

# Virginia State University

## Department of Psychology

### Master's Degree Program

#### Policies and Procedures Manual

Fall 2022



# Master's Degree Manual

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## I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

### A. GENERAL INFORMATION

This manual provides guidance and directives for the Master's in Psychology Program in the Department of Psychology at Virginia State University (VSU). Students should read this manual to learn of Departmental policies and guidelines of the program. Students may also utilize the College of Graduate Studies handbook for basic policies governing all graduate programs at the University.

### B. RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY AND INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

The Virginia State University Master's in Psychology Program recognizes, understands, respects and values the complexity of individual differences and sociocultural diversity. Subsequently, a major component of this program is the recruitment and inclusion of professionals, trainers and students from diverse cultural, social and ethnic backgrounds.

### C. NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The purpose of this policy is to establish clearly and unequivocally that the Department of Psychology prohibits the inequitable and unlawful treatment based on an individual's protected characteristics or statuses -- race, sex, color, national origin, religion, age, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, pregnancy, genetic information, disability, or any other status protected by law. The Department forbids discrimination, sexual assault, harassment, dating violence, domestic violence, stalking and retaliation as well as any other sexual misconduct by individuals subject to its control, supervision or influence. The Department of Psychology abides by the APA Code of Ethics and ascribes to the principles encoded in its preamble. Recognizing benevolence, responsibility, integrity, justice, and respect for the rights and dignity of others is core to inclusion and a conscious non-discriminatory approach to all who fall within the Department's sphere of influence.

### D. GOALS OF THE MASTER'S PROGRAM

While the primary focus of the graduate aspect of the psychology department is to prepare students for doctoral level training in psychology, the General Psychology concentration prepares students to become college professors, and the Clinical Psychology concentration prepares students to work in the public mental health sector including mental health agencies, prisons, and hospitals. At the conclusion of the Psychology program, students possess skills which are marketable and consequently are able to serve as effective agents of social change.

## II.

# ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

## A. ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

The screening process for the MS program begins on April 1st of each year. Students may be entered into the program unconditionally and conditionally. To be considered for admission to the Master's Program, a student must:

### Unconditional Admission

1. Have a minimum of 15 semester hours in psychology, including at least one course in each of the following: 1) social, personality, cognitive, or developmental psychology, 2) research methods, quantitative methods, or experimental psychology, and 3) physiological psychology. Students applying to the Master's Clinical Psychology program must have an additional course in abnormal psychology;
2. Submit official transcripts of undergraduate coursework.
3. Submit official GRE scores. The GRE is required for all applicants.
4. Complete a VSU Graduate School Application and the Psychology Department Supplemental Application, including a resume.
5. Submit a written personal statement (not to exceed three pages, double spaced) that describes your personal background, academic experience and future goals (professional and educational);
6. Submit three current letters of recommendation from professors, employers, and other professionals qualified to assess the applicant's ability to complete a Master's degree in Psychology. At least two letters should be from professors and/or psychologists.

**Students who are most competitive for unconditional admission will have:**

- A. An overall undergraduate grade point average of 3.00 (on a scale of 4.00 points)
- B. Have a minimum verbal GRE score of 153 and quantitative GRE score of 144 for the Master's of Science degree, Clinical Concentration. The GRE is not required for the Master's of Science degree, General Concentration. GRE scores should not be older than six years.

### Conditional Admission

1. Applicants can be granted conditional admission under the general provisions of the Graduate School whenever the requirements in **A)**, **B)**, and/or **C)** above are not met if additional program slots are available.
2. To be granted conditional admission, applicants also must have a minimum grade point average of 2.8 in the undergraduate major, a 3.00 grade point average during last two years of undergraduate course work.

3. To remove oneself from conditional status and achieve unconditional status, students must:
  - A. Complete all undergraduate prerequisites listed on the Program Card by the program coordinator,
  - B. Earn a B average, with no grade below C, in the first 15 graduate-level hours of their planned program of study and
  - C. Successfully complete PSYC 528 with a B or better.

## **B. TRANSFER CREDITS**

Students who would like to transfer courses taken at another institution must get approval from their Program Coordinator and the Chairperson of the Department. Students should initiate the process by reviewing the transcript and course descriptions with the Program Coordinator. The student will be asked to provide syllabi, course outlines or other course materials to facilitate the evaluation of the coursework. All transfer work must be at the "A" or "B" level from an accredited institution.

## **C. ENROLLMENT**

The program is designed for full time students. To complete the program in the recommended timeframe, students should carry a course load of 9-15 hours per semester. Students should only register for 15 credit hours with approval from their Program Coordinator. All students must maintain continuous enrollment in Master's level courses (at least one credit hour) for each fall and spring session (except for official leaves of absence) until they have completed all program requirements. Enrollment during the summer session cannot be accepted in place of registration for fall and spring sessions. Students must be registered for at least one credit hour during the semester they graduate. A student who does not enroll in courses for a fall or spring semester and has not been granted a formal leave of absence is subject to termination.

## **D. LEAVES OF ABSENCE**

While the department discourages students from taking leaves of absence in the middle of the program, students may be granted a leave of absence under certain circumstances. To apply for a leave of absence, submit a written petition and all supporting documents to the Coordinator of the Program. The petition must be approved by the Coordinator of the Program and the Chairperson of the Department. Students are granted a leave of absence for a stated period, usually not to exceed one year. A leave of absence during the academic year may be granted for verifiable personal, military, or medical reasons or emergencies. For medical leaves, written petitions must be accompanied by a statement from the doctor.

## **E. TIME LIMIT FOR COMPLETION OF DEGREE**

The maximum time allotted for completion of the Master's Degree is within six (6) calendar years from the date of initial registration in the program. Students may send a written request to the Chair of the University Graduate Policies and Petitions Committee for an extension beyond the six years.

### III. GRADES AND EVALUATIONS

#### A. GRADES

Each student must complete all required and elective coursework with a grade of “B” or higher and maintain a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 with no more than two grades of “C” (including grades of U and SP) and receive a favorable review by the departmental graduate faculty committee. For anyone with two (2) grades below “B”, or 1 grade below “C”, their continuing status will be subject to further departmental review. If the course with the unfavorable grade of “C” or below” is retaken and a higher grade is earned, the higher grade will be considered in the review. Each student will be evaluated annually. This evaluation will include academic performance, departmental contribution, and professionalism. Thus, in the event of any concern, written documentation will be given to the student.

#### B. STUDENT ANNUAL REVIEWS AND EVALUATIONS

Each student will be evaluated annually in areas such as progress in the program, coursework, scholarship, and research activities, as well as departmental contribution, ethics, and professionalism. Evaluations may also include clinical training (if applicable). This evaluation is conducted by the department faculty.

Students are required to complete coursework with a grade of “B” or higher (see Grades) and successfully complete programmatic milestones in a timely manner. Students should also be involved in department functions including attendance at colloquia, departmental activities, and meetings; participation in professional conferences and meetings; and participation in other activities and training programs beyond the minimal curriculum requirements outlined in this document. (Annual evaluation version to be sent to team)

#### C. CONDUCT EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Students are required to show good standing in the program. Thus, upon evaluation, students who fail to complete programmatic milestones, fail to meet the minimum grade requirements, or are found to be in violation of the program’s Professional Conduct Code in any other way will receive a warning letter and be put on probation. **During this probationary period the student is expected to complete the milestone in question or raise her/his grade point average by the end of the following semester.** Failure to successfully meet expectations and adjust the behavior in question during the probationary period may lead to termination from the Program.

*Termination from the Program.* If students do not make reasonable efforts to resolve issues that lead to programmatic probation, the Program Coordinator will make a recommendation to Chairperson and the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies regarding a student’s termination from the Program. Students have the right to appeal this decision to the Graduate School (see Appeals Process). Students who

have been terminated are ineligible to register in any semester or summer session until they have been properly reinstated.

#### **D. APPEALS PROCESS**

According to the College of Graduate Studies, the appeal's procedure for a student in the case of a complaint about perceived inaccurate or unfair evaluations is: 1) first contact the Coordinator of Program (Graduate Program Director if issue is with the Coordinator) 2) if the appeal is not resolved at the level of the Coordinator of the Program, then the student should contact the Department Chairperson; 3) and if the appeal is not resolved at the level of the Department Chairperson then the student should contact the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies for review of the situation by the Policies and Petitions Committee. The chairman of this committee is the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. The forms for the appeals process are provided in the Appendix.

## **IV. VSU POLICY ON THE PROHIBITION OF SEXUAL HARRASSMENT**

It is the goal of Virginia State University to provide a productive and challenging educational environment, free from sexual harassment. It is the responsibility of all members of the University community to ensure that individuals are provided equal access to education, employment and services without being subjected to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment is a type of sex discrimination and is prohibited misconduct which undermines the mission of the University.

Sexual harassment is defined as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors or other conduct of a sexual nature, or action taken in retaliation for reporting such behavior, when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or participation in a university-sponsored educational program or activity, or;
2. Submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for decisions affecting that individual's employment, academic standing or other benefits, or;
3. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a person's work or academic performance or creating a hostile and offensive work or learning environment.

Sexual harassment may include, but is not limited to: (1) Sexually suggestive conduct or remarks about clothing, body, or sexual activities directed personally at a member of the



University community; (2) whistling in a suggestive manner directed personally at others in the University community; (3) sexual propositions, invitations, or other unwanted pressures for sexual contact; (4) obscene gestures directed personally at other members of the University community; (5) patting, pinching, or any other sexually suggestive touching or feeling; (6) attempted or actual kissing or fondling; (7) coerced sexual acts; (8) assault; and (9) expressed or implied requests for sexual favors as a condition of employment, promotion or favorable academic performance.

Virginia State University will not tolerate any conduct by any member of the University community that constitutes sexual harassment as outlined in Title VII of Sect. 703 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Virginia's Human Rights Act, or other applicable state or federal laws and regulations. Upon notification of a sexual harassment complaint, the University shall take prompt and appropriate action in response to the charge presented by the complainant. Any employee of the University being advised of a complaint of sexual harassment shall immediately refer the matter to the Human Resources Manager (EEO). All complaints under the policy should be filed within 30 days from the date of the alleged harassment. Sexual harassment will not be tolerated at VSU.

The policy on the prohibition of sexual harassment was taken from the Virginia State University Student Handbook. Please refer to the handbook for the university's policy on sexual harassment in its entirety.

## **V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

One of the cornerstones of being a professional, is a focus on continual improvement through professional development. As beginning scholars there is an expectation that you will begin your careers by practicing professional development in graduate school as this reflects the expectations of your behavior over the course of your career.

Professional development includes attending non-mandatory training, providing trainings, performing research, and exploring theoretically and scientifically relevant information through conference attendance and group affiliation.

It is therefore suggested by faculty in the Master's Degree Program that students engage in research, join professional organizations (State and/or national) and attend/and or present at workshops, seminars, and professional conferences.

## **VI. PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

## **A. CODE OF CONDUCT**

Students are expected to abide by all University rules and regulations, and standards, and by the laws of Chesterfield County, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Federal government. It is not possible to list all acts of misconduct/disorderly conduct that can occur on campus, but students are required to exhibit the highest forms of good manners, behavior, and respect for the University community and its inhabitants.

## **B. CODE OF ETHICS**

Students are expected to exhibit exemplary ethical behavior as part of the University community and society. Acts of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, deliberate falsification, and other unethical acts that may be specifically defined by a student's individual discipline, are considered breaches of the Student Code of Ethics.

## **C. NONACADEMIC TERMINATION POLICY**

Students are required to follow the American Psychological Association as well as VSU ethical standards and academic integrity policies. Students must be able to perform and communicate on a graduate level and professionalism must be maintained at all times. This professional standard applies to classroom settings, research activities and community events. Consistent demonstration of unprofessional and unethical behavior will not be tolerated and serve as grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.

## **D. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY/ PLAGIARISM**

Academic dishonesty is a violation of the Student Academic Code. It is the student's responsibility to seek guidance from the instructor when there are questions or doubt pertaining to their academic integrity responsibilities. By accepting admission to Virginia State University, students are automatically subject to the provisions of the Student Academic Code and are expected to uphold and support this Code without compromise or exception.

Students are expected to comply with reporting procedures when they notice a violation, and all cases of academic dishonesty shall be reported by the instructor to the Program Coordinator and the Chairperson of the Department. The Chairperson of the Department shall report the incident to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies. Penalties for academic dishonesty may be loss of credit for the work in question, loss of credit for the course, suspension, or expulsion from the University. Students have the right to dispute any action in accordance with the Student Grievance Procedure. Ignorance of any aspect of the Student Academic Code is not a defense to an alleged violation.

*Cheating:* Cheating is obtaining an unearned academic advantage either through deliberate deception or indifference to the student academic code. A student is considered to be cheating if, in the opinion of the person administering an examination or assigned class work the student gives, seeks, or receives aid.

Cheating also includes, but is not limited to: (1) deliberate alteration of graded material for a re-grade or grade correction; (2) submitting without authorization the same assignment for credit in more than one course; (3) collaborating on any work when not allowed, either in or outside the classroom setting; (4) forging the signature of another or allowing forgery by another on any classroom related document such as class roll or an academic pledge; (5) use of unauthorized material stored or recorded on electronic devices during an exam or quiz; (6) use of "crib" notes or other unauthorized written material during an exam or quiz; (7) attempting to or allowing impersonation by another in order to take one's exam or quiz; (8) copying, alteration or fabrication of data such as that collected in a teaching laboratory or as part of a research project; and (9) intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another commit an act of academic dishonesty.

*Plagiarism:* Part of the college experience is the discovery of one's own voice. The Virginia State University teaching community is committed to helping each student find their voice. Plagiarism contradicts this end. Plagiarism is the presentation of others' ideas or written works as one's own. Written works can take the form of electronic or print media and could include - among other items - opinions, facts, and statistics. The following are examples of plagiarism.

1. Direct copying without an acknowledgment, either using quotation marks or a clear statement describing how that material was reproduced.
2. Not indicating a source when using unique words or phrases from the source. Words or phrases are considered unique if they would not be spoken or expressed the same way coincidentally. The use of unique language requires incorporation of quotation marks or a direct statement indicating who is responsible for the word, phrase, sentence, or group of sentences.
3. Not citing a source when an idea or written work can be attributed in any way to someone else.
4. Not acknowledging the contribution of any person who is a significant contributor to a work through discussion or any other such collaboration.

Although "common knowledge" does not require a reference, one may not be aware of what constitutes common knowledge. The golden rule is, when in doubt, cite. Specific examples of plagiarism are provided on the Virginia State University Academic Code Blackboard site. These examples were reproduced from the Code of Academic Integrity and Acknowledging the Work of Others, prepared by the Office of the Dean of Faculty, Cornell University and used with permission.

The code of conduct section was taken from the Virginia State University Student Handbook. Please refer to the handbook for the university's Code of Conduct in its entirety.

## **VII.**

# **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

## **A. GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

There are two types of graduate assistantships in the Department of Psychology: University supported graduate teaching assistantships (GTA) and research supported assistantships (research grants). Graduate teaching assistantships are for the academic year (beginning the first week before classes and ending the second week in May), although duties might change at the beginning of each semester. They may carry a workload up to 15 hours per week.

Applicants will be notified of their assignments by the Coordinator of the GTA Committee. All assignments will be reviewed at the beginning of each semester. Occasionally, the department may need to make changes in assignments during the year on a case-by-case basis. In addition, attention will be given to insure comparability in workloads across assistantships.

Graduate Assistants are expected to post and maintain regular office hours to insure availability to the undergraduate students and VSU faculty and staff. Performance on all assistantships is evaluated each semester.

## **B. TERMINATION OF FUNDING**

Student funding is based on the availability of university funds. Graduate assistantships normally end when the period of appointment is concluded, and the term of the assistantship agreement is fulfilled. An appointment also may end when the grant or contract supporting the student expires, for whatever reason, even if that occurs before the end of the student's current appointment. A graduate assistantship may be terminated for many reasons including:

1. Resignation/ withdrawal from the program by the student. A formal written request should be submitted to the program coordinator and department chair, with a copy to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies;
2. Performance issues that result in termination as agreed upon by the supervising faculty member, department chair and program Coordinator, with a copy to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies;
3. Academic dishonesty - failure of the graduate assistant to remain in good academic standing or to adhere to enrollment policies in accordance with this policy statement.

# **VIII. CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS**

## **A. CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY CONCENTRATION**

### **Year 1**

**Fall****Spring**

PSYC 520 Psyc Assessment I	3hrs.	PSYC 521 Psyc Assessment II	3hrs.
PSYC 517 Advanced Psychopathology	3hrs.	PSYC 519 Psychotherapy II: Techniques	3hrs.
PSYC 510 Pro-seminar	3hrs.	PSYC 528 Experimental Design	3hrs.
PSYC 522 Psyc Assessment Lab	3hrs.	PSYC 508 Psychotherapy I: Theories	3hrs.
<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>12hrs.</b>		<b>12hrs.</b>	

**Year 2****Fall****Spring**

PSYC 530 Ethics	3hrs.	PSYC 524 Practicum III	3hrs.
PSYC 523 Practicum II	3hrs.	PSYC 512 Human Growth & Development	3hrs.
PSYC 580 Statistical Methods in Health Psychology	3hrs.	PSYC 581 Statistical Methods in Health Psychology II	3hrs.
PSYC 599 Research & Thesis		PSYC 599 Research & Thesis	3hrs.
<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>9 hrs.</b>		<b>12hrs.</b>	

**CURRICULUM REQUIREMENTS****B. GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY CONCENTRATION****Year 1**

**Fall****Spring**

PSYC 580 Statistical Methods in Health Psychology	3hrs.	PSYC 581 Statistical Methods in Health Psychology II	3hrs.
PSYC 510 Pro-seminar	3hrs.	PSYC 528 Experimental Design	3hrs.
PSYC 527 Personality Theory	3hrs.	PSYC 532: Diagnosis/ Treatment of Substance Abuse	3hrs.
PSYC 514 Experimental Social Psych	3hrs.	PSYC 512 Human Growth & Devt.	3hrs.
<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>12hrs.</b>		<b>12hrs.</b>	

**Year 2****Fall****Spring**

PSYC 530 Ethics	3hrs.	PSYC 599 Research & Thesis	3hrs.
PSYC 599 Research & Thesis			
<b>Total</b>		<b>Total</b>	
<b>3hrs.</b>		<b>3hrs.</b>	

## IX. THE THESIS PROCESS

Students in the Master's Program in the Psychology Department at Virginia State University must write a thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Psychology. The thesis is a professional document that is based on an independent research project conducted by the student. The first step in the thesis process is selecting a thesis advisor.

### A. THESIS ADVISOR

The thesis advisor you select should be someone who has similar research interests as you and someone with whom you are comfortable working. Students typically meet with their advisors once a week. Students must select a full-time faculty member with Graduate Faculty status to serve as the thesis advisor. To verify if a faculty member has this status, the student may contact the Chairperson of the Psychology Department or the office of the College of Graduate Studies. **If you plan to register during the summer, discuss your plans with your advisor prior to registering.** Together, the student and the research advisor select a research topic for the thesis. The student, guided by the advisor, selects his/her thesis committee.

## **B. THESIS COMMITTEE**

The thesis committee should include a minimum of three members. The Chair of the Committee will be the student's thesis advisor and must have Graduate Faculty status. A fourth faculty member may serve on the thesis committee in the capacity of consultant. Consultants do not have input toward the student's grade for the thesis course.

## **C. PROPOSAL DEFENSE**

The purpose of the proposal defense is to present the thesis topic and research design to the committee for approval. All Master's level students must also submit a thesis proposal to their committee. The proposal should include Chapter 1 (Introduction), Chapter 2 (Selected Review of the Literature) and Chapter 3 (Methodology) and must be written in the format recommended by the American Psychological Association. Prior to the proposal defense, the student must be in good standing as a graduate student at the University. Once the advisor approves the thesis proposal document, the student convenes a proposal defense meeting with his/her thesis committee. The thesis proposal must be submitted to the committee at least two weeks before the proposal defense. All members of the thesis committee must attend the proposal meeting and approve the topic before the student is allowed to proceed. If the proposal does not meet with the committee's approval, they may elect to hold an additional meeting.

## **D. SUBMITTING AN IRB APPLICATION**

All research on human participants conducted at the University must be approved by the University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Submission to the IRB involves completing a protocol form, writing a brief description of the design and methodology, completion of an informed consent form and completing the responsible conduct of research training from the Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI) website. The instructions and forms for review can be found on the web at <https://www.vsu.edu/research/research-compliance/human-subjects.php>. Students must submit a protocol describing their intended research at least two weeks prior to the IRB meeting (the meeting dates are posted on the VSU website). **Expedited reviews are no longer conducted.** Data collection cannot begin until the student receives written permission from the IRB.

## E. THE THESIS

For many graduate students, the thesis may be their first professional document. The thesis represents an independent research project that demonstrates the student's ability to review current literature relevant to the student's project; to design an original study that will scientifically and strategically test a hypothesis, to statistically analyze data, and orally present and defend his/her results. Students typically enroll in the thesis research course (PSYC 599) each semester in their second year of the program. The thesis must meet the minimum requirements of 'VSU Master's Theses'.

Students must register for the thesis course (*PSYC 599*) each semester that they are working on the thesis. Students will receive a grade of "S" or "U" for each semester they are registered for thesis credits, except for the last semester they are registered for thesis credits, in which they must receive a grade of "A" or "B" to be awarded a master's degree. Receiving a "U" in any thesis work is tantamount to failing a course and will count toward the number of unsatisfactory grades that can lead to possible termination from the program. Students will not be awarded an "I" at any time for the research and thesis course. **To facilitate the thesis process, students may complete a *Thesis Research Planning Form* (see Appendix) at the beginning of each semester for which they are registered for thesis credits.** This form is intended to clarify both the student and advisor's expectations regarding work on the thesis and should be signed by both parties.

## F. WRITING AND FORMATTING THE THESIS DOCUMENT

The thesis has 5 chapters: Introduction, Selected Review of the Literature, Methodology, Results and Discussion. These chapters should be written to comply with the Graduate School's Thesis Manual and the American Psychological Association Publication Manual. Students may obtain a copy of Graduate School's Thesis Manual from the Graduate Studies Office. In addition to these requirements, students must also comply with the requirements of the Psychology Department as set forth in this manual.

# X. THESIS ORAL EXAMINATION (DEFENSE)

## A. REQUIREMENTS FOR THE THESIS ORAL EXAMINATION

Each Master's level student must orally defend his or her thesis as a requirement in partial fulfillment of the Master's degree. A final oral examination of the thesis will be held when the student has completed the thesis to the satisfaction of the student's advisor, all other requirements for the degree have been completed, and a 3.0 grade point average has been earned. A student is eligible to be examined on a thesis if the student: (a) has met all program requirements for a thesis examination, (b) is in good standing as a graduate student at the University, (c) is registered for thesis credits



(PSYC 599: *Research and Thesis*), (d) has a Thesis Committee, and (e) has at least a 3.0 grade point average.

The student must submit the final thesis document to the committee at least two weeks prior to the scheduled examination. **The thesis advisor will send an announcement to the department inviting everyone to the oral examination.** Oral examinations must be attended by all members of the student's thesis committee.

## B. PROCEDURES FOR THE ORAL EXAMINATION

The oral examination consists of a professional presentation by the student on the main aspects of the research reported in the thesis. The oral examination requires the student to give a 15-20 minute presentation that emphasizes the results and implications of their thesis research. The presentation should also include a brief description of the background and significance, methodology, main findings or results, implications, and future directions. After the presentation, the student will field questions from the thesis committee members. Questions from non-committee members of the Graduate Faculty, and graduate students from the candidate's graduate program will be permitted. The Chair of the thesis committee will determine whether questions are appropriate and germane to the thesis topic and how much time will be allotted for answers. After the oral examination, the student and any others who are not members of the thesis committee will be asked to leave the room and the thesis committee will discuss whether the thesis document (including the oral defense) is satisfactory.

A student who fails his/her oral examination may, at the discretion of the thesis committee, be allowed another examination not earlier than one semester after his/her failure.

## XI.

### SEQUENCE FOR COMPLETION OF THE MASTER'S DEGREE IN PSYCHOLOGY

Activity	Explanation
<b>1. Complete Program Card</b>	Must be completed twice by the student and his/her academic advisor; during the semester of entry and in the last semester. The student must be in good standing.
<b>2. Select your Thesis Advisor</b>	The advisor must be a member of the Graduate Faculty
<b>3. Enroll in Research and Thesis Course PSYC 599</b>	<b>Complete the Thesis Planning Form (optional)</b>

<b>4. Complete Thesis Research Planning Form</b>	All students should complete a Thesis Research Planning Form at the beginning of each semester for which they are registered for thesis credits.
<b>5. Select Thesis Committee</b>	Must be three <b>faculty</b> from the Psychology Department. The thesis Advisor must be graduate faculty.
<b>6. Thesis Proposal Defense</b>	Should give a thesis proposal to the committee two weeks prior to the defense; Complete the Thesis Proposal Form
<b>7. Complete Thesis Topic Card</b>	Must be filed with the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies at least six months before the candidate expects to complete all requirements for the degree for which he/she is a candidate.
<b>8. IRB application</b>	Must get IRB approval before data collection begins
<b>9. Thesis Oral Examination (Defense) Form</b>	This form must be submitted by the candidate two (2) months in advance of the defense. The candidate cannot defend until this form has been approved by the Graduate College Dean and returned to the advisor.
<b>10. Thesis Oral Examination (Defense)</b>	Must have the approval of the Thesis advisor

## XII.

### PROGRAM FACULTY

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**XIII.**  
**APPENDIX**

Appendix A.

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
ANNUAL REVIEW AND EVALUATION

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ V# \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Evaluation \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

**Progress in the program:**

1. **Academic Performance:** (*GPA, grades below "B"*) - \_\_\_\_\_

2. **Scholarship and Research activities:** \_\_\_\_\_

3. **Departmental Contributions:** (*attendance at colloquia, departmental activities and meetings, participation in professional conferences and meetings; and participation in other activities and training program*) \_\_\_\_\_

4. **Professional:** \_\_\_\_\_

5. **Clinical Training** (*if applicable*): \_\_\_\_\_

6. **Comments:** \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Recommendation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signatures:**

**Student's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program Coordinator:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Chairperson:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B.**  
**Thesis Research Planning Form (Optional)**  
**Department of Psychology**  
**Virginia State University**

**Student's Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**V#** \_\_\_\_\_

**Program of Study** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Working title of your thesis**

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**2. Thesis Advisor** \_\_\_\_\_

**Committee members**

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**3. What progress have you made on the thesis thus far?**

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**4. What do you expect to accomplish on your thesis this semester?**

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**5. What is your expected date of graduation?** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Thesis Advisor's Signature**



**APPENDIX C.  
Thesis Proposal Form  
Department of Psychology  
Virginia State University**

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**V- Number**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date of meeting**

**1. Working title of your thesis**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**2. Approval Status**

\*Please attach a description of required revisions

Chapter	Approved	Approved with minor revisions*	Not approved - Major revisions needed*
<b>Chapter 1</b> Introduction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Chapter 2</b> Literature Review	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Chapter 3</b> Methodology	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Overall Proposal</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			New meeting date _____

**3. Proposal approved:**

Tentative data collection start date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tentative defense date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Student's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Thesis Advisor's Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**4. Revised proposal approved (If needed):**

Tentative data collection start date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tentative defense date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**Student's Signature**

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**Thesis Advisor's Signature**

---

**Date**

**Graduate Student Thesis/Dissertation Evaluation Form**

<b>Student's Name:</b>		<b>Student ID:</b>	
<b>Program:</b>		<b>Degree:</b>	

<b>Date of Defense:</b>		<b>Final Grade:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>		<b>Chairperson:</b>	

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Criteria Met</b>	<b>Criteria Not Met</b>	<b>Comments/Edits</b>
<b>1. Research Questions/Problems:</b> Indicates the purpose of the research and the importance of this research to the discipline. Clearly presents theoretical foundation and research questions.			
<b>2. Literature Review:</b> Demonstrates depth of knowledge and provides overview of the most current relevant research. The review guides the reader to the purpose and justification for the research and the hypotheses.			
<b>3. Methodology:</b> Describes research design, description of participants, measures and techniques used to collect data, and the data analyses. Competently implements appropriate methods.			
<b>4. Results:</b> Presents the findings implicated by the data analyses. Findings are addressed as related to the hypotheses.			
<b>5. Discussion:</b> Addresses the implications of the findings and similarities and differences from previous research in this area. Identifies limitations and future directions of the research.			
<b>6. Format and Organization:</b> Consistent with APA and the College of Graduate Studies Guide. Document guides the reader through the chain of reasoning or progression of ideas.			
<b>7. Citations and References</b> Located and listed according to APA guidelines.			
<b>8. Oral Presentation</b> Oral defense is presented clearly. Competently defends research by providing clear and insightful answers to questions. Uses presentation resources as a guide, is understandable, and maintains professionalism.			

**Comments/Recommendations:**

PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON

This section to be completed by the student:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ V# \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS:

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF INITIAL INFORMAL GRIEVANCE: \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON(S) AGAINST WHOM GRIEVANCE IS DIRECTED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR GRIEVANCE: (Attach all supporting documents and use additional paper if necessary)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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RECOMMENDATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGY DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON (Completed by the Chairperson):

\_\_\_\_\_ Supports grievance                      \_\_\_\_\_ Does not support grievance

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Chairperson                      Date

This form must be attached to the Grievance Form sent to the Dean of the College of Graduate Studies.

**APPENDIX E. (DOES COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES HAVE THEIR OWN FORM?)**

**DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
FORMAL GRADUATE GRIEVANCE FORM  
DEAN OF THE COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

This section to be completed by the student:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ V# \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS:

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF INITIAL INFORMAL GRIEVANCE: \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON(S) AGAINST WHOM GRIEVANCE IS DIRECTED:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR GRIEVANCE: (Attach all supporting documents and use additional paper if necessary)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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RECOMMENDATION OF THE DEAN (Completed by the Dean):

\_\_\_\_\_ Supports grievance      \_\_\_\_\_ Does not support grievance

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Dean

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

This form and the Chairperson's form must be attached to a Grievance Form sent to the Graduate School's Policies and Petition Committee.

**APPENDIX F.**

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY  
FORMAL GRADUATE GRIEVANCE FORM  
GRADUATE SCHOOL'S POLICIES AND PETITIONS COMMITTEE  
**(DOES COLLEGE OF GRADUATE STUDIES HAVE THEIR OWN FORM?)**

This section to be completed by the student:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ V# \_\_\_\_\_

MAILING ADDRESS:

\_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE NUMBER: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL ADDRESS:

\_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF INITIAL INFORMAL GRIEVANCE: \_\_\_\_\_

PERSON(S) AGAINST WHOM GRIEVANCE IS DIRECTED:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE DESCRIBE YOUR GRIEVANCE: (Attach all supporting documents and use additional paper if necessary)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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RECOMMENDATION OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL'S POLICIES AND PETITIONS COMMITTEE (Must be completed by the Chairperson of the Committee):

\_\_\_\_\_ Supports grievance

\_\_\_\_\_ Does not support grievance

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Chairperson of the Graduate School's  
Policies and Petitions Committee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date