

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS IN THE DOCTORAL PROGRAM IN SOCIAL & PERSONALITY
PSYCHOLOGY

(Supplement to the Graduate Student Handbook)

The following guidelines apply to all students entering the program in the fall of 2014 or later. Students entering before that time have the option of following these guidelines or keeping to those that were in effect at the time they entered the program.

The Social/Personality Psychology program at the University of Missouri subscribes to an "apprenticeship" model of training in which students work closely with one or more faculty members, including a primary advisor, on research of mutual interest. Beginning in the first year, students will be actively involved in their advisor's ongoing research program. The exact nature of this involvement will be determined by the interests and needs of both parties, and may entail attending research meetings, designing research studies, running subjects, analyzing data, and/or writing research reports. The Social/Personality Training Committee (SPTC) believes that the research enterprise cannot be meaningful and motivating until a person has this type of "hands-on" experience. Based on their research experience, students are expected to make at least one presentation to faculty and fellow students each year they are in the program. These experiences, in conjunction with completing coursework and other program requirements (as outlined below), are intended to provide a firm grounding in the theory and methods of social/personality psychology, as well as the skills to conduct and publish one's own research. Please hold on to this information and refer to it as needed.

Yearly Sequence of Events

The following 5-year plan provides a suggested timeline for progressing through the program. Based on one's background and goals, optimal progress may vary across students and should be determined in conjunction with one's advisor and other faculty.

The first year. Upon entering the social/personality psychology program, students will be assigned an advisor based, whenever possible, on a congruence of interests. It will be the advisor's responsibility to aid the student in course selection, registration, and other administrative details. During the first year, students will be expected to successfully complete a set of recommended courses (see below), and collaborate with their primary advisor on research. At the end of the first year, students will present an informal talk based on their first-year research to a gathering of area faculty and graduate students. It is recommended that students identify a Master's thesis topic during the summer following their first year, and constitute their committee soon thereafter.

The second year. Students will continue their coursework throughout the second year, and will have nearly completed all course requirements by year's end. During the second year, students will propose their thesis and work toward its completion. Students may not begin data collection without explicit and formal approval from their committee. Students are also expected to give a talk to faculty and fellow graduate students during the second year on their in-progress or completed thesis, or on other research in which they are involved.

The third year. By the end of the third year, students will ordinarily have completed all course requirements. Also, sometime during the third year, if they have not already done so students are expected to defend their completed Master's thesis, and to give a talk to faculty and fellow graduate students based on the thesis, or on other research in which they are involved.

The comprehensive requirement. Subsequent to the defense of the Master's thesis, students will be expected to fulfill the Comprehensive Requirement, as outlined in the departmental graduate student handbook, before the end of the 4th year. The purpose of this requirement is to provide the student with the opportunity to accrue and demonstrate breadth and depth of knowledge in social and personality psychology. There are 3 formal options by which to fulfill the comprehensive requirement (described below). Students should select the option that best fits their needs and goals. However, regardless of the option chosen, all students will hold an oral defense of their comprehensive "project" and all students will be responsible for the material covered in the Social and Personality Area Comprehensive Reading List (see *The Social and Personality Area Comprehensive Reading List* section). Regardless of the option a particular student pursues to satisfy the comprehensive requirement, to ensure broad coverage of topics from the fields of Social and Personality Psychology the Chair of the comprehensive committee will solicit questions from committee members as appropriate for the particular student.

The comprehensive exam committee. Regardless of the option a student elects to pursue to satisfy the comprehensive requirement, the student must assemble a comprehensive exam committee. The make-up of this committee will be the same regardless of the option a student chooses. Specifically, the comprehensive exam committee must include:

- Three "regular" (i.e., tenured or tenure-track) faculty members whose primary appointments are with the Social/Personality Training Area within the Department of Psychological Sciences; one of these members must chair the committee
- At least one "regular" (i.e., tenured or tenure-track) faculty member whose primary appointment is with a different Training Area (not Social/Personality) in Psychological Sciences
- At least one "regular" (i.e., tenured or tenure-track) faculty member whose primary appointment is with a different department (i.e., not Psychological Sciences)

Possible comprehensive exam outcomes. Regardless of the particular option a student chooses for satisfying the comprehensive requirement, there are essentially four possible outcomes:

1. The comprehensive exam committee determines that the students' submitted materials merit an oral defense and the committee proceeds with the oral defense meeting (see option 3).
2. The comprehensive exam committee determines that some portion of the student's submitted materials is insufficient to be deemed passing. In this case, students may revise some or all of those materials and the revision will be re-evaluated by the committee.
 - a. If the comprehensive exam committee determines that the revisions are of sufficient quality to proceed, the student will schedule an oral defense meeting (see option 3).

- b. If the comprehensive exam committee determines that the revision remains insufficient, the student will be deemed to have failed their comprehensive exam (see option 4).
3. Assuming the student's revised materials for the comprehensive project are deemed of sufficient quality to merit an oral defense, the student must still successfully defend their responses at the oral defense meeting.
 - a. If the comprehensive exam committee determines that the student passes the oral defense, the student may proceed to candidacy for the doctoral degree.
 - b. If the comprehensive exam committee determines that the student did not successfully defend her/his responses during the oral defense, the student will be deemed to have failed their comprehensive exam (see option 4).
4. In the event that a student fails the comprehensive exam, as determined by the processes laid out above, the Graduate School will be notified of the student's failure not longer than two weeks following the notification of the student by the committee of its decision. At this point, according to Graduate School guidelines, the student is afforded the option of re-taking their comprehensive exam, but only after a period of 6 months from the date of their failed attempt (i.e., 6 months from when the Graduate School is notified). Should the student elect to proceed, two outcomes are possible:
 - a. (see options 1-3 above)
 - b. In the event that a student fails their second attempt at the comprehensive exam, as determined by the processes laid out above, the Graduate School will be notified of the student's failure not longer than two weeks following the notification of the student by the committee of its decision. At this point, the student will be asked to leave the department's graduate program.

There are three options for satisfying the comprehensive requirement, as follows:

The paper option: Write a comprehensive review paper, such as those published in *Psychological Review*, *Psychological Bulletin*, or *Personality and Social Psychology Review*. To ensure adequate coverage within the chosen topic area, the student will develop, in conjunction with his or her advisor, a detailed formal outline with a reading list (see *The Social and Personality Area Comprehensive Reading List* section). To ensure adequate breadth in the student's perspective, the outline must also specifically address how the topic of the review relates to the larger field of social or personality psychology. The final outline and reading list must be approved by the comprehensive committee, which may be the same as the doctoral dissertation committee. Once the outline is approved, the student will complete the paper (within 6 months) without input on the written document from their advisor or other faculty. (Examples of previously approved outlines and papers are on file in the social/personality library located on the 3rd floor of McAlester Hall.). Following completion of the written paper, the student will hold an oral defense with their comprehensive committee. During this defense, the student is responsible for the material covered in their paper as well as in the area comprehensive reading list.

The exam option. Students who pursue the exam option will complete a written exam (essays), which covers material from a core set of required research methods and theory courses, in addition to other material related to students' individual interests and goals as determined by

the student in conjunction with her or his advisor (see *The Social and Personality Area Comprehensive Reading List* section). More specifically, questions for the exam will be based on readings taken from the Social and Personality Area Comprehensive Reading List (described below), in addition to a supplemental list determined by the student in consultation with her/his advisor and other members of the student's comprehensive committee. The exam will be a "take-home" exam, meaning that students will be permitted to complete the exam over the period of one week (7 calendar days) and with full access to resource materials. Thus, it is expected that the answers will be of high quality and will be well-organized and well-written, and will be evaluated in accord with these standards. In particular, students will be expected to demonstrate a high level of understanding of core concepts, commensurate with advancement to doctoral candidacy in psychology. Students' responses must be reasoned, coherent and scholarly. The exam will assess both breadth and depth of knowledge in the field of social/personality psychology as well as the students' particular research area. A student's written (typed) responses to the exam questions will be evaluated by the comprehensive committee. If a student's responses are deemed adequate to proceed, the written exam will be followed by an oral defense, generally within 2 weeks of the completion of the written exam. As is the case with the other comprehensive options (paper and teaching), during the oral defense students will be expected to answer questions about any of the material from the reading list, even material not assessed in the take-home exam. In the event that a student's written responses to one or more exam questions are deemed insufficient in some manner, the committee will give the student up to 4 calendar days to revise their written response to one or more questions. The committee will then re-evaluate the student's responses and determine whether the revised version is of sufficient quality to warrant an oral defense. If so, the oral defense will be scheduled and will proceed as described previously. If not, the student will be informed by his/her committee Chair that they have failed their comprehensive exam. (See *Possible Comprehensive Exam Outcomes* section for details on what happens next.)

The teaching option: Students who intend to pursue the teaching option for completion of the comprehensive requirement should enroll in Teaching of Psychology Practicum (TOPP) after completion of the M.A. Students apply for TOPP during October/November and begin participation in the following Spring. As part of TOPP, students will prepare and teach either Social Psychology (PSYCH 2310) or Introduction to Personality (PSYCH 2320). Students will submit a course syllabus to their committees prior to their first experience teaching the course (in the Fall Semester as part of TOPP). Advisors will conduct one course visit during the first semester of teaching and meet with students to provide feedback. During this first semester of teaching the course, all exams, handouts, and course assignments will be submitted to the committee. Students will also teach the course (2310 or 2320) in the second semester of TOPP (the following Spring). Prior to the Spring semester, students will meet with their committees to discuss potential syllabus, exam, and course revisions. During the second semester of teaching, students will set up two classroom visits, by the advisor and at least one committee member. Following the second semester of teaching, students will schedule an oral defense. The defense will cover material from the area reading list (see *The Social and Personality Area Comprehensive Reading List* section). This progression is summarized below:

1. Enroll in TOPP post-MA. (Semester 1, Spring)
2. Form comprehensive exam committee.

3. Submit syllabus to committee, electronically.
4. Teach the course as part of TOPP (Semester 2, Fall).
5. Submit all course materials to the committee as they are created.
6. Schedule advisor course visit and feedback session.
7. Schedule committee meeting to discuss course revisions.
8. Teach the course a second time. (Semester 3, Spring)
9. Schedule visits by advisor and one other committee member.
10. Schedule oral defense.

[note - in certain years the TOPP may be structured such that students only teach the course for one semester (not two, as detailed above). During these years, the following approach is recommended, subject to approval by the student's comprehensive committee**]**

The teaching option: Students who intend to pursue the teaching option for completion of the comprehensive requirement should enroll in Teaching of Psychology Practicum (TOPP) after completion of the M.A. Students apply for TOPP during October/November and begin participation in the following Spring. As part of TOPP, students will prepare and teach either Social Psychology (PSYCH 2310) or Introduction to Personality (PSYCH 2320). Students will submit a course syllabus to their committees prior to their first experience teaching the course (either in the Fall or Spring Semester as part of TOPP). During the semester of teaching, students will set up two classroom visits, by the advisor and at least one committee member. All exams, handouts, and course assignments from the semester of teaching will be submitted to the committee. Following the semester of teaching, students will schedule an oral defense. The defense will cover material from the area reading list (see *The Social and Personality Area Comprehensive Reading List* section). This progression is summarized below:

1. Enroll in TOPP post-MA. (Semester 1, Spring)
2. Form comprehensive exam committee.
3. Submit syllabus to committee, electronically.
4. Teach the course as part of TOPP (Semester 2, Fall or Spring).
5. Submit all course materials to the committee as they are created.
6. Schedule visits by advisor and one other committee member to class to observe and provide feedback on teaching.
7. Schedule oral defense.

The Social and Personality Area Comprehensive Reading List. Each student will be expected, by the time of their comprehensive process, to have a working knowledge of and familiarity with a number of key concepts in the field of social/personality psychology, as reflected in a core set of readings from the social/personality literature. The core of the Reading List will consist of readings from the syllabi of the 4 core required courses in the program, which includes the 2 courses in the Methodologies Sequence and the 2 courses in the Theories Sequence (see Area of Concentration Requirements for Social/Personality Psychology Students, below). Of course, syllabi in these courses can and often do change from year to year, and so the Reading List will not necessarily be consistent for students in different years/entering classes. For any given student, the core of his/her Reading List will be based on the syllabi that he/she used in those core courses.

In addition to the readings lists from the core courses mentioned above, the Reading List will be supplemented for each student with readings selected by the student in consultation with her/his advisor, to more specifically target literatures related to the student's interests and goals. The Reading List may also feature readings from other seminar courses. Prior to the start of the comprehensive process, the student will compile her/his Reading List in consultation with the advisor and potentially other members of the student's comprehensive committee.

The fourth and fifth years. Students will write and defend their dissertation proposal by the end of the fourth year, and defend the dissertation by the end of the fifth year. For those who opted for the comprehensive paper option, ideally, the comprehensive paper will lay the groundwork for the student's dissertation, and lead logically into it. However, it is expected that the comprehensive paper will be broader than the introduction to the dissertation. As with the Master's project, students may not begin data collection without explicit and formal approval from their committee.

Yearly Evaluation.

By April 15 of each year, students will be asked to complete a cumulative record of their year's activities, as detailed by the Graduate Student Online Assessment System (see: <https://www.missouri.edu/~gradschl/oa/> or you can link to it from the department webpage: <http://www.missouri.edu/~psywww/>). This includes first- and second-semester grades, research experiences, and any other program-relevant information, as well as all professional and scholarly activities (e.g., teaching or research assistantships, publications, talks [even those in our seminar series], posters, etc.). In addition to providing comprehensive information on the Online Assessment Form, students should also submit an updated copy of their vita to their advisor. Students should also include the program and course checklists appended at the end of this document. By the end of the academic year, students should receive a formal evaluation of their progress toward the M.A. or Ph.D. degrees by the SPTC. This evaluation will cover coursework, research, and professional skills.

Other Procedural Matters

Financial support. There are two primary sources of financial support open to graduate students in good standing: (1) research assistantships provided by the department or on a faculty member's grant, or (2) teaching assistantships provided by the department. The area and departmental policy is that students in good standing are provided support through their fifth year. Support beyond the fifth year is not guaranteed.

Coursework. While the Ph.D. program in social/personality psychology emphasizes the accumulation of research skills by participating actively in ongoing research, acceptable performance in coursework is also an integral part of the doctoral program. The training committee expects that students performing at the Ph.D. level should receive A's in the area methods and theory courses (i.e., 9320-9330, 9310-8620), and no worse than B's in other courses. Students receiving incomplete grades will be given one semester in which to remove the incomplete. After one semester, the training committee will treat the grade as equivalent to an F.

Lead time on papers. Students must provide copies of completed papers (theses, comprehensive outlines & papers, dissertations) to all committee members at least two weeks

prior to the scheduled date of the defense of that paper. Exceptions to this policy must be negotiated individually by the student with all members of the committee.

Exemption to program requirements. Students who seek exceptions to the rules and procedures established by the SPTC may appeal in writing to the training committee. The appeal should specifically indicate the reasons for the appeal.

Using a pre-doctoral grant application as your dissertation proposal: The SPTC supports and encourages students to prepare pre-doctoral grant applications (such as an NRSA or an NIH R36 [dissertation award]; please see information on departmental summer funding possibilities to support pre-doc grant preparation efforts). Note, however, that doing so often raises some format, timing, and other associated issues with regard to the proposal and defense of the comprehensive paper and dissertation. The information below is intended to provide guidance in such situations.

Students may propose to use a pre-doctoral grant application as their dissertation proposal. Although the decision to accept a pre-doctoral grant application as a dissertation proposal rests with the students' dissertation committee, the SPTC generally supports doing so. This means that, pending approval by the dissertation committee, students may present their committee with a document formatted according to the funding agency (e.g., NIH) guidelines rather than the typical APA format associated with dissertation proposals. This does not mean that submitting or even successfully obtaining a pre-doctoral grant allows the student to bypass the formal proposal and approval process of the dissertation committee. It merely means that, pending approval by the dissertation committee, students may submit the dissertation proposal in an alternative format. The dissertation committee still retains the authority to approve, reject, or request modifications to the dissertation project, regardless of the decision by the funding agency. Note that the SPTC recommends that students propose their dissertation to their dissertation committee prior to submitting their pre-doctoral grant application, as the student can then benefit from the committee's feedback.

As explained in previous sections, the typical sequence is for students to propose their comprehensive paper outline and reading list, and upon approval thereof, to write and defend the paper within a six month window. Subsequent to the defense of the comprehensive paper, students then begin working on their dissertation. However, the due dates for pre-doctoral grants (e.g., an NRSA or R36), especially considering the revision process that typically follows, are such that the student may need to have their dissertation idea articulated prior to the proposal of their comprehensive paper. In such situations, pending approval by the student's comprehensive and/or dissertation committees, the student may propose his or her dissertation prior to proposing the comprehensive paper (thereby possibly taking advantage of the dissertation committee's feedback in the preparation of their grant application). In so doing, however, the student must submit in writing a proposed explicit timeline for completing the comprehensive paper. This will typically mean proposing the comprehensive paper soon (e.g., 1 month) after proposing the dissertation (and/or submitting the pre-doctoral grant application), and within six months from that date, defending the comprehensive paper before dissertation data collection is commenced

Probation and Termination

Reasons for probation or termination. The Social/Personality Psychology training area subscribes to the reasons for termination stated in the Graduate Student Handbook. These reasons include poor grades (as defined above), poor progress, and unprofessional conduct. For the present purposes, poor progress is defined as falling more than one year behind the suggested timeline for completing the Master's Thesis, the comprehensive review paper, and the dissertation. Procedures related to probation and termination are detailed in a separate document, and may be obtained from the area director.

Area of Concentration Requirements for Social/Personality Psychology Students (24 hours)

Department regulations require students to complete a minimum of 24 credit hours within their area of concentration. For social/personality area students these requirements are as follows (for more information see the course requirement worksheet):

A. Methodologies Sequence (6 hours)

Psych 9320 - Experimental Methods & Laboratory Research

Psych 9330 - Field Research Methods

Psychology 9320 and 9330 cannot be used by social/personality students to fulfill the general departmental requirement for a third course in statistics and methods.

B. Theories Sequence (6 hours)

Psych 9310 - Seminar in Social Psychology (Overview of classic & contemporary research and theory in experimental social psychology)

Psych 8620 - Seminar in Personality (Overview of classic & contemporary research and theory in personality psychology)

C. Social/Personality Content Courses (12 hours)

Social/personality students must complete 12 hours of coursework chosen from the courses listed below. Other courses may meet this requirement if approved by the training committee.

Psych 9725 - The Literature Review*

Psych 9720 – Latent Variables*

Psych 9735 - Psychological Process Models*

Psych 9350- Studies in Social/Personality Psychology (repeatable with altered content; e.g., Interpersonal & Intergroup, Creativity, The Self, Social Cognition, Positive Psychology)

Psych 8610 – Motivation

Psych 9001 – Medical Decision Making

Other regulations pertaining to Area of Concentration requirements can be found in the Graduate Student Handbook.

Notes on Double-Counting Courses:

*Double counting statistics courses as social/personality content courses:

As noted, students may double count one statistics course (either: 9725, 9720, 9735) as both a stats course and a social/personality content course. Please note that these courses require a final paper/project and the SPTC's logic behind this opportunity is that students may double count when the final paper/project has the potential to significantly increase a student's knowledge about a content area of social or personality psychology. As such, students seeking to double count one of these stats courses are required to submit a formal proposal. These proposals are due by the end of the 9th week of the relevant semester and should be submitted to the student's primary advisor who will then forward it to the SPTC for consideration. It is expected that such proposals will be 1 - 2 typed double-spaced pages. The SPTC trusts the course instructor to monitor the statistical and/or methodological rigor of the proposed project, and thus our primary concern is with the potential of the project to enhance the student's knowledge of a social or personality area of research. Thus, the proposal should be attentive to this concern and justify the topic accordingly. This means that the proposal should detail how the project relates to and/or draws from a broader research area in social or personality. It is not sufficient to say, for example, that this project is related to cognitive dissonance theory. Rather, the nature of the connection to dissonance theory should be explained, as should the potential connection to other associated theories and topics (e.g., self-perception theory, self-affirmation theory, the nature of attitude-behavior consistency or attitude change). This typically means that the final paper the student prepares will go beyond what is expected by the course instructor in terms of its conceptual depth or scope of literature review. In addition to submitting the paper to the course instructor, the student should also submit a copy of the paper to the primary advisor who, in consultation with the SPTC, approves the final paper or not.

Double-Counting Courses for Social/Personality Area and Departmental Distribution Requirements

The social/personality area requirements co-exist with the broader course requirements of the Department of Psychological Sciences (available at <http://psychology.missouri.edu/sites/psychology.missouri.edu/files/Graduate%20Student%20Handbook%20FS2015.pdf>). To fulfill Class A Distribution requirements, students must take 3 courses across 6 designated areas: Abnormal, Biological, Cognition/Learning, Developmental, Motivation/Personality, and Social. Social Personality student will generally count their Social Theories (9310) and Personality Theories (8620) courses toward the distribution requirement, leaving them to take 1 course from either the Abnormal, Biological, Cognition/Learning, or Developmental areas. Students are not required to double count courses, and are encouraged to enroll in classes as they and their advisors deem appropriate.

GENERAL CHECKLIST OF PROGRAM REQUIRMENTS

To be updated and turned in as the cover page of your annual spring evaluation

Name: _____

Advisor: _____

Current year: _____

Year started Program: _____

Check which requirements you have completed. If you are not completing requirements within the suggested time, explain your plans for when you will complete this requirement.

Identify Master's Thesis topic.....
(suggested by end of 1st year, start of 2nd)

Constitute Masters Thesis Committee..
(suggested by start of 2nd year)

Propose Masters Thesis.....
(suggested during 2nd year)

Completed course requirements.....
(suggested by end of 3rd year)

Defend Masters Thesis.....
(suggested by 3rd year)

Propose Comprehensive project.....
(suggested by end of 3rd year/ start of 4th)

Defend Comprehensive Project.....
(suggested by 4th year)

Propose Dissertation.....
(suggested by end of 4th/ start of 5th year)

Defend Dissertation.....
(suggested by end of 5th year)

Complete Course Requirements for Social/Personality Ph.D. Students:

Class A Distribution Curriculum (21 hrs)

Ethics (1 hr): Ethics and Prof. Issues (Psyc 8910)

Statistics (11 hrs): General Linear Models I (Psyc 8710 & 8730 LAB)

General Linear Models II (Psyc 8720 & 8730 LAB)

Distribution (9hrs): (In addition to social and personality theories courses; must take 1 course from 1 of the following 4 categories: Abnormal, Biological, Cognitive, Developmental)

Social Theories (9310; also meets class B theories requirement)

Personality Theories (8620; also meets class B theories requirement)

Class B Social/Pers. Area of Concentration (24 hrs)

Methods (6 hrs): Experimental methods (Psyc 9320)

Non-experimental methods (Psyc 9330)

Theories (6 hrs): Social theories (Psyc 9310; also meets class A distribution requirement)

Personality theories (Psyc 8620 also meets class A distribution requirement)

Seminars (12 hrs): _____

Double-count opportunity

Social Seminar (1 hour/week; must be taken each semester enrolled; Psyc 9360)

Class C Research (as needed to complete minimum of 83 total hours; recommended you keep a running total)

_____ hrs to date non-Thesis research (8050)

_____ hrs to date Thesis research (8090; at least 3 hours)

_____ hrs to date non-dissertation research (9050)

_____ hrs to date dissertation research (9090; at least 3 hours)

Other courses (non-required):