrations in Behavior Analysis, Behavioral Neuroscience, Clinical Psychology, Clinical Child Psychology, and Life-Span Developmental Psychology (referred to as "Program Areas" below). Currently, enrollment is about 80 graduate students at various levels of training. The clinical program (Clinical and Clinical Child program areas) is accredited by the American Psychological Association, and the Behavior Analysis program is accredited by the Association for Behavior Analysis International.

For any questions regarding accreditation of clinical programs, please contact the accrediting agency, the Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation of the American Psychological Association, 750 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002. Phone Number: (202) 336-5979; Website: <http://www.apa.org/ed/accreditation>.

For any questions regarding accreditation of behavior-analysis programs, please contact the accrediting agency, the Association for Behavior Analysis International, 550 W. Centre Avenue, Portage, MI 49024. Phone number: (269) 492-9310; Website: <https://accreditation.abainternational.org/welcome.aspx>.

### **I.B.2. General Requirements**

Our program areas place a number of requirements on students during their first year in graduate school. The overall curriculum, however, offers considerable flexibility so that students can tailor their coursework and other experiences to meet individual objectives. Our programs emphasize not only classroom activities, but also basic and applied research and professional activities. Students in the doctoral programs are expected to become involved in research and professional activities during their first year on campus and to continue this involvement throughout their time in the program.

Students in the doctoral programs must demonstrate competencies in statistics and research design. All students in the doctoral programs complete a master's thesis, either before or after entering their program. In addition to the Departmental course requirements, each program area requires specific courses for students in that area. The remaining hours in each student's program are selected by the student in consultation with the student's adviser and Advising Committee. Each student must fulfill doctoral candidacy requirements before beginning a dissertation; these requirements vary among the program areas. Upon admission to candidacy, the student completes a doctoral dissertation and defends it before a dissertation committee.

### **I.B.3. Advising and Orientation**

New students register for courses and complete a number of online training modules prior to arriving in Morgantown. All first-year students attend orientation meetings during the week before classes begin in the fall. The graduate curriculum and assistantship assignments are discussed and explained by the department chair, director of graduate training, program area coordinators, and administrative staff. Therefore, new students must arrive in Morgantown in time to attend this orientation.

During orientation, students declare an academic adviser and research adviser (who are often, but not always, the same person). Typically, students determine which faculty member(s) will serve as their academic adviser and research adviser during the admissions process, prior to arriving in Morgantown.

Students are expected to be advised by one or more faculty members whose supervision facilitates development of the knowledge and skills needed for professional competence in both their Program Area and a specific research area. Continued professional development occurs through attending and participating in national and regional meetings, the Department of Psychology colloquium series, and other professional activities. Area Coordinators are available to students for information regarding Department and Program Area requirements, competencies, Departmental policy, and so forth.

### **I.B.3. Communication**

Each graduate student has access to the department letterhead, a university email (MIX) address, and a physical mailbox in the main office of the Psychology Department. Information of concern

to graduate students is communicated primarily via e-mail. Graduate students should regularly check their e-mail and department mailbox.

Mail sent to graduate students at the Department of Psychology, West Virginia University, P.O. Box 6040, Morgantown, WV 26506-6040, will be placed in their mailboxes along with campus mail and Departmental notices.

The general Department of Psychology telephone number is (304) 293-2001, and the fax number is (304) 293-6606.

#### **I.B.4. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities and disability concerns should contact the [Office of Accessibility Services](#). This office functions as a resource service, a support service, a counseling service, and a referral service for students with disabilities and disability concerns.

### **I.C. Balancing Multiple Roles**

#### **I.C.1. Work-Life Balance**

The Department of Psychology statement on Work-Life Balance can be found in the Department Handbook. Students who need support managing their multiple responsibilities are encouraged to approach their academic or research adviser(s), area coordinator, the Director of Graduate Training, or the Department Chair to discuss possible supports or modifications, including (but not limited to) the possibility of an alternate work assignment (see section below). Students who need assistance, but are uncomfortable approaching someone in the department, may contact the [WVU Program Director for Graduate Student Success](#).

#### **I.C.2. [Modification of Duties](#)**

West Virginia University offers graduate assistants (GAs) an opportunity to apply for a period of time away from assistantship duties. The request may be made when the GA requires time for the birth/adoption of a child, for illness or injury (including mental health issues), bereavement or to care for an immediate family member with a serious health condition. During the time away, known as a Modification of Duty (MOD), the GA may keep their stipend and associated assistantship benefits.

An MOD applies only to assistantship responsibilities. GAs must also discuss their academic plans with the appropriate advisor(s) for their program. Students who would like to request a Modification of Duties should read the [full policy](#) and follow the [procedures specified by OGEL to request the modification](#).

#### **I.C.3. Leaves of Absence**

Students may request a leave of absence for any reason, and need not specify the reason in the request. Common reasons for requesting a leave of absence include those related to mental health, physical health, parental leave or family leave, or other personal reasons.

Students who wish to take a leave of absence must request the leave in writing. The request can occur by email, and must contain the following information:

- The requested duration of the leave,
- A statement acknowledging that the student must inform the Director of Graduate Training by January 1 if they plan to return to the program in the fall, and that failure to provide this notification will result in the student being terminated from the program,
- Acknowledgement that the leave will suspend the student's access to university resources.

The request is submitted to the Coordinator of the student's Program Area Training Committee for consideration. The Coordinator may consult the Program Area Training Committee for advice on the decision. Before doing so, however, the Coordinator weighs the sensitivity of the request with the need to inform the members of the committee. The Coordinator then submits the request and a recommendation to the Director of Graduate Training, who decides whether to grant the leave. The Director of Graduate Training will notify the student of the outcome of the request, and file documentation about the request in the student's department file. A student who is not granted a requested leave may appeal the decision to the Department Chair.

A leave of absence may not exceed one calendar year. The student must notify the Director of Graduate Training by January 1 if they plan to return to the program in the fall semester following completion of the leave. Leaves of absence do not change the [maximum time limits for graduation](#). In addition, students may have to revise their Plan of Study upon returning to the program.

#### **I.C.4. Volunteer Teaching**

Graduate students are welcome to teach courses on a voluntary basis when such teaching is appropriately supervised and when the teaching activity does not seriously impede the student's academic progress. Plans for volunteer teaching must be made well in advance of the semester in which the course is offered to allow the course to be listed in the Schedule of Courses. In general, information about Fall semester courses must be submitted by the end of the previous fall semester and information about Spring semester courses must be submitted by the end of the previous summer.

Team teaching of courses will be allowed only when each graduate student has sole responsibility for one section of the course. One-credit courses may be taught only by one student; two-credit courses may be taught by one or two students; three-credit courses may be taught by one, two, or three students. If a course is taught by two students, each student is responsible for one half of the course; if a course is taught by three students, each student is responsible for one third of the course. Each independently taught section of the course should be

graded separately and students should complete a course and instructor evaluation following each section.

Following are the steps needed to teach a volunteer course. Students teaching a section of a regularly scheduled course only need to complete Step 1 and contact the Associate Chair concerning scheduling.

1. Obtain permission from your advisor for this addition to your workload.
2. Find a faculty member willing to supervise your teaching. The faculty member needs to be willing to perform the activities listed in the department's "Policy for Faculty Supervision of Graduate Student Instructors," on the S: Department Documentation drive.
3. Submit to the Director of Undergraduate Training a course syllabus for review by the Undergraduate Training Committee. The syllabus must be reviewed by the course supervisor before being submitted. These materials must be submitted by September 15 for Spring semester courses and by February 15 for Fall semester courses. A list of information that should be included in a course syllabus is provided on the shared S: Department Documentation drive.
4. Once approved by UTC, give the Associate Chair the 700 or 800 Student ID number of the person whose name will be listed in the course schedule, the name of the faculty member supervisor, and any preferences or constraints affecting when the course is scheduled.

## I.D. Registration and Financial Considerations

### I.D.1. Enrollment Requirements

Students should generally expect to enroll in at least one credit in each fall or spring term from their first semester until the semester in which their dissertation ETD has been accepted by the library, in accordance with the [University continuous enrollment policy](#). Additionally, students who utilize federal financial aid should make themselves aware of the requirements regarding registration, and should contact the Mountaineer HUB (304-293-1988) for questions about aid eligibility.

Students receiving assistantships must meet [University enrollment requirements](#), which require full-time student enrollment (9 credits) in fall and spring and at least 1 credit in summer. When a student receives an assistantship, at least part of the university tuition is waived, in accordance with the university [assistantship tuition waiver policy](#).

Graduate students typically enroll in 9-15 credits per semester. Students who are teaching or engaged in clinical work must register for at least one credit of teaching or clinical practicum (respectively) during each semester that they are engaged in the work.

In addition to the information above, international students should be aware of any enrollment requirements that may impact their visas; information about this is available from the [International Students and Scholars Services Office](#).

### **I.D.2. University Tuition Waivers**

There are two types of tuition charged to student accounts every semester: (a) University tuition, which is the amount charged to graduate students for attending WVU as either an in-state resident or out-of-state resident, and (b) College tuition, which reflects the cost of graduate education for trainees in programs within a given college (e.g., Eberly College of Arts and Sciences has a different college tuition than the School of Law or School of Medicine).

For students who have an assistantship in the Fall or Spring semesters, University tuition will be paid by the University. Pending the availability of funds, Eberly College of Arts and Sciences graduate and professional tuition will be paid by the Department (see [College Tuition section](#) for details). University tuition waivers for Fall and Spring semesters are processed automatically for students who have an assistantship.

To be eligible to receive a University tuition waiver for the summer session, a student must have been appointed to a graduate assistantship during the preceding Fall and Spring semesters. Otherwise, students can receive a University tuition waiver only for the summer if they are appointed to a summer assistantship (research, teaching, or service). Students must request a waiver of summer tuition. A memo and a form are distributed each March to prompt graduate student requests for these waivers. Students who do not return the form by the indicated due date are responsible for paying University and College tuition during the summer. Students who have questions about the summer waivers should contact the department Administrative Associate.

Students who do not have an assistantship (e.g., are on internship, declined an assistantship) may be eligible for a [meritorious student waiver of University tuition](#). The Department of Psychology has a limited number of merit waivers. Consequently, students should only request the number of hours needed in a given semester, and should be prepared to pay for some number of credits, should the number of requested credits exceed the number of merit waivers that are available. Generally, requests for more than 9 credit hours (6 for advanced students who are ineligible for funding) will not be approved. Recipients are required to email notification to the department Administrative Associate if they will not be using any portion of the merit waiver awarded to them for the semester. This notification must be received no later than the last day to pay an invoice for the semester.

Students in the following prioritized categories will be considered for merit waivers:

1. Students who are eligible for Department funding who receive funding from an approved source that does not cover University tuition and fees.
2. Students engaged in an approved internship (limited to one year).

3. Advanced students who are no longer supported by a graduate assistantship but who are making acceptable progress toward their degree (limited to one year).

As needed, prioritization within categories will be based on timely progress through the degree program, graduate grades received, and West Virginia residency. Prioritization will be done by the Director of Graduate Training, with difficult cases referred to the GTC. The Director of Graduate Training may distribute any additional credits available after the above priorities have been met.

### **I.D.3. College Tuition**

The Psychology Department will pay Eberly College of Arts and Sciences tuition for students who have an assistantship or merit waiver in the Fall or Spring semesters, pending the availability of funds. Students may be responsible for College tuition if they enroll in courses outside the Eberly College of Arts and Sciences; college graduate and professional tuition is often higher in other colleges. College graduate and professional tuition can be found [here](#).

College tuition payments for Fall and Spring semesters are processed automatically for students who have an assistantship.

Students must request payment of summer college tuition, and such payments are limited to courses listed on the student's academic plan of study. Students request payment of college tuition at the same time and using the same procedure as summer [University tuition waivers](#).

### **I.D.4. Fees**

Students receiving waivers of any type are responsible for paying [fees](#).

### **I.D.5. Payroll and Health Insurance**

Graduate students awarded assistantships are placed on University payroll, with official titles of Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA), Graduate Research Assistant (GRA), or Graduate Service Assistant (GSA), depending on the funding type. Graduate teaching assistants are paid in arrears, on the same schedule as all other WVU employees (see the Department Handbook for details). GRA or GSA appointments may have special provisions; students should refer to their letters of hire for details.

Graduate Assistants (all types) are automatically enrolled in student health insurance through payroll, but can opt out of health insurance under some circumstances. Details about the coverage provided by this insurance is available by WVU [Talent and Culture](#).

### **I.D.6. Regular Academic Year Support**

Graduate assistantships or fellowships normally are provided for all students in good standing throughout the normal graduate training period. Continued funding requires progress according to the [guidelines for timely progress](#) as well as satisfactory performance of the duties associated with prior assistantships. The following guidelines apply to all students in the program.

Students may be supported by fellowships (such as the Swiger or Dubois Fellowships), teaching assistantships, research assistantships, practicum placements, or other positions. Students also may apply for or accept University assistantships outside the Department. The particular form of University support a student receives must be approved by their Program Area Training Committee and the Director of Graduate Training, regardless of the source of funding (i.e., Department of Psychology funds, individual grant funds, funds from other departments, etc.).

Typically, the Associate Chairperson of the Department solicits information from students concerning their preferred source of funding for the following academic year in March or April of each year. The Associate Chairperson drafts assignments and consults with the Program Area Training Committee regarding the appropriateness of the drafted funding assignment in relation to each student's strengths and training goals.

Assignment of students to specific assistantships, opportunities for assistantships, and practica takes into consideration students' availability, standing in the program, interests, competencies, and preferences to the extent possible. Based on the Departmental needs, the Associate Chairperson will inform students of the source of their funding for the following year. When students request funds that are not controlled by the Department of Psychology (i.e., research assistantships funded by grants, teaching assistantships funded by other departments, etc.), students must obtain approval from the Program Area Training Committee before seeking or accepting such support. Faculty members seeking or obtaining grant funds to support students are advised to check with the appropriate Program Area Training Committee before assuming that a particular student will be available for that support.

#### **I.D.7. Employment Beyond Assistantship**

Per University policy, students may not hold more than the total equivalent of one assistantship (see the [Office of Graduate Education and Life website](#) for details). Students on assistantships are allowed to work up to [100 additional hours](#) per semester for a unit within the University with permission from their Program Area Training Committee and the Director of Graduate Training (international students should also check with the [International Students and Scholars Services](#) for visa implications). Working more than 100 hours per semester for a unit within the University in addition to the assistantship requires permission from the Office of Graduate Education and Life.

The student is strongly encouraged to inform in writing his or her Adviser and Program Area Coordinator of any employment outside the University. Other opportunities for brief employment can at times contribute to a student's training. Work for pay without substantial benefits directly related to the student's career goals, however, generally is undesirable. To ensure timely

completion of the degree, students may be offered advice about the potential adverse consequences of such employment.

Students must adhere to APA Ethical Standards (and, for Behavior Analysis students, the BACB Ethics Code) when representing their affiliation and credentials to outside employers. Note that only a licensed psychologist can use the title “psychologist.” Students must also be aware that when they are engaged in outside employment or professional activities that are not part of their training program, they are not insured against claims of malpractice.

In addition to the information above, international students should be aware that any employment is subject first and foremost to the conditions of their visa. International students should consult with [International Students & Scholars Services](#) if they are interested in any employment beyond their assistantship, or if they have questions about their visa requirements.

To seek employment beyond the assistantship for any unit within WVU, students must:

1. Obtain approval of the faculty advisor. The faculty advisor then routes the request to the program area training committee for approval. Once approved by the training committee, the area coordinator routes the request to the Graduate Training Committee for approval. If the student is a fellow, or the request exceeds 100 hours in a single semester, the Director of Graduate Training seeks approval from the Office of Graduate Education and Life.
1. Once appropriate approvals have been granted, the funding source is responsible for placing the student on payroll. The student should seek clarification from the funding source about who will submit the necessary documentation.
2. Once the EBO accepts the payroll form, the student may start the extra work for pay. No work done prior to EBO approval can be paid. That is, the payroll form must be approved prior to the work being completed.
3. The student is responsible for seeking input about how hours must be documented. In most cases, the student will clock in and out using MyTime.
4. Approvals for work beyond the assistantship cannot extend past the term of the current assistantship (typically, a 9-month period). If the student wishes to seek additional work in a subsequent term, new approvals must be obtained.

### **I.D.8. Summer Support**

The Department of Psychology does its best to provide some funding for all students who lack *any* summer funding from the institution and who request it. Funded positions can include teaching on-campus or online summer school courses, summer research assistantships, course support positions (e.g., PSYC 491: Field Experience), course development assistantships, and other work needed by the department (e.g., installing computers in offices and labs). Typically, there are more requests for summer funding than we have funded positions, so the following factors are used in assigning these positions to students:

1. Students who are not receiving support of any kind from the department over the summer have a higher priority than students already receiving some summer support (e.g., practicum or grant that ends mid-summer).
2. Students who have been enrolled for more than one year and have never received summer funds from the department or institution have a higher priority for summer funding over students who have received summer funding in the past.
3. Graduate students in good standing have a higher priority for summer employment than those on probation.
4. Students enrolled in the doctoral program of the Department of Psychology have a higher priority over students enrolled in other academic programs. Students from other academic units should not expect summer funding from the department, but can be hired if no graduate student in the department is interested or available for a designated position.
5. Because faculty supervision of teaching is limited over the summer, first-time instructors do not receive the amount of supervision we normally provide. Therefore, for teaching positions of both on-campus and online summer courses, students who have taught a class offered in summer school before and were evaluated positively by their teaching supervisors are given preference over students who have yet to teach a class. Students who have taught a class before and were evaluated positively by their teaching supervisors are also eligible for teaching a different class over the summer based on their teaching experience; they are given a higher priority over students who have yet to teach a class.

Students do not need to obtain approval to accept summer support, but should consult with their adviser before accepting summer support outside the Department. Students who request summer funding from the Department must inform the Associate Chairperson about any other sources of support. Departmental summer funding consists of teaching assistantships, practicum assignments, research stipends, and occasionally other forms of funding.

The Director of Clinical Training solicits applications for clinical practicum placements that begin in the summer and the Associate Chairperson solicits applications for other forms of Departmental summer funding in March. Students are assigned to these sources of funding based primarily on their qualifications, and secondarily on their rank, history of prior funding, and progress and standing in their program. To the extent possible, students are not assigned to more than one source of Departmental summer funding.

#### **I.D.9. Number of Years of Funding**

Students entering the doctoral program in Psychology after completing a bachelor's degree can expect to receive a stipend and University tuition waiver for 4 years. Students entering the doctoral program after completing a Master's degree elsewhere can expect funding for 3 years if their request for a thesis waiver is approved, and for 4 years if they are required to complete a thesis as part of their program (see [Section III.D.2](#)). Eberly College of Arts and Sciences fees are non-waivable and thus are the responsibility of the student. The current fee schedule is available on the [WVU website](#).

Students who are not on probation may request an additional year of funding (often colloquially called a “fifth year”). Requests are due between August 15th and April 1<sup>st</sup> of the student’s 3<sup>rd</sup> year (if tracked for 4 years) or 2<sup>nd</sup> year (if tracked for 3 years). This allows sufficient time for the student to establish a performance record for the training area to consider in its deliberations about whether to grant the funding request.

To request an additional year of funding, students submit a short (one page or less) rationale for remaining at WVU for an additional year and a copy of their curriculum vita to their area coordinator. The area training committee reviews the requests and decides whether or not to grant the request, taking into consideration the student’s professional development, training area needs for admitting new students during the next admissions cycle, and criteria outlined in the training area supplement to this Handbook. If the request is granted, it is understood that this constrains the availability of resources that might be offered to an incoming student. It is also understood that the student will refrain from entering the job market, and that faculty will refrain from writing letters of recommendation in support of such efforts. The additional year of funding is conditional on the student remaining in good standing, including but not limited to proposing the dissertation by Dec 15 of the following academic year (year 4 if the student enters the graduate program with a bachelor’s degree).

Students who plan to enter the job market in their final year of graduate training (4<sup>th</sup> yr for students entering with a bachelor’s degree; 3<sup>rd</sup> yr for students entering with an approved master’s degree) should not request an additional year of funding. However, if the student’s job search is unsuccessful, and funding is available, they are able to receive funding if assistantships are available. Similarly, if a student does not request an additional year of funding or requests an additional year of funding and the request is disapproved, the student is still eligible to receive funding, when funding is available.

#### **I.D.10. FICA—Federal Insurance Contributions Act (Social Security Exemption)**

Information about the student exemption for FICA tax can be found on the [IRS website](#). The determination of whether or not a graduate assistant is exempt from FICA withholding is an automated process made on a pay-cycle-by-pay-cycle basis each semester. If a graduate assistant does not meet credit hour requirements each pay cycle, each semester, FICA will be withheld from the paycheck. FICA will continue to be withheld until the credit hour requirements are met. To ensure that FICA is not withheld from their paycheck, graduate assistants must be registered for classes by the appropriate payroll processing date.

When students receive summer funding, there are special considerations for enrollment during the summer term because the number of credits impacts FICA withholding as well as the student’s responsibility for fees. Students should carefully read the university’s [guidance on summer enrollment](#).

### **I.E. Graduate Student Role within Junior Colleague Model**

The Department of Psychology at WVU uses a “Junior Colleague” training model, which emphasizes positive and productive professional relationships between faculty and graduate students. This section outlines the specific role of graduate students within the Junior Colleague Mode. For more information about the Junior Colleague Model, please refer to the Department Handbook.

### **I.E.1. Department Participation**

Graduate students serve as voting representatives on all standing Department committees. Graduate student representatives are encouraged to participate freely in all meetings. When matters of student business are discussed, graduate student representatives are dismissed from committee meetings to maintain student privacy.

Graduate students are encouraged to participate in all Departmental activities and appropriate university and community activities. For example, graduate students are involved in planning and conducting Departmental conferences and social events and in selecting graduate applicants and new faculty members.

Graduate student input is considered whenever possible when faculty members make decisions that affect graduate student training (such as making changes in requirements, assigning office or research space, implementing new policies, making teaching and practicum assignments).

Graduate students are involved in faculty evaluations at several levels, including evaluating individual and classroom faculty performance and serving, if elected, as full voting members of the Faculty Evaluation Committee.

### **I.E.2. Graduate Student Relationships with Faculty**

Contact among faculty members and graduate students outside of the classroom is frequent and informal. Graduate students typically address faculty members on a first-name basis.

Graduate students and faculty members should set clear expectations for communication and professional interactions at the start of their relationship. This may include topics such as expected response times for emails, turn-around times for edits to drafted documents, acceptable methods for communication (e.g., email, text, phone calls), and other personal/professional boundaries. Such expectations can be set informally or formally (e.g., using a checklist).

Graduate students share joint responsibility with their advisers for their timely progress in the program. Thus, faculty members show a professional interest in graduate students' general well-being, progress, and accomplishments. To that end, graduate students should expect appropriate reinforcement and constructive criticism of their research ideas, papers, teaching activities, and so forth from faculty members. Graduate students can also expect that faculty members will assist them in obtaining resources to support their work and in solving work-related problems, at least as much as the faculty member would assist any other colleague.

Faculty members and graduate students seek one another's input and advice when appropriate. Both parties are respectful of one another's time, opinions, professional questions, suggestions, and so forth, and are courteous toward each other at all times. Both parties minimize interruptions and distractions during meetings. Faculty members strive to be as accessible to graduate students for consultations as they would be for their faculty colleagues.

Graduate students are free to select faculty members to serve as advisers and on thesis, prelim, and dissertation committees. These selections are, of course, also with the faculty members' consent and within the constraints of University and [Department](#) guidelines.

Faculty members treat graduate students as colleagues in social situations. For example, faculty members introduce students to colleagues and interact with students at social functions.

Student-faculty relationships sometimes can be disrupted by personality clashes or other considerations. If such disruptions occur, the parties should first seek resolution through discussion. If resolution is not achieved, the student may seek advice from the Area Coordinator or the Director of Graduate Training (or the Department Chair in cases where the Director of Graduate Training is perceived to have a conflict of interest). As an alternative, or in addition to seeking advice from faculty within the Department, students may seek advice outside of the Department (e.g., from the [Program Director for Graduate Student Success](#) in the Office of Graduate Education and Life).

## II. Advising Committee

### II.A. Introduction

Each student is required to select an adviser who, along with the student's Program Area Training Committee, assists in designing a training plan intended to facilitate attainment of the student's long-term professional goals. The student and adviser should work together to ensure that the student can accomplish the training plan in accordance with the department timelines for funding and milestones.

DegreeWorks serves as the record of the courses a student must complete to meet graduation requirements. Students use DegreeWorks to monitor completion of graduation requirements. Information about DegreeWorks can be found on the [WVU University Registrar's website](#).

Students and their advisers consult DegreeWorks during preregistration to determine the courses that should be taken during the coming semester. In the annual evaluation of the student's progress, the Program Area Training Committee assesses the correspondence between the student's activities and the training plan, in accordance with significant deadlines that are listed in the Program Area Supplements.

## II.B. Advising Committee

### II.B.1. Membership

Advising Committees consist of the core and associate faculty members of the student's Program Area Training Committee. The student's adviser and two other Area Training Committee members sign the student's Plan of Study form on behalf of the Area Training Committee. One of these members must be outside the student's Program Area. Clinical Child and Clinical students must have at least one signature from an Area Training Committee member who is not a clinical psychologist. The third signature will be provided by another core Area member.

### II.B.2. Selecting an Adviser

Students declare academic and research advisers during orientation. Typically, students are informed which faculty member will serve as their adviser(s) during the admissions process, prior to arriving in Morgantown. If not, after obtaining the faculty member's explicit consent to serve as the adviser(s), the student must inform the Director of Graduate Training of the name of the student's academic adviser by October 1.

The academic adviser must be a core member of the student's Program Area Training Committee. The role of the academic adviser is to work with the student to prepare a Plan of Study, to be available for consultation with the student as the student enrolls for courses or works toward area milestones, and to deliver feedback to the student following evaluations of student performance. The academic adviser may or may not also serve as the student's research adviser and supervisor. The student can [change](#) academic advisers at any time during graduate training. Students may also change their research adviser at any time, but such changes are typically done between completion of the thesis and dissertation (e.g., if the student's research interests shift or there is a better interpersonal match with a different faculty member).

### II.B.3. Changing/Replacing the Adviser

If a faculty member is unable or unwilling to continue as an academic or research adviser, the student is responsible for obtaining a replacement. The student also may choose to replace the adviser.

To change the adviser, the student submits a Change in Adviser Form to the Area Training Coordinator. The requested change is then reviewed by the Area Training Committee and, if approved, signed by three Advising Committee members (the adviser, one core member, and one Associate member; note that these members do not have to be the same individuals who signed the original Plan of Study). The request is then reviewed by the GTC. If the GTC approves the request, the Director of Graduate Training files the form with the Department's Graduate Records Office and notifies both advisers (old and new) of the change.

## II.C. Arrival on Campus

New students should plan to arrive to campus at least 10 days before the start of classes to accommodate new-student orientation activities. In rare circumstances, students may need to delay their arrival. This most often occurs for international students who encounter difficulties obtaining a visa. In the event that students are delayed, they must seek approval for the delayed arrival by emailing the Director of Graduate Training, and they must arrive no later than the first day of classes. Failure to arrive by the first day of classes may result in the student needing to defer their admission to the following academic year.

## III. Department and Program Requirements

### III.A. University Requirements

Students must adhere to the University requirements and regulations concerning degree conferral described in the [WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#).

### III.B. Master's Degree

#### III.B.1. Doctoral Students

Doctoral students must earn a Master's degree prior to earning a doctoral degree. Students entering a doctoral program with a Master's degree from another university or in another field are not required to obtain another Master's degree, but may be required to complete a thesis following the guidelines in Section IV (see the section on [thesis waivers](#)) or a comparable research project. If completion of a thesis is required by the Program Area Training Committee, the student may elect to obtain another Master's degree.

Doctoral students entering the program without a Master's degree will receive an M.S. degree in psychology upon completion of requirements specified in the [WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#).

#### III.B.2. Maximum Time Limits for Meeting Master's Degree Requirements

Doctoral students who do not complete their Master's degree requirements by May 15 of their third year (see [milestones](#)) are ineligible for continued Departmental funding and also will be considered for dismissal.

The WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog provides information about [maximum time limits](#) for completing all course work used to meet Master's degree requirements. Procedures for revalidating course work that falls outside the maximum time limit are also described in the

Graduate/Professional Catalog. However, the Department may terminate students who fail to make adequate progress before the university maximums are reached.

## III.C. Doctoral Degree

### III.C.1. Courses

Many of the required and elective courses for the doctoral degree are taken in the student's first two years on campus. [The WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#) explains how students can meet the department requirements for three courses in research design and data analysis based on the particular Program Area.

Independent Research (PSYC 797) - Students who are conducting research should enroll in at least one credit of PSYC 797 each semester during which they are research active.

Seminar on Teaching Psychology (PSYC 606) – Students who teach lecture courses are required to take a 1-credit Teaching Seminar simultaneously with their first experience teaching a lecture course.

Teaching Practicum (PSYC 790) – Students are required to enroll for 1-3 credits of PSYC 790 each semester or summer session during which they are teaching a Departmental course.

Other Practicum Courses (PSYC 630, 660, 670, 730, and 740) – Students in some programs are required to or may volunteer to engage in practicum experiences during their graduate education (see [WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#)). Both funded and unfunded practica are arranged only by the Program Area Coordinators, in consultation with the Director of Graduate Training. Students must not negotiate practica with out-of-Department individuals or agencies without the prior knowledge and consent of their Program Area Coordinator. Students must enroll for at least one credit of the appropriate practicum course during any semester or summer session during which they engage in paid or unpaid practicum work undertaken for the purpose of enhancing their education in psychology.

Program Area Course Requirements – Students must complete the core and elective courses specified by their Program Area Training Committee, as specified in the [WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#).

### III.C.2. Competencies and Other Requirements

Research Competency – Students are required to demonstrate research and communication skills through the development of a written Master's thesis and a written dissertation, both based on empirical study of a psychological topic, and oral defenses of the [thesis and dissertation](#).

The Department also expects students to conduct research in addition to the thesis and dissertation. Students normally receive Independent Study (PSYC 797) or other research course credit for this work.

Other Competencies – Some Program Areas require additional demonstrations of competencies. See the Program Area Supplement for further information.

### **III.C.3. Doctoral Qualifying Examination (Prelim)**

Passing the qualifying examination is a prerequisite for admission to doctoral candidacy. The examination is often called the “preliminary examination” or “prelim” in this Department. Each Program Area Training Committee constructs and evaluates its own preliminary examination. Students should consult the Program Area Supplement for their program area’s requirement and procedure.

Students must specify a timetable for completing the preliminary examination in the Plan of Study and, depending on the program, may be required to specify the general area(s) for the preliminary examination.

### **III.C.4. Admission to Doctoral Candidacy**

Admission to doctoral candidacy is by vote of the Department faculty, on the recommendation of the student’s Program Area Training Committee. To be considered for doctoral candidacy, the student must have completed all requirements for the Master’s degree (including documentation that the electronic thesis has been accepted by the library), passed the preliminary examination, and be advanced by the Program Area Training Committee for consideration by the Full Faculty. Program Area Training Committees’ recommendations are based on consideration of the students’ coursework and grades, satisfactory performance of professional duties (including clinical skills when appropriate), timely progress, satisfactory performance in research, and consistent exhibition of professional behavior.

After a positive Department faculty vote, the Director of Graduate Training notifies the student and Department Chair, and routes the information to the student’s file in the Department’s Graduate Office. The Department Chair informs the Eberly College Office of Graduate Students of the date of advancement to candidacy when submitting the forms to create the dissertation committee. If a student is not recommended for admission to doctoral candidacy by either the Program Area Training Committee or the Department faculty, the student will be [terminated](#) from the program.

### **III.C.5. Continuous Enrollment**

Students formally admitted to candidacy are subject to [WVU continuous enrollment requirements for graduate students](#) as a condition of their continued candidacy.

A student who fails to enroll will be dropped from candidacy unless the student has been granted a [leave of absence](#). If the student then wishes to request readmission to candidacy, the student must first retake and pass prelims. In addition, students who have been inactive (i.e., not enrolled) for two or more years must reapply for admission to the Department and University before completing a degree.

### III.C.6. Maximum Time Limits for Meeting Doctoral Degree Requirements

The WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog provides information about [maximum time limits](#) for completing all course work used to meet degree requirements following admission to doctoral candidacy. However, the Department may [terminate students](#) who fail to make adequate progress or for other reasons at any time.

In the event a student fails to complete the doctorate within five years after admission to candidacy, the university allows for requests for an extension. Students who need an extension should follow the [university guidelines](#).

If a student does not meet the time limits specified in the student's Plan of Study, the Program Area Training Committee may [terminate](#) the student or stipulate another time limit that is less than the maximum stipulated by the WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog.

## III.D. Course and Thesis Waivers

### III.D.1. Course Waivers

Students may request waivers for any course listed in the Plan of Study by documenting competency in the material covered in the course. Competency may be demonstrated through completion of an equivalent course or through other experiences (e.g., applied work, independent reading, or passing an examination).

To apply for a waiver, a first-year graduate student must complete a Waiver Request Form and submit it to the WVU faculty member who currently teaches the course. The faculty member will assess the student's competence (which may include giving the student an exam), and complete and sign the waiver form. If approved by the faculty member, the waiver will then be considered by the GTC. If the GTC approves the waiver, the signed Waiver Request Form will be returned to the student to be attached to the Plan of Study.

Students must submit waiver requests to the faculty member who currently teaches the course by September 15, and then to the graduate training committee by October 1. These due dates allow time to consider the request prior to the student's Plan of Study meeting. However, if the request is to waive a course that is normally required for students during their first semester, the student must submit a Waiver Request Form no later than Monday of the week prior to the start of classes. Unless the instructor of the course recommends a waiver of the course prior to the first day of class, the student must attend, but not enroll in, the course. If the waiver is not recommended, the student must then add the course by the [University deadline](#).

### III.D.2. Thesis Waivers

A student entering the program with a Master's degree with a thesis from an accredited university may request waiver of the thesis requirement. Typically, waivers of the thesis are

provided only when the student has previously completed a thesis that is deemed equivalent to what would normally be done at WVU.

To apply for a waiver, the student must complete a Waiver Request Form and submit the form and a copy of the thesis to the Coordinator of the student's Program Area Training Committee, by September 15 of the student's first year in the program. The Coordinator circulates the document among all core faculty members of the appropriate Program Area Training Committee. After reading the thesis, the faculty may ask to meet with the student and discuss the research in an informal oral examination.

The faculty will develop a consensus evaluation by the Plan of Study due date. Two outcomes are possible:

1. The document may be accepted as completely meeting the thesis requirement if, in the opinion of the faculty, the thesis is comparable in scope, purpose, method, and execution to theses successfully completed within the program. The student's progress in the program will be judged according to the probation and dismissal dates for major academic milestones for students entering with a master's degree, as specified in Section V.C and in the Program Area Supplements.
2. The document may be judged as not acceptable. In this case, the student will follow the standard sequence of steps to complete a thesis within the program (proposal, research, oral defense, etc.), but will not be required to obtain another master's degree. The student's progress in the program will be judged according to the probation and dismissal dates for major academic milestones for students entering with a bachelor's degree (including [Department](#) and in the Program Area milestones).

Approved waiver requests will then be considered by the GTC. If the GTC approves the waiver, the signed Waiver Request Form will be returned to the student to be attached to the Plan of Study and documented in DegreeWorks.

## III.E. Course Grades

### III.E.1. Letter Grade vs. "P/F" Grades

[The WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#) contains information regarding the use and interpretation of letter grades, and "P/F" grades for graduate students.

Student performance in any courses other than independent study, practicum, and professional development courses will be assigned a letter grade ("A," "B," "C," "D," or "F").

In some circumstances, students may [audit](#) a course. Students who audit are charged the typical fees for enrolling in the course, but do not receive credit or a grade. Students who are considering auditing a course should speak with their academic and research adviser(s), and the course instructor, before registering as an auditor.

### III.E.2. Incomplete (“I”) and No Report (“NR”) Grades

Conditions under which the grade of I is given are described in the [The WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#). The Catalog also explains how grades of “I” affect a student’s GPA and graduation status. The grade of NR is assigned by the Admissions and Records Office when no grade is reported by the course instructor. Faculty modify grades of “NR” and “I” through STAR.

### III.E.3. Grades of “C” or Below

A grade of “C” or lower (including “F” or “U”) in any course taken by a graduate student is unsatisfactory and is grounds for probation. A total of two grades of “C” or lower results in the student being automatically placed on probation and is grounds for dismissal. If placed on probation, the student must fulfill the requirements specified in the probation letter for probationary status to be removed (see the section on [probation](#) and the [Graduate Catalog](#) for details).

Students who earn a grade of “C” or lower in a course, regardless of probation status, are strongly encouraged to develop a plan with the Program Area Training Committee to remediate the course content.

## III.F. Graduation

### III.F.1. Application for Graduation and Diploma and Declaration of Defense Date

At the beginning of the semester in which a student plans to graduate, the student must email the Department’s Assistant Director of Graduate Training so that a change in status can be processed. The student then completes an “[Application for Graduation and Diploma](#)” form (available online through the student’s MIX account and the STAR system).

Due dates for meeting graduation requirements will be distributed via email by the Director of Graduate Training at the beginning of each semester and also will be posted above mailboxes in the main office of the Department.

If a student is deleted from the graduation list, they must file a new “Application for Graduation and Diploma” form.

Even if a student meets all requirements for graduation, the student’s transcript and diploma can be withheld by the Office of Admissions and Records if the student has outstanding University bills. Students must return all keys before leaving campus.

The Director of Graduate Training is the student’s point of contact in the Department for information about graduation deadlines and procedures.

### III.F.2. Degree Conferral Letters

Students sometimes request a letter from the university confirming that a degree will be conferred. Such conferral letters are most commonly requested by students on pre-doctoral internship or students leaving for a position before the degree is officially conferred. Only the registrar can supply such letters. When a conferral letter is needed, the department must certify the student for graduation (early) in DegreeWorks. Then, the Eberly Director of Graduate Studies emails the registrar with the request. Unfortunately for students on internship, confirmation of conferral letters cannot be requested until it is possible to certify that the internship requirements have been met (i.e., there is zero chance the internship requirement will not be met). Generally, this means that such letters are only available when the internship period is nearly complete. Students with questions about conferral letters can email registrar@mail.wvu.edu to see what letter can be obtained at that time, prior to all requirements being met.

### **III.F.3. Early Participation in Commencement**

Students who will graduate in August and wish to participate in graduation ceremonies in May can apply to participate, and such requests are typically granted if all degree requirements except ETD acceptance or completion of the internship have occurred. However, students may only participate in the May ceremony in the year immediately preceding the August graduation. Students who will be on internship for a year (e.g., Clinical/Clinical Child students) are not eligible to participate in graduation in the term before their internship, even if all other degree requirements have been met.

### **III.F.4. Policy on Enrollment During Final Semester**

Graduate students are subject to University requirements for continuous enrollment as specified in the WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog during the semester (or summer) of graduation and must complete registration by the normal [registration deadlines](#).

## **IV. Procedures for the Thesis and Dissertation**

Students in the doctoral program are required to complete thesis and dissertation research projects prior to obtaining the Ph.D. Each of these projects requires empirical research that is approved and overseen by a committee of faculty members selected by the student in accord with the guidelines provided below. The thesis research is conducted under the supervision of the thesis committee chair; the dissertation is developed and conducted more independently by the student with assistance and oversight provided by the dissertation committee chair.

Normally, students can expect faculty members to return feedback on thesis and dissertation documents within two weeks.

In addition to the information below, students also should refer to their [Training Area's Supplement to the Handbook](#) for additional regulations and guidelines, and to the [WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#)

## IV.A. Forming a Committee

### IV.A.1. Master's Thesis Chair

Prior to selecting a thesis committee chair, the student often holds informal discussions with relevant faculty members about a research idea. Ideally, the agreed-upon research project will be in an area of interest to both the student and the faculty member. The chair may suggest the research area and problem, but allow the student flexibility in articulating the specific problem and developing the design of the experiment. Per University regulations, only “regular” members of the Graduate Faculty may be thesis committee chairs. Information regarding Graduate Faculty status of faculty members is available from the [Office of Graduate Education and Life website](#). The chair of the thesis committee is not necessarily the student's academic adviser.

### IV.A.2. Master's Thesis Committee

The thesis committee is composed of at least two other members in addition to the [chair](#). Committee members should be selected by the student in consultation with the thesis committee chair. The majority of the committee members (including the chair) must be “regular” members of the Graduate Faculty. Information regarding Graduate Faculty status of faculty members is available from the [Office of Graduate Education and Life website](#). At least one committee member must be from outside the student's program area and can be from outside the Department of Psychology (in the case of Clinical and Clinical Child students at least one committee member must come from outside these two program areas). Questions about whether or not an individual qualifies as being outside the student's specialization area should be directed to the Department Chair.

### IV.A.3. Dissertation Committee Chair

A student can form their dissertation committee only after being admitted to doctoral candidacy. Prior to selecting a dissertation committee chair, the student should hold informal discussions with relevant faculty members about a research idea. Ideally, the agreed-upon research project will be in an area of interest to both the student and the faculty member. However, the student is expected to take leadership in both suggesting the research problem and designing the experiment under the guidance of the chair. Only “regular” members of the Graduate Faculty may be dissertation committee chairs. Information regarding Graduate Faculty status of faculty members is available from the [Office of Graduate Education and Life website](#). The chair of the dissertation committee is not necessarily the student's academic adviser.

### IV.A.4. The Dissertation Committee

The dissertation committee is composed of at least four faculty members (including the chair), unless otherwise specified in the student's [Program Area Supplement](#). One of the dissertation committee members serves as the dissertation committee chair. Committee members should be selected by the student in consultation with the dissertation committee chair. The majority of the committee members (including the chair) must be "regular" members of the Graduate Faculty. Information regarding Graduate Faculty status of faculty members is available from the [Office of Graduate Education and Life website](#). At least one member must be from outside the Department of Psychology and at least one other member must be from outside the student's program area (in the case of Clinical and Clinical Child students at least one committee member must come from outside these two program areas). Questions about whether or not an individual qualifies as being outside the student's specialization area should be directed to the Department Chair.

#### **IV.A.5. Approval of the Committee**

Faculty who agree to serve on a thesis or dissertation committee, including the chair of the committee, indicate their willingness to serve by signing the Master's Thesis or Dissertation Committee Request Form. The student submits it to the committee members and to the committee chair for their signatures. Next, the student submits the Committee Request Form to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training. In the case of dissertation committees, the Assistant Director of Graduate Training confirms that the student has been advanced to doctoral candidacy. The Assistant Director of Graduate Training then submits the form to the Department Chair for approval. Approval of the committee depends on whether the requirements for committee composition outlined above have been met. If the Department Chair approves the committee, then the Chair informs the student and sends the committee information to the College using the [Eberly Candidacy Form](#). If the Department Chair does not approve the committee, then the Chair sends feedback to the student and the student modifies the committee and restarts the committee-formation process. Full approval of the committee must be completed before the proposal meeting.

#### **IV.A.6. Substituting Committee Members**

Substitution is appropriate only if a faculty member resigns, is or will be on leave at the time the committee meetings are scheduled, or is unable to be present at the prospectus meeting or final defense. [Faculty members who resign from the university but are willing to complete their committee service may do so.](#)

The student and the committee chair first must discuss potential substitutions. The student, chair, and substitutes complete the "Change of Committee Chair or Member Form," which the student submits to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training, who forwards it to the Department Chair for written approval. Once signed by the Department Chair, the Change of Committee Chair Form is returned to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training, who notifies the student of approval and who documents approval of the change in the student's departmental file. This process must be completed prior to the proposal or defense meeting. If any changes in

committee membership beyond the substitution of one committee member are necessary, a new committee must be formed using the same procedures as the initial committee formation.

## IV.B. Proposal Meeting

### IV.B.1. Proposal Preparation

The student must prepare a formal proposal of the research. This proposal is prepared in consultation with the committee chair before the committee is convened for its proposal meeting. The student should check the [Program Area Supplements](#) for any special Program Area requirements for the proposal. See also the [general guidance](#) on theses and dissertations provided below.

### IV.B.2. Proposal Meeting Arrangements

The proposal meeting can be scheduled only after formal approval of the committee by the Department Chair.

After the proposal is approved by the committee chair, the student provides an electronic and paper copy of the document to each of the other committee members, unless only an electronic copy is requested. The student schedules a meeting of the committee. Each member of the committee must receive the document and agree to the time and place of the meeting at least 10 working days (i.e., Monday through Friday, excluding university holidays) before the date of this meeting.

The usual time allotted for a proposal meeting is two hours. The student is responsible for [scheduling a room](#) and making the necessary arrangements for audio-visual equipment needed for the proposal meeting. Departmental policy precludes students from providing food or beverages at the proposal meeting.

Committee meetings may only be scheduled on days when the Department of Psychology is open for business (i.e., meetings may not take place on weekends or University holidays). Because most faculty in the Department of Psychology are appointed on contracts that require service from August 16 to May 15 of the year, committee meetings are normally held between August 30 through May 15 to account for the 10-working-day period between distribution of the document and the meeting. No constraints are placed on the time of day for a meeting, but all committee members must agree to both the date and time of the meeting.

### IV.B.3. The Proposal Meeting

The student and all members of the committee must be present at the proposal meeting, either in person or through videoconferencing software. The meeting must be adjourned if any member is absent. Proposal meetings are closed to those not on the committee. The proposal meeting may

be postponed or cancelled prior to the meeting if the majority of the committee agrees that the proposal is insufficiently developed for the proposal meeting to take place.

The proposal meeting consists of a brief presentation by the student followed by discussion of the proposal by the committee and the student. The student should assume that the committee members have read the written proposal document, and therefore the presentation should be approximately 10 minutes long, and devoted primarily to method. The rest of the meeting should be devoted to discussion and questions. The proposal meeting must include discussion and committee approval of the planned data collection procedures, including who will actually collect the data and when the data will be collected. The student is asked to leave the room at the end of the meeting, at which point the committee members decide the outcome of the proposal meeting.

#### **IV.B.4. Outcome of the Proposal Meeting**

The outcome of the proposal meeting can be approval, disapproval, approval with changes, or approval withheld pending review of changes.

If the proposal is approved, each committee member should endorse the approval (i.e., by signing the cover page labeled as “approved” or by sending an email to the chair from their professional email address noting approval with no changes). The chair should compile these approvals, along with the approved proposal document, into a PDF and send that PDF as an email to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training within 24 hours of the proposal meeting. The Assistant Director of Graduate Training files the PDF in the student’s department file and .

If the proposal is not approved, the student may revise the proposal and hold another proposal meeting.

If the proposal is approved with changes, the student must make a list of the changes and submit the list by e-mail to the committee chair and to all committee members within one week of the proposal meeting. Each committee member should send an email to the chair from their professional email address noting approval of the changes. The chair should compile these emails, along with the approved proposal document and the list of changes, into a PDF and send that PDF as an email to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training within 24 hours of receipt of the final approval. The Assistant Director of Graduate Training files the PDF in the student’s department file.

If the proposal is not approved at the meeting, the student must take the corrective actions prescribed by the committee, which may include sending an updated version of the document, a list of the changes, preliminary data, or other measures to the committee members within one week of the proposal meeting. Each committee member should then send an email to the chair from their professional email address noting approval of the changes or other measures, or suggesting further corrective action. Once approval is granted, the chair should compile the approval emails, along with the approved proposal document and any documents related to the corrective action, into a PDF and send that PDF as an email to the Assistant Director of Graduate

Training within 24 hours of receipt of the final approval. The Assistant Director of Graduate Training files the PDF in the student's department file.

The proposal is considered approved when the approval emails and approved document are placed in the student's file.

#### **IV.B.5. External Approval of Research**

Any research conducted by WVU faculty, staff, and students must be approved by the Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRB) or the Animal Care and Use Committee (ACUC) prior to the beginning of data collection. Note that Departmental approval is also needed if participants are to be recruited from psychology classes (see Policy on Research Studies Using Undergraduate Subjects). Students are responsible for ensuring that their research has been approved by the IRB or ACUC even if they do not write the IRB/ACUC proposal.

### **IV.C. Final Examination (Defense Meeting)**

The final examination for the Master's degree is an oral defense of the thesis. For the Doctoral degree, the final examination is an oral defense of the dissertation.

#### **IV.C.1. Declaration of Defense Date**

No less than two weeks prior to the final examination date, the student must submit an "[Eberly College Thesis and Dissertation Defense Date Declaration form](#)." This form is signed by the committee chair, each member of the committee, and the Department Chair and approved by the College. When the student receives notification of approval from the College, they forward the notification to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training who enters the information into DegreeWorks. The Thesis and Dissertation Defense Date Declaration Form sets up the final examination date and signifies that the student's committee members agree to be present on the scheduled date.

#### **IV.C.2. The Document**

Before the committee can meet for the final examination, the student must prepare the written thesis or doctoral dissertation document. The student should check the [Program Area Supplements](#) for any special Program Area requirements and should refer to [The West Virginia University Guide to the Preparation of Master's Theses and Doctoral Dissertations](#).

After the draft is approved by the committee chair, the student delivers an electronic and paper copy of the document to committee members, unless only an electronic copy is requested. The student schedules a meeting of the committee. Each member of the committee must receive the document at least 10 working days before the date of this final examination meeting.

### **IV.C.3. Other Final Examination Meeting Arrangements**

The usual time allotted for a final examination is two hours. The student is responsible for adding the event to the [university calendar](#), [scheduling a room](#), and making the necessary arrangements for any audio-visual equipment needed. Departmental policy precludes students from providing food or beverages at the examination. Defense meetings are open to the public and all members of the University community (i.e., faculty, staff, and students).

Committee meetings may only be scheduled on days when the Department of Psychology is open for business (i.e., meetings may not take place on weekends or University holidays). Because most faculty in the Department of Psychology are appointed on contracts that require service from August 16 to May 15 of the year, committee meetings are normally held between August 30 through May 15 to account for the 10-working-day period between distribution of the document and the meeting. No constraints are placed on the time of day for a meeting, but all committee members must agree to both the date and time of the meeting.

### **IV.C.4. Final Examination Meeting (The Defense)**

Two documents are required for the final examination meeting: the [Eberly Thesis and Dissertation Oral Defense Form](#) and an [Electronic Thesis and Dissertation \(ETD\) Submission Signature Form](#). Each document serves a distinct purpose. The committee uses the Oral Defense Form to record the outcome of the final oral examination. The committee uses the ETD Submission Signature Form to record the committee's approval of the written document.

The student and all members of the student's committee must be present at the examination; the meeting must be adjourned if any member is absent. See the [Substituting Committee Members](#) section if a substitution is necessary.

The final examination meeting may be postponed or cancelled before the start of the meeting if the majority of the committee agrees that the document is insufficiently developed for the meeting to take place.

The final meeting presentation should be on the order of a research presentation at a conference symposium, that is, no more than 20 minutes to cover rationale, methods, results, and discussion. As with the proposal meeting, the remaining time should be devoted to discussion and questions. Upon completion of the discussion and questioning, everyone except the committee members must leave the room so the committee can deliberate and make a decision about passing or failing the student on the oral defense.

### **IV.C.5. Outcome of the Final Examination Meeting**

At the conclusion of the oral defense, each committee member (including the chair) signs the [Oral Defense Form](#) and records their vote as to whether the oral defense is passed or failed. Information regarding the conditions that constitute failure of the defense by the Committee as a

whole are explained in the WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog in the section on [degree regulations](#).

Immediately following the meeting, the signed Oral Defense Form is returned to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training (either on paper or digitally). The Assistant Director of Graduate Training places a copy of the student's file and then sends the original (if a paper form) to the College Graduate Records Office in Woodburn Hall. The Assistant Director of Graduate Training must return the Oral Defense Form to the Graduate Records Office no later than 4pm the day following the defense meeting (or next business day).

If the committee decides that the student has failed the oral defense, the committee may decide whether or not to schedule a reexamination (which must be approved by the College Dean). If the committee decides not to allow a reexamination, the committee is disbanded and the student's future in the program (which could include dismissal or beginning a new thesis or dissertation with a new committee) will be determined by their Program Area Training Committee.

If the written thesis or dissertation document is approved at the meeting by the committee without changes, each member must sign the [ETD Submission Signature Form](#). If corrections or changes are required, committee members have the right to see the fully revised document before signing the ETD Submission Signature Form. The chair of the committee should not sign the ETD Submission Signature Form until all corrections and changes to the document have been made.

The final approved version of the thesis or dissertation document must be [submitted electronically](#) to the WVU Library. After the document is accepted, the student must forward the notice of acceptance of the document to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training who enters the date of approval into DegreeWorks. Students are not expected to provide a final paper copy of the document to the chair and other members of the committee, unless requested to do so.

## **IV.D. General Information and Guidelines on Completing Thesis and Dissertation Research**

### **IV.D.1. Departmental and Other Support of Thesis and Dissertation Research Costs**

Funds to cover certain expenses associated with the conduct of thesis and dissertation research may be available through both the Department of Psychology and the University.

### **IV.D.2. Student Responsibilities**

The student writes the proposal and final document for the thesis and dissertation. Any assistance with data collection and analysis from individuals other than Department faculty members or committee members must be specified at the proposal meeting and approved by the committee. Deviations from the proposed methods and analysis must be approved by the committee.

### **IV.D.3. Institutional Review Board and Animal Care and Use Committee Approval**

The Institutional Review Board and the Animal Care and Use Committee are extra-Departmental committees, the purpose of which is to ensure the safety and protection of, respectively, human and animal participants in research projects. Students should familiarize themselves with the IRB or ACUC guidelines for research with humans or animals, as is appropriate to their research. Before any research (including collection of pilot data) with humans or animals is initiated, the research must have official written approval from the IRB or ACUC. Ordinarily this approval involves submitting a protocol describing the research; however, students should consult with their research supervisor before seeking IRB or ACUC approval to ensure that the supervisor does not already have approval from the appropriate committee to conduct the research project. In cases where students conduct research under a previously approved IRB or ACUC protocol, the student is responsible for obtaining, reading, and adhering to the procedures described in the approved protocol. Students are advised that approval of research by either the IRB or the ACUC entails review at several levels and protocols should be submitted well in advance of the anticipated starting date of a research project.

The IRB and ACUC guidelines include procedures for submitting a protocol. A copy of the Guidelines, together with relevant forms, may be obtained from [university IRB](#) and [ACUC offices](#) at the Office of Sponsored Programs and are available electronically.

Research that involves recruiting participants from psychology classes must also be approved by the Department. See Policy on Research Studies Using Undergraduate Subjects for guidelines.

### **IV.D.4. Guidelines for Thesis and Dissertations Proposals (see also Program Supplements)**

Students should discuss appropriate topics and methods with their committee chairs. Dissertations are expected to be an original contribution to knowledge.

The proposal should describe the research problem in sufficient depth and breadth that the rationale for the study is clear to the committee members and the procedures could be replicated on the basis of the proposal alone. In most cases, the proposal document will be no more than 25 pages of text, excluding cover page, references, and supporting materials. The student should check with the chair and committee, along with the Program Area Supplement, to determine if they prefer a brief introduction in the proposal that will be expanded for the final document, or if they prefer a complete introduction in the proposal that will require minimal modifications for the final document. The proposal, along with the list of changes requested by the committee at the proposal meeting, is a formal agreement between the student and the committee as to what will constitute the thesis or dissertation project. However, students are also encouraged to pursue additional logical analyses or research questions that arise in the course of conducting the proposed research.

Generally, proposals will include introduction, method, data analysis, and reference sections, along with relevant appendices.

- Introduction – The introduction should include a relevant and concise literature review based on a thorough search of appropriate computerized databases and relevant books and journals. The student is responsible for knowing that the problem to be investigated has not been studied previously in the proposed way.
- Method – The method section should be as complete as possible. Ideally, the method section in the final thesis or dissertation will be virtually identical to this section of the proposal, but with the past tense instead of the future tense. It may be modified if changes in the method were approved by the committee. This section must include information about the design, selection of research participants, tests, manipulations, instructions, and so forth. Also, attention should be given to issues such as the feasibility, reliability, and validity of the independent and dependent variables. The proposed method must be sufficient to answer the research questions. Doing so may require only citation of previous research in which the procedures were used, or it may require pilot work.
- Data Analysis – The section on data analysis should indicate how conclusions will be drawn from the data. This section should include information on how the dependent variables are measured and any manipulation or cleaning of the data. This section should also indicate what inferential statistics or other analytic strategies will be used.
- References – The reference section must be complete and use accurate APA style.
- Appendices – Copies of instruments and forms to be used in the research should be provided in appendices. Copyrighted materials must not be photocopied, but rather should be described and properly referenced in earlier sections. Original copies of copyrighted instruments may be provided with the proposal or loaned to committee members for reference during the proposal or final examination meeting. Unless appropriate approvals are granted by copyright holders, copyrighted materials should not be included in the appendices of the final document to be submitted to the ETD website.

#### IV.D.5. Timely Completion of Theses and Dissertations (Milestones)

Students are expected to complete their theses and dissertations in a [timely manner](#), but students sometimes encounter impediments to this process. The purpose of this section is to provide guidance and advice to students to help them complete their theses and dissertations in an appropriate amount of time.

Students should be aware of [probation and funding termination dates](#) for thesis and dissertation proposal completion and thesis completion. However, milestones for the thesis proposal and thesis completion are one semester earlier than the probation dates. Thus, students who are required to complete a Master's thesis should plan to have their thesis proposal approved by the end of the Spring semester in their first year and to complete their thesis by the end of the Spring semester in their second year. The milestones for dissertation proposal completion varies according to program and whether or not a student is required to complete a thesis (see Program Area Supplements).

The following sample timeline illustrates how a thesis or dissertation can be completed according to the milestones (assuming a student entered with a Bachelor's degree). Variations from this timeline may occur with different types of studies (large vs. small literature to review,

more or less difficult and time-consuming data collection, complex vs. straightforward analyses, etc).

Thesis	Dissertation	Dissertation (entering with approved thesis)
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Select a committee chair, begin reviewing literature, develop question and method.		
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Fall 1	Fall 3	Spring or Summer 2
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Complete literature review, write proposal, hold proposal meeting.		
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Spring 1	Spring 3	Fall 3
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Obtain IRB/ACUC approval, begin data collection.		
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Summer 1	Summer 3	Fall 3
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Complete data collection, analyze data.		
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Fall 2	Fall 4	Spring 3
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Write final document, hold final meeting.		
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Spring 2	Spring 4	Spring 3 or Fall 4
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#### Suggestions on Completing Theses and Dissertations in a Timely Manner

1. Get started early. Begin discussing (and reading about) ideas for the thesis with potential committee chairs soon after beginning the program. Begin thinking about (and reading about) ideas for the dissertation while completing the thesis. Allow extra time for obtaining some needed articles and books through interlibrary loan.
2. Select a reasonable project. Read only the directly relevant literature initially; the rest can be read later. Pick a subject population that will be reasonably easy to obtain. Do not plan a study that requires a huge sample size (unless you are certain you can obtain the subjects). If necessary, conduct pilot work to determine the feasibility of obtaining subjects and of the experimental procedure. Make a reasonable estimate of the amount of time data collection will require by getting advice from others who have conducted similar studies.
3. Meet regularly with the committee chair. Commit to completing a specific task before each meeting.
4. Assume that there will be many revisions of both the proposal and the final document. Discuss with your chair whether the document should be submitted in sections or as a whole. If submitted in sections, work on other sections while waiting for feedback. Develop intermediate target dates and a plan for getting feedback on drafts.
5. Overlap tasks. Enter and code data and assess the analysis plan while collecting data when it is appropriate to do so. Run analyses on partial data to debug your analyses. Expand the introduction and rewrite the method section while collecting data.
6. Devote consistent amounts of time to the project.
7. Break the project into small, manageable tasks. Do not try to write the entire document or do all of the analyses at once.

#### **IV.D.6. Formatting Theses and Dissertations**

Follow the most recent edition of the APA Publication Manual on all matters of style not covered in this section. Format requirements for theses and dissertations described in the [WVU Guide](#). Stylistic suggestions given in the WVU Guide should be followed unless they are in conflict with either the APA Publication Manual or with instructions given in this Handbook (including the Program Area Supplements). References may be single spaced with a double space separating each reference rather than completely double spaced. They should appear in a hanging-indentation format.

## **V. Student Evaluation**

### **V.A. Annual Evaluations**

The annual evaluation is a comprehensive and systematic method of monitoring student progress that also provides students feedback regarding their work in the program. Program Area Training Committees evaluate the progress of first-year students at the end of the first semester and all students at the end of each year. The evaluation process is designed in part to ensure that students complete their degrees within the planned time frame. Students whose progress appears inadequate may be placed on [academic probation](#). In addition, unsatisfactory performance, as determined by the annual evaluation, may result in withdrawing the student's support or dismissing the student from the graduate program. Program Area Training Committees rely on several sources when gathering information concerning students' academic and professional activities: the Plan of Study, the Annual Activity Report, practicum and/or teaching evaluations (as appropriate), professional behavior and the student's vita.

#### **V.A.1. Annual Activity Report**

Students are asked to complete Annual Activity Report forms by April 15 each year. One copy of the completed Activity Report, accompanied by an updated curriculum vitae, must be submitted to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training for placement in the student's permanent file. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, students submit only an updated curriculum vitae to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training for placement in the student's permanent file.

#### **V.A.2. Vita**

The Latin word "vita" ("life") is usually understood to mean "professional life." Note that there are many formats for a vita and other examples may be obtained from faculty and other students. Update your vita frequently. Your adviser may be of help if you have questions about constructing your vita. Be certain to include in the vita the date on which it was constructed or modified.

## V.B. Process and Outcome of the Annual Evaluations

### V.B.1. Process

The student's Program Area Training Committee, and primary research mentor (even if outside the area committee) review and discuss the student's evaluation materials. The Program Area Training Committee ensures that written feedback is obtained from any supervisors of the student (e.g., research mentor, teaching supervisor, practicum supervisor) who are unable to attend the evaluation meeting. The written feedback document is signed by all core members of the Program Area Training Committee, and by the student's primary research mentor. The student normally receives feedback concerning performance during the evaluation period no later than May 15 (or February 1, when students are evaluated at midyear). The student's adviser, or another core member of the Program Area Training Committee, reviews the feedback with the student.

### V.B.2. Outcome

Students whose progress is satisfactory will maintain eligibility for continued funding.

Students whose performance or progress is unsatisfactory may be given [probationary](#) status, have their [funding terminated](#), and/or be recommended for [dismissal](#) from the graduate program.

## V.C. Probation and Funding Termination Dates for Major Academic Milestones

### V.C.1. Probation and Funding Termination Dates for Doctoral Students

The doctoral programs are designed for students to complete their training in 4 years (or 3 years if the student enters with an approved Master's thesis), plus an additional year in an internship for clinical students. The department target-date [milestones](#) are designed to assist students with their timely progress through the program.

Students may anticipate funding for only 4 years (3 years for students entering with an approved Master's thesis) of doctoral training. Thus, the Department has established probation and funding termination dates for the accomplishment of three major academic milestones: the thesis proposal and completion and the dissertation proposal. [University regulations](#) provide information on time limits for the completion of the dissertation. The Department dates are:

	<u>Milestone Probation date</u>	<u>Funding termination date</u>
Thesis proposal completed	December 15, Year 2	May 15, Year 2
Thesis defense completion	December 15, Year 3	May 15, Year 3
Dissertation proposal completion	December 15, Year 4*	May 15, Year 4*

\*Year 3 for students who entered with an approved Master's thesis.

The thesis or dissertation proposal will be considered “completed” when a copy of the written [proposal when the approval materials are placed in the student's file](#). The signed proposal must be accompanied, when appropriate, by a list of changes required by the committee that has been approved and signed by the committee chair, in consultation with committee members as needed.

The thesis or dissertation will be considered completed when the electronic document is accepted by the library.

### **V.C.2. Consequences**

Students who do not complete a milestone prior to the [probation date](#) will be placed on probation until the milestone is completed. Probation and its termination are automatic.

Doctoral students who do not complete a milestone prior to the funding termination date will be ineligible for Departmental funding in the following year. In addition, the Graduate Training Committee (GTC) will recommend that the student's Program Area Training Committee dismiss the student. If the student is not dismissed, the student may become eligible again for funding in a subsequent year. The counting of a student's years in the program continues unless the student receives an approved leave of absence (see Section III.H).

## **V.D. Probation**

### **V.D.1. Grounds for Probation**

[The WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#) provides a definition of probation and explains the consequences for students of being placed on probation. Information on procedures for removing students from probation also can be found in the [Graduate/Professional Catalog](#).

Students may be placed on probation by their Program Area Training Committee for reasons related to academic or professional performance in addition to failing to meet the milestone dates described above. Specific grounds for probation include, for example, not removing an incomplete grade by the deadline and receiving one grade of C or lower.

### **V.D.2. Procedures**

University procedures require that letters notifying students of placement on probation include specific elements (described in the [WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#)). In the Department, when a Program Area Training Committee places a student on probation or removes a student from probation, the Program Area Coordinator sends a letter to the student and to the Director of Graduate Training for placement in the student's file. At the Department level, students may appeal being placed on probation by providing written grounds (typically via email) to the Department Chair. Appeals to the Department Chair must be submitted within 10 days of being notified of placement on probation. Students should consult the [WVU Graduate/Professional](#)

[Catalog](#) for information about probation and appeal procedures at the Department, College and University levels.

### **V.D.3. Consequences of Probation**

Students who miss the probation date for a milestone in a particular year or who are on probation for other reasons at the end of an academic year will receive lower priority for the next year's assignments of teaching (including summer), practica, and offices (to the extent practicable).

## **V.E. Student Dismissal and Resignation**

### **V.E.1. Grounds for Dismissal**

The following conditions are grounds for dismissal of a student:

- Graduation.
- Unsatisfactory performance or progress as determined by Program Area Training Committee annual evaluation.
- Major deviation from the approved Plan of Study including time table for graduation.
- Failure of prelims.
- Failure to be recommended for admission to doctoral candidacy by either the Program Area Training Committee or the Department faculty.
- Inability to form a Thesis or Dissertation Committee.
- Unauthorized leave.
- Academic Misconduct (includes plagiarizing and research misconduct). See the [WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog](#) for more information. See course syllabi for special rules used in specific courses.
- Two or more grades of "C" or below.
- Failure to remove two or more concurrent incompletes (i.e., incompletes that are on the student's transcript simultaneously) by the deadline. See Section III.E.2 for more detail about incompletes.
- Failure to meet the academic and professional standards described in this Handbook.
- Violation of any of the institutional, academic, or behavioral standards described in the [WVU Graduate/Professional Handbook](#), the [American Psychological Association code of ethics](#), or codes of ethics specified for the student's Program Area (see Program Area Supplements).

### **V.E.2. Procedures for Dismissing a Student**

Discussions of potential dismissal can be prompted from any source (e.g., faculty member, GTC, any other party). Formal recommendations for dismissal are initiated by Program Area Training Committee. The training committee writes a memo to the GTC specifying the grounds for dismissal of the student. Recommendations are reviewed by the GTC. The GTC votes on whether to accept or to reject the recommendation. The Director of Graduate Training records

the vote and notifies the student of the decision in a memo specifying the grounds for dismissal, effective date of dismissal, and, in the case of delayed dismissals, conditions that must be met in the interim. The Director of Graduate Training copies the training area and the Department Chair on the memo.

### **V.E.3. Appeals and Grievances (see also the section on [Ethical Issues and Grievances](#))**

Program areas or students who are dissatisfied with the decision of GTC on dismissing a student may appeal to the Department Chair. At the Department level, students may appeal decisions made by GTC to the Department Chair. Appeals should specify the grounds for appeal and be sent to the Department Chair by email. Appeals to the Department Chair must be submitted within 10 class days of being notified of the GTC's decision. Students should consult the [WVU Graduate/Professional Handbook](#) for other details about grounds for dismissal and appeal procedures at the Department, College, and University levels.

### **V.E.4. Procedures for Resignation**

Students may choose to resign from the doctoral program in psychology for a number of reasons. To resign, the student submits a memo to the Director of Graduate Training. The Area Coordinator needs to be "cc"ed (carbon copied) on this memo. The memo includes the effective date of the resignation and a few sentences that explain the reason for the resignation. If the date of resignation is not immediate, the Area Training Committee specifies the conditions under which the student is allowed an extended resignation date. These conditions are reviewed by the Graduate Training Committee. The Director of Graduate Training normally offers to meet with the student before accepting the resignation. After accepting the student's resignation, the Director of Graduate Training gives the memo to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training to file in student records. The Assistant Director of Graduate Training submits a request to the Registrar's Office to change the student to non-degree status.

## **V.F. Awards**

### **V.F.1. Philip E. Comer Award for Graduate Student Teaching**

Purpose. The Comer Award recognizes outstanding teaching by students enrolled in the doctoral programs in the Department of Psychology. The award commemorates the exemplary contributions made by Dr. Comer to the teaching mission of the Department and University.

Eligibility. Graduate students are eligible for nomination in their third through fifth years, if they entered the program with a Bachelor's degree, and in their second through fourth years, if they entered the program with an approved Master's degree.

Nominations. Nominations are due October 15. A student may be nominated by any faculty member or graduate student. Self-nominations are welcome and encouraged. Nominations are submitted electronically to the Director of Graduate Training and the Assistant Director of

Graduate Training for review by the Graduate Training Committee. Nominations should include: (a) copies of summaries of student ratings for all courses taught at WVU (end-of-semester evaluations only), (b) list of name and email address for all WVU teaching supervisors, (c) list of teaching-related activities, (d) sample teaching materials developed by the nominee (may include syllabi, exams, lecture notes/slides, handouts, etc.).

Selection of Awardee. Any number (including zero) of students can be selected for the award each year. Award recipients are selected by the Graduate Training Committee, in consultation with the Undergraduate Training Committee.

Criteria:

- A. Teaching excellence relative to all graduates of our program, not simply relative to students graduating in a particular year.
- B. Originality/excellence of student-developed teaching materials.

### **V.F.2. Don Hake Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Career**

Purpose. To recognize doctoral students whose careers represent the ideals of scholarship, citizenship, and professionalism. The Outstanding Graduate Student Award was initiated in September 1986 in memory of Don Hake.

The Department may choose not to give the Hake Award every year. The nominees should be outstanding relative to all graduates of our program, not simply relative to students graduating in a particular year. However, in the noncompetitive spirit demonstrated by Dr. Hake, no upper limit is placed on the number of students who may receive the award in any year.

Eligibility. Graduate students who have had their dissertation proposal approved and who are in year 3 if they entered with an approved master's thesis and year 4 if not are eligible.

Nominations. Nominations are due February 15<sup>th</sup>. The Director of Graduate Training will solicit nominations for the award. Nominations may be made by the Area Training Committees or by individual faculty members. The nomination letter should specify the source of the nomination. The Nominator assembles the following information for presentation to the GTC. Note that students should not be told that they are being nominated for this award. Items a and b below are available in student's files.

- a. The student's current vita
- b. Evaluation letters for each year the student has been in the department (faculty are not responsible for gathering their evaluation letters, the Assistant Director of Graduate Training will compile the evaluation letters for all nominees)
- c. One-page (or less) memorandum of nomination in which the student's performance in each area of concern is summarized, including at least scholarship, citizenship, and professionalism (see definitions below).

- d. Additional letter of support from other faculty (not required).

All nomination materials (with the exception of evaluation letters) must be compiled and emailed to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training on or before the nomination deadline.

Selection of Awardees. Nomination materials will be made available for faculty review in the Student Records Office. All faculty will be invited to rate and comment on the nominees. Ratings and comments will be treated confidentially and reviewed by the GTC. The awardees will be selected from among the nominees based on the information in the nomination packet and any ratings and comments received. The selection is an item of student business, and therefore the student representative will not take part in any aspect of the procedures.

Criteria. Nominees are expected to be outstanding in each of the following areas:

- a. Scholarship includes research and performance in courses, seminars, teaching, practica, or other applicants of basic knowledge in psychology. “Research and Other Scholarly Activity” is broadly defined in the Department’s Faculty Activities Report. In general, Awardees are expected to have published and presented their research.
- b. Citizenship is defined by the quality of a person’s participation in a community, such as the department, university, city or profession. The good citizen participates actively in departmental affairs and may participate in the concerns of the university, city or profession. The Department is a community of student and faculty scholars and of professional staff. Its community affairs include but are not limited to the following: committee work; advancement of its members (e.g., by mutual cooperation in research, help in writing, if authorized, and sharing of expenses for professional travel); opportunities for learning (e.g., by developing seminars and by participating in colloquia); opportunities for research (e.g., by sharing of laboratory space, equipment, and skills); and extracurricular activities (e.g., departmental parties and picnics). The good citizen of any community also improves or at least maintains the quality of life in the community.

Professionalism means conformity to the ethical and behavioral standards of one’s profession.

Ethical standards are specified by at least three professions: (a) the standards of psychological research and/or service delivery specified, for example, by the American Psychological Association or Society, the Association for Behavior Analysis, the Society for Research in Child Development, and the Gerontological Society of America; (b) the standards of a university instructor specified, for example, by some of these organizations and by the American Association of University Professors; and (c) the standards of a university student specified in the West Virginia University Student Handbook and the Department of Psychology Graduate Handbook.

### **V.F.3. The Barry Edelstein Graduate Student Research Award**

Purpose. To encourage graduate students to publish their master’s theses and recognize the best published thesis each year.

**Eligibility.** Graduate students in the Ph.D. program whose thesis has been published or is in press. The graduate student must be the first author on the publication and the research must have been conducted at WVU. Students must be full time students in the Ph.D. program at the time of nomination. Students who have exceeded five years of training (four years if entering the program with an approved master's thesis) are ineligible. Students may apply for the award only once.

**Nominations.** Nominations should be submitted no later than February 15 of the academic year in which the award is to be given. Only self-nominations are allowed. Nominations are submitted by the student via email to the Director of Graduate Training and the Assistant Director of Graduate Training for review by the Graduate Training Committee. Other supporting information (e.g., letters of recommendation) will not be considered. Nominations should include (a) the published manuscript based on the master's thesis, and (b) a one-page or less letter of nomination. If the manuscript is 'in press,' a copy of the editor's letter indicating that it has been accepted for publication without changes should accompany the nomination. The nomination letter should include (a) how the study contributes to the field (e.g., its strengths, what makes it unique), (b) a brief description of the journal and why it was selected (e.g., it is the flagship journal in the field and so has a high impact, etc), (c) the date of ETD approval, and (d) the date the manuscript was submitted to the journal in which it was published.

All nomination materials (with the exception of evaluation letters) must be compiled and emailed to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training on or before the nomination deadline.

**Selection of Awardee.** The awardee will be selected by the Graduate Training Committee from among the nominees based on the overall quality and merit of the document. Up to Two awards of \$1,500 each will be awarded each year. The award will be presented at the annual Department of Psychology award ceremony.

**Criteria:**

- A. Potential impact on the field
- C. Originality/creativity
- D. Importance of questions addressed
- E. Use of existing theory, research, or both
- F. Extent to which methodological elements (e.g., sample, measures, data analysis) are adequately described
- G. Quality of interpretations and conclusions

#### **V.F.4. Department of Psychology Graduate Student Award for Outstanding Service**

**Purpose.** To recognize doctoral students who demonstrate outstanding and extraordinary service to the department/university, discipline of psychology, and/or community. Students who are nominated should be notable for their efforts with regard to advocacy, giving back to the discipline or local community, and/or improving the Department of Psychology at WVU, the Eberly College, or University.

The Department may choose not to give the Award every year. The nominees should be outstanding relative to all graduates of our program, not simply relative to students graduating in a particular year. Up to two students may win this award each year.

Eligibility. 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> year graduate students

Nominations. Only self-nominations by students are allowed. Award nomination packages should include:

- a. The student's current vita.
- b. A memorandum of nomination which specifies in 500 words or less why the student's service to the Department/College/ University, profession, and/or community is to be considered outstanding and extraordinary.
- c. The names of three individuals familiar with the student's service contributions who have agreed to endorse the nomination. Names and email addresses should be listed at the bottom of the memorandum of nomination. The student must seek advance permission from the three individuals to include their names.

All nomination materials must be compiled and emailed to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training on or before the nomination deadline.

Selection of Awardees. The Director of Graduate Training will solicit nominations for the award. Nomination materials are submitted by the student to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training by February 15.

Nomination materials will be made available for faculty review in the Student Records Office. All faculty will be invited to make evaluative comments on the nominees. These comments will be treated confidentially and reviewed by the GTC. The awardee(s) will be selected by the GTC from the nominations received, based on nomination materials and faculty comments on these materials. The selection is an item of student business, and therefore the student representative will not take part in any aspect of the procedures.

Criteria. Nominees are expected to have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to service, evidence of which may be found **within at least two** of the following three categories:

- a. Service to the Department/College/University: Examples of service in this category include the following: outstanding service as the student representative to Department committees; extraordinary service as a volunteer for example, through serving as a unpaid graduate teaching assistant, consistently serving as a capstone poster reviewer, representing the Area, Department, or University at events (e.g., recruiting events, First Year Academy briefings/tours, Psi Chi meetings); outstanding contributions to graduate student professional organizations such as

WVU's Graduate/ Professional Student Senate, or as a member of other University groups (e.g., Black Student Union, Science Policy Organization, Neuroscience Club).

b. Service to the profession: Evidence of service to the profession may include: (a) outstanding service as a leader to professional organizations such as American Psychological Association Graduate Student (APAGS) Association, Association for Psychological Science, or other professional organizations; (b) Professional service to local divisions or chapters of national organizations (e.g., coordinating training opportunities for others) (c) voluntarily seeking professional training that benefits others; (d) advocating on behalf of other professionals; and (e) engaging in significant service on behalf of the science of our profession (e.g., consistently reviewing manuscripts for publication; reviewing conference presentations for awards).

c. Service to the community: Outstanding community service may include providing voluntary services to under-served or under-represented groups or fundraising for social services in the community. This activity is in addition to any such services provided as part of a practicum placement.

Examples of service are not limited to the ones described above.

#### **V.F.5. Department of Psychology Graduate Student Award for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

Purpose. Diversity, inclusion, and equity are core components we all should strive to promote within ourselves and others. The purpose of this award is to recognize doctoral students whose careers represent the ideals of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within the realms of research, teaching, clinical work, and/or service. The nominees should be outstanding relative to all students in our department with respect to the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion. To foster a noncompetitive spirit, no restriction is placed on the number of students who may receive the award in any year. However, the department may choose not to give the Graduate Diversity & Inclusion Award every year.

Eligibility. This inclusive award is open to all graduate students. Graduate students in any year of their program are eligible to self-nominate.

Self-Nominations. Nominations are due February 15th. The Director of Graduate Training will solicit self-nominations for the award. The student assembles the following information for presentation to the Graduate Training Committee.

1. The student's current curriculum vitae
2. Evaluation letters for each year the student has been in the department (students are not responsible for gathering their evaluation letters, the Assistant Director of Graduate Training will compile the evaluation letters for all nominees)
3. One-page (or less) memorandum of describing the student's performance in the areas of diversity, inclusion, and equity (see definitions below).
4. The names and email addresses for three individuals familiar with the student's

DEI-related activities who have agreed to endorse the nomination. Names and email addresses should be listed at the bottom of the memorandum of nomination. The student must seek advance permission from the three individuals to include their names.

All nomination materials (with the exception of evaluation letters) must be compiled and emailed to the Assistant Director of Graduate Training on or before the nomination deadline.

### Selection of Awardees.

Criteria. Nominees are expected to be outstanding in one or more of the following areas:

1. ***Diversity constitutes the presence of different perspectives.*** (e.g., race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and [dis]ability). In general, nominees are expected to proactively draw on a variety of diverse perspectives to inform research, teaching, clinical work, and/or service.
2. ***Equity is the promotion of justice, impartiality, and fairness.*** Topics related to equity center on understanding the root causes of disparities within our society. For example, exploring the fairness within procedures, processes, and distribution of resources is related to equity.
3. ***Inclusion ensures that diverse and marginalized groups actually are welcomed, invited, and able to participate fully in all opportunities within an organization or group.***

Inclusion focused on behaviors and social norms that make sure people feel welcomed.

Opportunities to demonstrate achievement in the areas of DEI are diverse and expansive; however, **awardees must be outstanding relative to all graduates of our program with respect to the area of diversity, equity, and inclusion.** For example, serving on the diversity committee does not constitute meeting this requirement, but research production, community activism, extracurricular teaching, and DEI-centered clinical work could demonstrate meeting the threshold of outstanding achievements. Below are some examples of achievements that could be considered outstanding DEI achievements.

1. ***Activities centered on improving the lives of diverse communities.*** This may include research products (e.g., presentations, publications, projects) focused on specific marginalized or underrepresented populations. Clinical work centered on providing a needed service to underrepresented and minoritized groups.
2. ***Work that promotes a culture of inclusion.*** For example, nominees may engage in service projects that cultivate a pipeline of diverse talent in the community. Additionally, nominees may also serve groups dedicated to improving the representation of diverse groups (e.g., professional groups). Furthermore, nominees may produce and disseminate research that promotes inclusion of underrepresented and diverse groups within science.
3. ***Teaching and mentoring committed to supporting and increasing diversity within our department, community, or profession.*** This may include creating or organizing work groups centered on DEI issues, organizing DEI learning opportunities (e.g., volunteer teaching or developing DEI-focused seminars), and supporting underrepresented minoritized individuals.

*Activism and service efforts addressing DEI concerns that promote equality and empower marginalized communities.* These activities could be in university or community settings and may include organizational or hands-on advocacy and service work (e.g., leadership positions in service groups or peaceful demonstrations).

## VI. Ethical Issues and Grievances

### VI.A.1. Academic Appeals

Students who have a grievance pertaining to an academic penalty (i.e., grade penalty, expulsion from class, academic probation, academic suspension, and academic dismissal) should consult the WVU Graduate/Professional Catalog for information on [appeal procedures](#). The Graduate/Professional Catalog provides general information on how students should be notified of an academic penalty and procedures students can take to appeal an academic penalty. Specific step-by-step guidelines for appealing academic dismissals and academic sanctions are stated. Students who wish to appeal a decision should act quickly, as appeals must occur within a specified amount of time and can be time-consuming.

The appeal procedures are different for cases of [academic dishonesty](#) and [failure to meet academic and professional standards](#).

### VI.A.2. Nonacademic Professional Appeals

The University has no formal policy regarding professional conflicts unrelated to academic performance, such as authorship and order of authors on professional presentations and publications. To make a grievance pertaining to authorship and/or similar professional nonacademic conflicts, the student should first discuss the issue with the person (faculty or student) with whom they have a grievance. If the grievance remains unresolved following this discussion, the student should ask their academic adviser to accompany the student to discuss the matter with the person with whom the student has a grievance (or go to the next step if the grievance is with the adviser). If the issue is still not resolved, the student should ask their Program Area Coordinator to meet with the student and the person with whom the student has a grievance (or go to the next step if the grievance is with the coordinator). The next step, if the conflict still stands, is for the student to ask the Department Chair to attend a meeting with the student and the person with whom the student has a grievance. Finally, if the conflict is still unresolved, the student may ask the [WVU Director of Graduate Student Success](#) to meet with the student and the person with whom the student has a grievance.

If the grievance is with a departmental staff member, the student should first go to the staff member to resolve the conflict. If the conflict cannot be resolved in this way, the student should

then go to the staff member's immediate supervisor, then to the Chair, and then to the Director of Graduate Student Success.

### **VI.B.1. Discrimination**

The [Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion](#) handles grievance complaints due to discrimination and also provides educational materials regarding discrimination (i.e., definition and prevention) and affirmative action.

Students may contact the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for specific information regarding the university's nondiscrimination policy, complaint procedure, or affirmative action policy. Students are strongly advised to examine the University's [Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Policy](#) before filing a discrimination complaint. Graduate students who supervise other graduate students or undergraduate students in research, teaching, service, or clinical teams are subject to the same nondiscrimination policies as other employees.

If a student has a grievance regarding discrimination due to race, ethnicity, nationality, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, veteran status, religion and/or other personal variables or beliefs, the student can make a [grievance complaint](#). The same grievance procedure is followed for complaints of discrimination on the basis of age, color, disability, ethnic origin, marital status, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

### **VI.E.4. Sexual Harassment & Sexual Assault**

Sexual harassment is prohibited by Federal law. The definition of sexual harassment and WVU policies regarding harassment are available through [WVU's Title IX](#) and Office of Equity Assurance which also handles grievances related to sexual harassment. The WVU policy and grievance procedure on sexual harassment is available on the Title IX and Office of Equity Assurance website. The grievance procedure can be initiated by filling out [this form](#). The same form is completed for sexual harassment involving discrimination (see section on [Discrimination](#)).

Faculty and students receive Title IX training as a condition of employment. Graduate students who supervise other graduate students or undergraduate students in research, teaching, service, or clinical teams are subject to the same Title IX policies as other employees. Training materials are available from the Title IX and Office of Equity Assurance for students and faculty who are interested in further information on handling sexual harassment issues in the classroom and other professional situations.

If a student is unsure as to whether or not sexual harassment occurred or has questions about the process of filing a complaint, the student may call or text WVU's anonymous Equity Assurance Hotline 304-906-9930 which is monitored 24 hours per day, seven days a week. Hotline staff are available to consult with students regarding filing a complaint, what to expect if a complaint is filed, and available resources; students remain anonymous.

To report sexual harassment or discrimination, the student should contact WVU's Title IX Office of Equity Assurance at 304-293-5600; <https://titleix.wvu.edu/home>. The Title IX Office will provide information and assistance to the student filing a complaint. The Title IX Office of Equity Assurance will consult with the student regarding the university's grievance process and provide information about legal action. Students are advised that when discussing or reporting a sexual harassment incident(s) to a faculty supervisor, the faculty supervisor is obligated to contact WVU's Title IX Office of Equity Assurance.

There are options available outside of the university for sexual harassment grievances. Students can report a sexual harassment and/or sexual assault incident to the Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center (RDVIC, phone: (304) 292-5100) and/or to the police. These outside sources, especially the RDVIC, will in all likelihood advocate for the victim. The role of the Title IX Office of Equity Assurance is to pursue an investigation in an attempt to determine the truth.

At its extreme, sexual harassment involves sexual assault. A list of [resources](#) and information is available through The Title IX Office of Equity Assurance.

Students who experience any form of sexual assault are encouraged to seek immediate medical attention, whether or not they choose to file a complaint report and involve law enforcement. WellWVU lists [information about receiving medical attention following a sexual assault](#). Students may prefer to contact the community centers for rape crisis and domestic violence (listed below) to get assistance in obtaining medical attention.

The Rape and Domestic Violence Information Center (RDVIC), 24-Hour Hotline: 304-292-5100, <http://rdvic.org/>

West Virginia Foundation for Rape Information & Services, Inc. 304-366-9500

<http://www.fris.org/>